

Celebration: The joy of Jehovah’s Love and Provision and Dwelling with Him.

Let’s review from last week’s lesson:

I think it is important to remind ourselves of the whole purpose of these feasts and sacrifices. When the Lord gave Moses the plans for the original Tabernacle, He made it very clear that every detail was to be carried out.

- *The whole purpose of these plans which were to be carried out was so that: **"And let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them."** (Exodus 25:8, NAS). It’s important to note that all the detail of the*

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*Day of Atonement was to teach that God wishes to dwell with His people and that they be drawn near to Himself. Let us not forget that even the carrying out of these plans pointed to another time when God would, indeed, dwell with His people and that this Old Testament reality pointed to the ultimate reality: **"And He said to me, "Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever. And the house of Israel will not again defile My holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their harlotry and by the corpses of their kings when they die,"** (Ezekiel 43:7) and again, **"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."** (Rev. 21:3).*

- *We need to remember that the whole purpose of the feasts of Jehovah was not the pomp and circumstances of the feasts but in the most solemn of the feasts - the Day of Atonement God was going to do a very wonderful thing. **"And there I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel."** Exodus 25:22.*

The underlying theme of Redemption is that the LORD will not thwarted from His plan to enjoy the fellowship if His People. The feasts, particularly the feast of Tabernacles points to that fact.

Let’s take a quick look at Exodus 25:8 where the LORD gives out instructions for the building of the Tabernacle:

And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. Exodus 25:8 (KJV).

I’m especially interested in the word “dwell.” The original, *shakan* contains many shadings of meanings. The actual meaning probably needs to be taken from the context where it is being used. The word was used for Abram’s camp at Mamre ([Gen 14:13](#)). That probably implied a camping more than a permanent dwelling.

However, the LORD promised His People would live in the Promised Land forever ([Ps 37:29; 69:36](#)). The LORD frequently includes "in the midst" with His dwelling with His People which implies an intimate dwelling (see our text in Exodus and also [Zech 2:19, 11](#)). Let's lift a portion of text from [The Complete Biblical Library, Hebrew English Dictionary](#).¹

*"...the most frequent use of **shakhan**: God dwelling among his people. The LORD who lives forever declares that He 'lives in or occupies' a high and holy place as well as 'dwelling' with the lowly and contrite to revive them (Isa. 57:15). The LORD chose to establish the nation of Israel for a place through which He would come into the world and offer a relationship with people. He established his tabernacle or 'dwelling place,' (from this same verb root: see HED #5088; also read there about 'shekinah') as the place where people could come to meet with Him. He declared He would live there among his people (Exo. 25:8; 29:42-48; 1 Ki. 6:13) and allow them to experience his presence there, which was said to be in the cloud. That cloud 'dwelt' or 'settled' (another common use of this verb) on Sinai and the Tabernacle (Exo. 24:16; 40:35; 1 Ki. 8:12). John picked up on this idea when he said that Jesus was Word of God becoming a man and 'tabernacling' or 'dwelling among the people (John 1:14).*

There is a lot more reading here but the theme is consistent that the LORD intends to dwell in a personal way among His People and that they would be living in His Presence forever.

Now let's leave this topic with it in the back of our minds as we consider the Feast of Tabernacles. I must emphasize that this feast highlights the LORD's desire to live among His People and that this is not just a celebration that He has, for one more year, provided for His People but the very word implies the Israelite abiding with not only themselves but the LORD.

Leviticus 23:39-43 **'On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD for seven days, with a rest on the first day and a rest on the eighth day. [40] 'Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. [41] 'You shall thus celebrate it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. [42] 'You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, [43] so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.' "** (NAS).

The feast of Tabernacles must have been an odd sight to the neighbors of Israel. The month of Tishri was a busy month for Israel. The feast of Trumpets was on the first day, the Day of Atonement on the tenth and now with the mourning - the repenting of Israel - the covering of Israel's sins accomplished comes the feast of Tabernacles. The

¹ Sin - Taw book, page 228 and following text.

time of the feast was at the end of the harvest cycle just entering the cold and rainy season. This should have been a time when Israel would have left the watch towers - the scanty shelters over which they observed the crops to guard against vandalism - left the fields and gone to the shelter of their homes. Instead, they built these flimsy three sided booths and celebrated the end of the harvest under stars and perhaps rainy clouds. It was to be a time of great rejoicing.² Jehovah wanted Israel to remember the days of His provision in the wilderness when he brought them out of Egypt and provided for them.

This celebration is a culmination of all the feasts and makes a connection to the Gentile world which we will see later on. This feast was one of three "pilgrim feasts" where Jehovah expected all the males of Israel to journey to Jerusalem. He told them not to worry about leaving their home defenseless - He would protect their homes.³

A Look to the Past.

'You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.' " (Lev.23:42, 43).

The theme of redemption closes out the last of the seven feasts of Jehovah. All of these feasts are a celebration of the fact that Jehovah had stretched out His arms and delivered His people from the slavery of Egypt. In our application of these feasts to our spiritual condition the Lord spared not even His Son to redeem us all from sin. The feasts are not merely traditions of a unique culture but a story of God's interest in mankind and His plan to redeem them from sin's grip.

The symbolism of the booths is just this - the Israelites depended completely upon Jehovah for their existence in the wilderness "leadings."⁴ The celebration of living in these booths for eight days was a celebration of complete dependence upon the Lord for their escape from sin and their entrance into the promised land.

² Deut. 16:13-15 **Celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days after you have gathered the produce of your threshing floor and your winepress. [14] Be joyful at your Feast--you, your sons and daughters, your menservants and maidservants, and the Levites, the aliens, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns. [15] For seven days celebrate the Feast to the LORD your God at the place the LORD will choose. For the LORD your God will bless you in all your harvest and in all the work of your hands, and your joy will be complete. (NIV).**

³ Exodus 34:24 **"For I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your borders, and no man shall covet your land when you go up three times a year to appear before the LORD your God. (NAS).**

⁴ Perhaps not so obvious the so-called wanderings were not to be confused with JEHOVAH allowing the Israelites to wander aimlessly – rather they were led throughout this wilderness experience.

A Look To the Future.

Zech. 14:16-17 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. [17] And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. (KJV).

The Jews believe that the feast of Tabernacles is the one feast that ties them to the Gentiles. At the end time the Lord will deliver Israel and usher that nation into the millennial reign of the messiah. The nations will keep the feast of Tabernacles to worship the Lord and to be healed from their diseases. God will dwell with His people.

Zech. 14:6-9 And it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. [7] For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light. [8] And it will come about in that day that living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter. [9] And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one. (NAS, Compare with Rev. 22:1-5)

The feast of Tabernacles is full of meaning of redemption from sin, of the total provision of the Lord for His people and His life-giving grace. God's word teaches that during the millennial reign of Christ there will be a river that will flow from the throne of God and on either side of this river of life will be trees that bear fruit that will be for the healing of the nations. This is the meeting of the Jew and the Christian - the feast of Tabernacles the final feast of the ingathering of Jehovah's harvest of the souls of men everywhere throughout the world both Jew and Gentile. **"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."** (Galatians 3:28).

Read Rev. 21:23-22:5 . Amen..