THE FEASTS OF THE LORD

REDISCOVERING GOD'S APPOINTED TIMES

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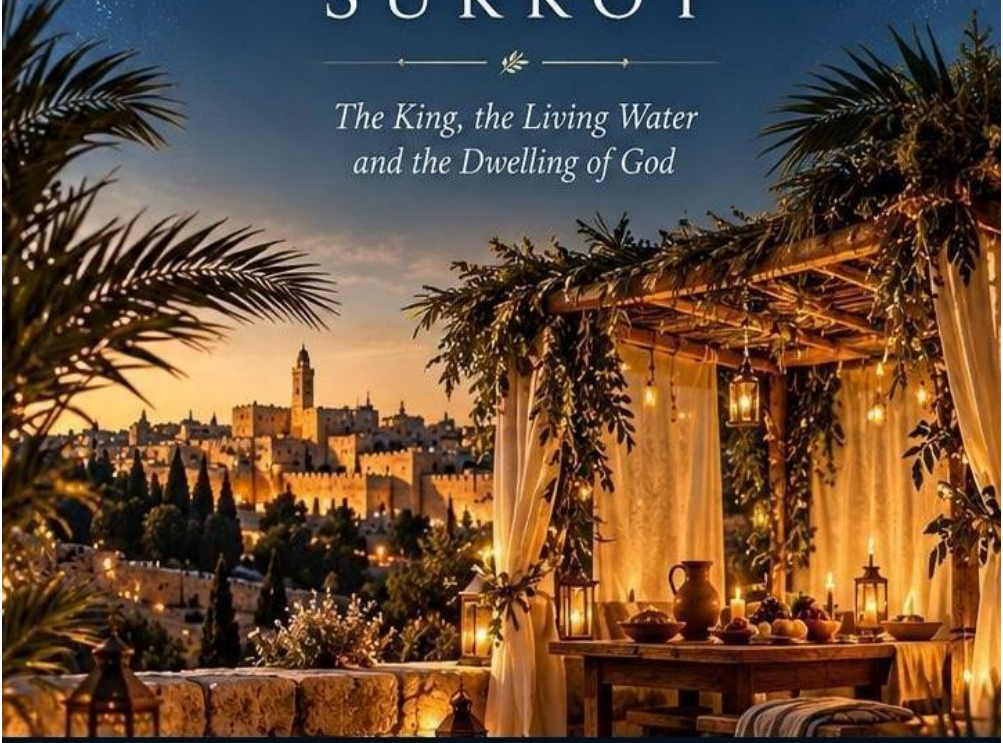
THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

SUKKOT

The King, the Living Water and the Dwelling of God



YOVEL PUBLICATIONS

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES
SUKKOT

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Scripture quotations are based principally on the King James Version, with occasional adjustments for clarity and to reflect the underlying Hebrew or Greek. The name Yeshua is used throughout for Jesus the Messiah.

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INTRODUCTION

SHADOWS OF THINGS TO COME

The Feasts and Their Substance



In respect of a Feast, or of a new moon, or of Sabbaths: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Messiah. - Colossians 2:16-17

Paul's words give us a fitting doorway into the appointed times. Feasts, new moons and Sabbaths are named together and called a shadow of things to come. A shadow is not a worthless negative. It exists because a reality casts it; its outline tells us something about the body to which it belongs.

The important expression is things to come. Paul does not say merely that the Feasts were shadows of things once fulfilled and then left behind. He calls them a shadow of things to come. The appointed times look backward, but they also reach forward. Passover remembers deliverance from Egypt and opens into Messiah our Passover; Firstfruits reaches into resurrection; and the seventh-month Feasts carry us toward awakening, atonement, gathering, restoration, dwelling and the Kingdom.

A memorial can look behind us while a shadow falls ahead of us. That is why the Feasts can rehearse what God has already done and still teach us to expect what He has promised to do. Their Substance belongs to Messiah, and their prophetic contours lead naturally toward redemption, resurrection, the gathering of His people, the restoration of all things and the reign of the King.

Torah establishes the pattern. The Prophets enlarge it. Yeshua gives it Substance. The apostles then show us the hope toward which it moves.

Sukkot is the last of the annual pilgrimage Feasts and the great Feast of ingathering. It arrives when the harvest has been gathered in, when Israel is commanded to rejoice, and when the people leave their permanent houses for simple booths beneath the open sky. It looks backward to the wilderness, but it refuses to remain there.

The God who sheltered Israel in the wilderness desired something greater than a people merely travelling under His protection. From the beginning He declared His purpose: I will dwell among them. That desire becomes a golden thread running through the Tabernacle, the Temple, the prophets, the Gospel and the final chapters of Revelation.

Israel dwelt in booths.
The Word tabernacled among us.
The Spirit dwells within us.
And the tabernacle of God will be with men.

Along the way Sukkot gathers some of Scripture's richest images: harvest and ingathering, water and thirst, light and glory, Jerusalem and the nations, the King and His Kingdom, the Bride and her joy. At the centre stands Yeshua. He comes to the Feast, teaches in the Temple and, at its climactic moment, stands and cries to every thirsty soul to come to Him and drink.

The Feast begins beneath branches. It ends with a City, a river, the Tree of Life and God dwelling with His people forever.

ONE

THE FEAST OF INGATHERING

The Season of Joy



Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine: and thou shalt rejoice in thy feast. - Deuteronomy 16:13-14

The seventh month reaches its fullness in joy. Trumpets has sounded. The Day of Atonement has passed. Now Israel is commanded to gather before YHVH for seven days and rejoice.

Torah calls Sukkot the Feast of Tabernacles and also the Feast of Ingathering. The timing matters. The grain has been gathered. The wine and oil have been brought in. The labour of the agricultural year has reached its joyful conclusion, and the people come up to the place YHVH has chosen.

Three times in the year Israel was commanded to appear before YHVH: at Unleavened Bread, at Shavuot and at Sukkot. The pilgrim road therefore belongs to the Feast. Families leave their towns and villages. Jerusalem fills. Songs of ascent rise from the road. The people come up because the King has appointed a meeting with them.

Sukkot is the seventh Feast in the seventh month and lasts seven days, followed by an eighth-day assembly. Scripture does not ask us to turn numbers into a secret code, but the repeated rhythm of seven is impossible to miss. The biblical week reaches its completion on the Sabbath; the agricultural year reaches its great autumn gathering at Sukkot.

And unlike the solemn affliction of Yom Kippur, Sukkot gives a direct command: rejoice.

Rejoicing is not an optional mood at Sukkot. It is part of the appointment.

That command becomes especially beautiful when Israel's history is remembered. The people who rejoice at harvest are the descendants of slaves. The people bringing produce from their inheritance are the descendants of wanderers who once owned no field, no vineyard and no permanent home. Every basket of fruit says that God kept His promise.

Nehemiah 8 gives us one of Scripture's loveliest restorations of the Feast. A remnant has returned from exile. The walls of Jerusalem have been rebuilt. Ezra opens the Torah before the people, and as the Word is heard they discover afresh the command to dwell in booths. They gather branches, build shelters and celebrate with very great gladness. In that same gathering Nehemiah tells them, "the joy of YHVH is your strength." The return to the Land becomes a return to the Word, and the return to the Word becomes joy.

Sukkot therefore begins with gratitude. Harvest has been gathered. Exiles have come home. The Word has been heard again. Yet the Feast is still a shadow of things to come. A greater ingathering remains, and a greater joy is waiting.

The harvest points forward.
The pilgrimage points forward.
The joy points forward.

Sukkot begins at the end of a harvest because Scripture is leading us toward the day when the Lord of the harvest gathers His people and the King receives the nations in Jerusalem.

TWO

THAT YOUR GENERATIONS MAY KNOW

Booths, Pilgrims and the City to Come



Ye shall dwell in booths seven days... that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. - Leviticus 23:42-43

For seven days the Israelite leaves the security of the permanent house and lives beneath branches.

The command is deliberately simple. Build a temporary dwelling. Sit in it. Eat in it. Let the children ask why. Then tell the story again.

You were slaves in Egypt. YHVH brought you out. Before there was a settled inheritance, there was a wilderness. Before there were houses of stone, there were tents. Before there were fields and vineyards, there was daily dependence upon the God who travelled with His people.

The booth therefore teaches memory, but it also teaches perspective. A solid house can tempt us to believe that what surrounds us is permanent. Sukkot deliberately loosens that illusion. The roof is temporary. The walls are temporary. The things we own are temporary.

But the pilgrimage is not over.

Peter speaks of believers as strangers and pilgrims. Paul describes the present body as an earthly house of this tabernacle, a tent that will one day be folded away. Peter himself, knowing that his death is near, speaks of shortly putting off his tabernacle.

This is not contempt for the life God has given us. It is freedom from pretending that this age is home.

Centuries before Sukkot was commanded, Abraham lived the pilgrim pattern that the Feast would later teach. Hebrews tells us that he dwelt in the land of promise as in a strange country, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob. Why? Because he looked for a City which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

There is something wonderfully fitting in that picture. Abraham lives in a tent while looking for a City.

A temporary dwelling.
An eternal destination.

Sukkot trains the heart to live between those two things. We receive the present with thanksgiving, but we do not mistake it for the inheritance. We build, work, plant and rejoice, yet we know that the final home of the people of God cannot be shaken.

The Feast therefore gives us a pilgrim mind. It teaches us to travel lightly enough to follow when God calls, gratefully enough to rejoice in what He provides, and hopefully enough to keep looking for the City.

And that hope becomes even more astonishing when Scripture reveals that the City is not merely the place where redeemed people will live. It is the place where God Himself will dwell among them.

TABERNACLES - PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The God Who Was, and Is, and Is to Come



I am Alpha and Omega... which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. - Revelation 1:8

The pattern of past, present and future is more than a convenient way to organise the meaning of Sukkot. It reflects the way Scripture speaks of the God who appointed the Feast.

At the burning bush YHVH revealed Himself to Moses with the words Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh - I AM THAT I AM, or I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE - and then gave His covenant Name. Revelation later worships Him as the One who is, and who was, and who is to come. Jewish and Messianic worship has often voiced that same movement as hayah, hoveh, v'yavo - He was, He is, and He is coming.

The God of Sukkot is therefore not confined to one moment in Israel's past. The God who dwelt among His people is the God who dwells within His people and the God who will dwell with His people forever.

God called Abraham. From Abraham came Isaac. From Isaac came Jacob. Jacob became Israel, and from Israel came the twelve tribes. God chose Israel, delivered His people from bondage, brought them to Himself and placed His dwelling in their midst.

TABERNACLES PAST
God among His people.

As glorious as that was - and it was glorious - the present reality is greater. Under the New Covenant God does not merely dwell among His people. By His Holy Spirit He dwells within them. Yeshua is Emmanuel - God with us. He has promised never to leave us nor forsake us. And Paul gives us one of the most astonishing phrases in all of Scripture: Messiah in you, the hope of glory.

TABERNACLES PRESENT
God within His people.

Yet as glorious as this is - and it is glorious - there is still more glory to come. John tells us that when He appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Revelation carries us still further, to the new heaven and new earth, where the great voice announces that the tabernacle of God is with men and that He will dwell with them.

TABERNACLES FUTURE
God with His people forever.

Past, present and future are gathered into the faithfulness of the One who was, and is, and is to come. The wilderness Tabernacle was not the end. The indwelling Spirit is not the end. The promise is moving toward sight, likeness, resurrection, the City and the unhindered presence of God.

THREE

THE WORD TABERNACLED AMONG US

Emmanuel - God With Us



And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us... full of grace and truth. - John 1:14

John could have said simply that the Word lived among us. Instead he chooses the language of the tent.

The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us.

The language reaches back through the whole story of Israel. In the wilderness YHVH commanded Moses, Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. The Tabernacle stood in the centre of the camp because the purpose of redemption was never merely to remove Israel from Pharaoh. God brought them out so that He might bring them near.

The pillars of cloud and fire declared His presence. The glory filled the Tabernacle. The camp moved when He moved and rested when He rested. Israel's life was ordered around the dwelling of God.

Then John announces something greater than the wilderness sanctuary.

The dwelling place of God has taken flesh.

Yeshua does not simply visit humanity with a message from heaven. He is Emmanuel - God with us. That name gathers the heart of Sukkot into a Person. The Feast remembers the God who dwelt among Israel in the wilderness; Emmanuel declares that God has come near to dwell with His people.

He walks Israel's roads, sits at tables, touches the unclean, sleeps in boats, weeps beside a tomb and speaks the words of the Father. The wonder is not only that God sends a message to His people, but that He is with them. The dwelling is no longer a tent at the centre of the camp. The Word Himself has come among us.

Sukkot gives us the vocabulary to feel the wonder of the incarnation. The God who once dwelt in the midst of Israel in a tent now comes among His people in human flesh. The booth is a shadow; Emmanuel is the wonder toward which the language of dwelling opens.

The tabernacling language has naturally caused many readers to wonder whether Yeshua's birth itself may have fallen near Sukkot. The proposed chronology is debated, and nothing in this booklet needs to depend upon it. John's statement is already strong enough. Whatever the precise date of His birth, the theological meaning is unmistakable: the Word came to tabernacle among men.

And even that is not the end of the pattern. Emmanuel is not merely a name attached to the birth of Yeshua. He is God with us, and He does not abandon His people. By His Holy Spirit He dwells within them, and Paul gives the mystery in a few astonishing words: Messiah in you, the hope of glory.

Exodus says, I will dwell among them. John says, the Word tabernacled among us. Paul says, Messiah is in you, the hope of glory. Revelation will finally say, the tabernacle of God is with men.

Emmanuel: God among His people, within His people, and with His people forever.

FOUR

A HOUSE FILLED WITH GLORY

Solomon, the Temple and the Feast



Also at the same time Solomon kept the feast seven days... and on the three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away into their tents, glad and merry in heart. - 2 Chronicles 7:8, 10

Centuries after the wilderness, Sukkot became the setting for another great moment in the story of God's dwelling.

Solomon had finished the House. The Ark was brought up. The elders of Israel gathered in Jerusalem in the seventh month, at the Feast. Sacrifices filled the courts. Priests and Levites stood in their appointed places. Trumpets sounded. Praise arose.

Then the cloud came.

The priests could not continue ministering because the glory of YHVH filled the House of God.

The Feast of booths became the setting for the dedication of the House.

The connection is beautiful. Israel once lived in temporary shelters while God's dwelling travelled in a tent. Now the nation has been planted in the Land, and a permanent House has been built in Jerusalem. Yet the real glory of the Temple is not the stone, cedar or gold. It is the Presence that fills it.

Solomon understands this. Even at the dedication he knows that heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain God, much less the House he has built. The Temple is holy because God chooses to place His Name there and meet with His people.

The prayer of dedication also stretches outward. Solomon asks that the foreigner who comes from a far country for the sake of God's great Name should be heard, so that all peoples of the earth may know Him.

Already the House in Jerusalem is looking toward the nations.

Second Chronicles records another striking line in Solomon's prayer: Let Thy priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let Thy saints rejoice in goodness. Priesthood, salvation and rejoicing come together at the Feast.

Then fire descends from heaven, glory fills the House and the people bow with their faces to the ground, worshipping and giving thanks because He is good and His mercy endures forever.

The people finally return to their tents glad and merry in heart.

But Scripture will not allow us to stop at Solomon's Temple. The prophets speak of a greater dwelling. Yeshua speaks of the Temple of His body. Hebrews tells us that Messiah is Son over His own House. Peter describes living stones being built into a spiritual house.

The House built by the son points toward the House gathered in the Son.

Sukkot therefore carries the glory of Solomon forward. The cloud fills the Temple, but the story is still moving toward the day when the glory of God fills a redeemed people and the nations come to worship the King.

FIVE

THIS EARTHLY TABERNACLE

The God Who Dwells Within



For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. - 2 Corinthians 5:1

Sukkot teaches us that the body itself is a temporary dwelling.

Paul uses the language plainly. Our present body is an earthly house of this tabernacle. It is real, precious and God-given, but it is not permanent. We groan, not because creation is evil, but because mortality is not the final condition for which we were made.

Peter speaks the same way when he says that he must shortly put off his tabernacle. Both apostles can face death without pretending it is nothing because they know the tent is not the inheritance.

Yet the New Covenant adds another astonishing truth. While we dwell in a temporary body, the Spirit of the eternal God dwells in us.

Paul writes, Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them. He reaches back to the promises of Torah and the prophets and applies their dwelling language to the people of Messiah.

The same promise appears in Ezekiel's vision of restoration: My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

The pattern is becoming clearer. God dwelt among Israel. The Word tabernacled among us. The Spirit now dwells within the people of Messiah. The final dwelling has begun before the final City has appeared.

We live in a temporary tabernacle while the eternal God dwells within us.

That truth changes the way we live in the present age. The body is not disposable. It is a vessel of holy purpose. Our lives are not our own. The God who dwells within us calls us to holiness, mercy, obedience and love.

Paul also gives us another phrase that belongs beautifully beside Sukkot: Messiah in you, the hope of glory.

Hope of glory means we are not yet at the end of the story. We carry treasure in earthen vessels. We have the firstfruits of the Spirit, but still wait for the redemption of the body. The dwelling has begun, but the full ingathering is still ahead.

So the believer lives as Sukkot teaches: grateful for the present tent, conscious of its fragility, filled with the Presence of God and looking toward the dwelling that cannot be dissolved.

SIX

HE SET HIS FACE FOR JERUSALEM

The King Goes Up to the Feast



Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.
- John 7:2

The Gospel narrative now brings us directly to Sukkot.

John tells us plainly that Sukkot is at hand. Yeshua's brothers urge Him to leave Galilee and show His works openly in Judea. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world.

The words carry an irony they do not yet understand. Sukkot truly does look toward the day when the King will be revealed before the world and the nations will come to Jerusalem to worship. But this is not yet that hour.

Yeshua refuses to be driven by human expectation. His time is in the Father's hand. His brothers go up openly. He goes up in His own time, not with the public display they demanded.

Luke's narrative, read alongside John, turns decisively toward Jerusalem. Yeshua steadfastly sets His face to go. The wording echoes the Servant in Isaiah: I have set My face like a flint (Isaiah 50:7). He is going toward rejection, suffering and the work appointed by His Father, yet He does not turn aside. The road itself becomes part of the message.

A Samaritan village refuses to receive Him because His face is set toward Jerusalem. The detail takes us back to His conversation with the woman at the well. The Samaritans worshipped on Mount Gerizim; the Jews at

Jerusalem. Yeshua had already declared that the hour was coming when true worshippers would worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

Yet for this appointed Feast He goes up to Jerusalem, because the Torah has not disappeared and the appointed time has arrived.

James and John want fire to fall on the rejecting village, but Yeshua rebukes them. The One going to the Feast of joy and ingathering has not come to destroy men's lives but to save them.

Then the road fills with would-be disciples. One will follow anywhere. Another wants first to bury his father. Another wants to say farewell at home. Yeshua's answers are severe because the Kingdom is near and the journey has direction.

The King is going up to Jerusalem.

There is also a beautiful continuity in the sequence. Only days before, the disciples had seen Yeshua transfigured in glory. Now He walks the road of obedience toward Jerusalem. Soon, at the Feast, the image of flint will meet another wilderness image: the Rock standing in the Temple and calling the thirsty to come to Him and drink. The King who will one day be revealed to the nations first walks the road appointed by His Father.

SEVEN

WHERE IS HE?

Messiah in the Midst of the Feast



Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, Where is He? - John 7:11

Jerusalem is full, but the question moving through the crowds is not about the harvest, the booths or even the ceremonies.

Where is He?

Some say Yeshua is good. Others say He deceives the people. Fear keeps many voices quiet. The Feast has gathered Israel to Jerusalem, and in the middle of that gathering the whole city seems to be arguing about the identity of one Man.

Then, about the middle of the Feast, Yeshua appears in the Temple and teaches.

The rulers marvel because He has not been trained in their recognised schools. Yeshua answers by taking attention away from human credentials: My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me.

The language belongs to Deuteronomy 18. Moses had promised that YHVH would raise up a Prophet like him and put His words in that Prophet's mouth. The connection is deeply Johannine. Again and again John presents Yeshua as the One sent by the Father, who does not speak from Himself but speaks what the Father has given Him. At Sukkot, in the Temple, the promised Prophet and the Sent One come together in one Person.

Then He turns the accusation back upon His hearers. Did not Moses give you the Torah, and yet none of you keeps the Torah? Why do you seek to kill Me?

The conversation reaches back to the previous Jerusalem Feast in John 5, where the healing of the man on the Sabbath had exposed the conflict between the life-giving work of the Father and the rulers' interpretation of Sabbath. Now Yeshua returns to that work and asks why making a man completely whole should be condemned.

Sukkot is therefore not merely a beautiful background. The Feast becomes a courtroom in which Israel is confronted with the One to whom Moses points.

The crowd debates His origin. The rulers send officers to arrest Him. Some confess that He must be the Prophet. Others say He is the Messiah. The city divides over Him.

And still His hour has not come. No one lays a hand upon Him.

When the officers finally return empty-handed, their explanation is wonderfully simple.

Never man spake like this Man.

Sukkot has gathered Israel around the Temple, but the true question of the Feast is now standing in their midst: Will they recognise the One whom God has sent?

EIGHT

WITH JOY SHALL YE DRAW WATER

The House of Water Drawing



Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. - Isaiah 12:3

To hear John 7 as its first hearers heard it, we must step into the sound and colour of Jerusalem at Sukkot.

The Torah commands rejoicing and sacrifices, but later Temple tradition added a remarkable ceremony of water drawing and pouring. The Mishnah remembers the celebration with a saying: whoever had not seen the rejoicing at the place of the water drawing had never seen rejoicing in his life.

At dawn, a priest went down from the Temple toward the Pool of Siloam carrying a golden vessel. Musicians and worshippers accompanied the movement through the city. Water was drawn from the pool and carried back up toward the Temple.

The name Siloam - Shiloach - carries the sense of sent. John himself draws attention to that meaning elsewhere in his Gospel. At the very Feast where Yeshua repeatedly speaks of the One who sent Him, water is being carried from the pool called Sent.

As the procession approached the Water Gate, trumpets sounded. The priest went up to the altar, and the water was poured while another libation of wine was offered beside it. Prayers rose for the rains that would sustain the land through the coming season.

Isaiah's words belonged naturally to the celebration: “With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”

The Hebrew word translated salvation here is yeshuah.

Isaiah is deliberately reaching back to the Song of Moses. At the sea Israel sang, “YHVH is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation.” Isaiah takes up the same confession and immediately carries it forward: “Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” Psalm 118, one of the Hallel Psalms sung at the Feast, repeats the confession before crying, “Save now, I beseech Thee, O YHVH.” The salvation celebrated at the sea becomes the salvation promised by the prophet, sung at the Feast and pictured in water drawn with joy. Into that setting Yeshua will stand and say, “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.”

The Levites sang the Hallel Psalms, including Psalm 118. Palm branches were lifted. The cry rose: Save now, I pray, O YHVH. The Hebrew Hoshia na gives us Hosanna - save now.

On the seventh day the altar was circled seven times in a climactic appeal for salvation and blessing. The Feast of ingathering becomes a great cry for water, rain and salvation.

And all the while Yeshua is in the Temple.

The ceremony is magnificent, but the Gospel is preparing us for something greater than ceremony. The golden vessel can carry water to the altar. It cannot give living water to the heart.

For that, the Well of Salvation must speak.

NINE

IF ANYONE THIRSTS

Come to the Rock



If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.
- John 7:37

Then comes the moment toward which the whole Feast seems to have been moving.

On the last day, that great day of the Feast, Yeshua stands and cries out.

If anyone thirsts, let him come unto Me, and drink.

He does not point toward the golden vessel. He does not send the thirsty soul back down the hill to Siloam. He calls the thirsty to Himself.

The claim is immense because Scripture has taught Israel where living water comes from.

In the wilderness the people thirsted and YHVH brought water from the rock. Psalm 114 remembers the God who turned the rock into a standing water and the flint into a fountain of waters. Deuteronomy remembers water brought out of the rock of flint. Paul later removes any uncertainty about the spiritual meaning when he says, They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Messiah.

Now, at the Feast that remembers the wilderness, the Rock is standing in the Temple.

Come to Me.

The memory of Moses makes the scene even richer. At Horeb YHVH told Moses to strike the rock, and water came out for the people. Years later at Meribah the command was different: speak to the rock. Moses struck it twice instead. Paul then tells us that the spiritual Rock was Messiah. Read together, the pattern invites attention: at Horeb the rock is struck; at Meribah the command is to speak. Now, at Sukkot, the Rock stands among His people and says, Come to Me, and drink.

John explains the meaning. Yeshua is speaking of the Spirit, whom believers would receive after He was glorified. Living water is not merely refreshment for the individual. It becomes a river flowing outward from within.

That takes us back to John 4. Beside Jacob's well Yeshua had promised the Samaritan woman water springing up into everlasting life. He told her that the hour was coming when worship would not be confined to Gerizim or Jerusalem. Now in Jerusalem, at Sukkot, the same invitation widens: If anyone thirsts.

Anyone.

The Feast that will one day gather nations to the King already contains the invitation of the Saviour of the world.

And the Bible carries the cry all the way to its final page. Revelation shows a river of the water of life proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Then the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. Let him that is athirst come. Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Exodus gives the Rock.
Isaiah gives the wells of salvation.
John gives Yeshua standing and crying.
Revelation gives the river flowing from the throne.
The shadow has become Substance.

TEN

THE EIGHTH-DAY ASSEMBLY

Mercy and Righteous Judgement



Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?... Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more. - John 8:10-11

John 7 closes with Jerusalem still divided over Yeshua. The officers have returned without arresting Him, the rulers are arguing, and the Feast has reached its final day. Then John carries us into the next morning.

Following the chronology set out in Behold the Lamb of God - A Harmony of the Gospels, that morning brings us to the eighth-day assembly - Shemini Atzeret. The seven days of booths are complete, yet one appointed day remains. The temporary shelters have served their purpose, but Yeshua is still in Jerusalem.

Early in the morning He returns to the Temple. The people gather around Him, and He sits down to teach. Into that scene the scribes and Pharisees bring a woman taken in adultery and set her in the midst.

They invoke Moses and demand a judgement. John tells us their purpose plainly: they are testing Yeshua, seeking an accusation against Him. The woman is placed before Him as the instrument of their trap.

Yeshua does something unexpected. He stoops down and writes with His finger on the ground.

The gesture gathers striking Scriptural echoes. Moses received the tablets written with the finger of God; now,

while men invoke Moses against the woman, Yeshua bends and writes with His finger in the dust.

Jeremiah had warned that those who depart from YHVH would be written in the earth because they had forsaken YHVH, the fountain of living waters. Only hours before, Yeshua had stood in the Temple and cried, If anyone thirsts, let him come unto Me, and drink. The Fountain of living water is still in their midst.

They continue pressing Him. At last He stands and answers: He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. Then He stoops and writes again.

One by one the accusers leave, beginning with the eldest. The courtroom empties until Yeshua and the woman remain.

Then comes the exchange that gives the scene its beauty. Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She answers, No man, Lord. Yeshua replies, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

This is not mercy that calls sin harmless. He names a new direction: sin no more. Nor is it judgement eager to destroy. The One who had been challenged to condemn sends the woman away with mercy and a future.

The previous day Yeshua had said, Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgement. On the eighth day He shows righteous judgement in His own hands. The woman brought in under accusation leaves with a call to new life. The appointed season closes with mercy, holiness and the possibility of a new beginning.

ELEVEN

SEVENTY FOR THE NATIONS

The Harvest Truly Is Great



After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before His face... therefore said He unto them, The harvest truly is great. - Luke 10:1-2

After Sukkot, Luke records another remarkable transition. After these things the Lord appoints seventy and sends them two by two before His face.

That number already belongs to the Feast. Numbers 29 sets out the offerings for Sukkot. Across the seven days the number of bulls descends day by day: thirteen, twelve, eleven, ten, nine, eight and seven.

The total is seventy.

Later Jewish tradition understood the seventy bulls as corresponding to the nations, and the prophets unmistakably connect Sukkot with the nations.

Now Yeshua appoints seventy and sends them out.

Seventy at the Feast.
Seventy sent to the harvest.

The sequence is beautiful. Sukkot has celebrated ingathering. Zechariah has looked toward the nations coming up to Jerusalem. Now Yeshua sends seventy messengers outward and tells them that the harvest truly is great.

Their message is the Kingdom: The kingdom of God is come near unto you.

They are sent without the securities travellers normally carry. Like pilgrims, they depend upon the provision of God and the hospitality of those who receive them. They enter houses with peace. They heal the sick. They announce the nearness of the Kingdom.

The Feast of ingathering has become a mission into the harvest.

And then the theme of Sukkot returns in joy.

The seventy come back rejoicing because even the demons are subject to them in Yeshua's name. Yeshua does not crush their joy; He purifies it. Rejoice not merely that spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven.

Then Luke tells us that Yeshua Himself rejoices in the Spirit.

The disciples rejoice.
The Messiah rejoices.
The Feast of joy continues in the harvest.

This is not merely enthusiasm over successful ministry. The Father is revealing the Kingdom to the humble. The Son is making the Father known. Prophets and kings had longed to see what the disciples are seeing.

Sukkot looks toward the nations coming to the King. Luke 10 shows the King's servants already going to the nations with the announcement that His Kingdom has drawn near.

TWELVE

THE KING IN JERUSALEM

All Nations Shall Come Up



And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations... shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. - Zechariah 14:16

Sukkot does not end in the first century. The prophets carry the Feast into the Kingdom.

Zechariah 14 looks beyond the present order to a day when YHVH is King over all the earth. Jerusalem stands at the centre, living waters flow out from the City, and the nations that remain go up year after year to worship the King and keep Sukkot.

That prophecy gathers together the great themes we have already seen.

Jerusalem.
Living water.
The nations.
The King.
The Feast.

The pilgrimage that once belonged to Israel widens to the world.

This is why Sukkot is such a powerful Feast of the Kingdom. Passover speaks of redemption. Shavuot speaks of harvest and Spirit. Trumpets awakens. Atonement cleanses. Sukkot celebrates the gathered people dwelling in joy under the reign of the King.

The prophetic picture also guards us against reducing the Kingdom to something invisible and private. Zechariah speaks of nations, Jerusalem, worship, rain and the King reigning over the earth.

Revelation 7 gives us another scene that sounds unmistakably like Sukkot. John sees a great multitude that no man can number, from every nation, kindred, people and tongue. They stand before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands.

Palm branches. Nations. Salvation. The throne.

And then comes the dwelling promise: He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell - shall tabernacle - over them. They hunger no more and thirst no more, because the Lamb in the midst of the throne shepherds them and leads them to living fountains of waters.

Sukkot is everywhere in the imagery.

The Feast of Ingathering has become a multitude no man can number. The cry for water has become living fountains. The branches are in the hands of the redeemed. The God who sheltered Israel in the wilderness now spreads His dwelling over people from every nation.

And still the story is not finished.

The Kingdom itself moves toward something greater than a restored earth under Messiah's reign. The temporary must finally give way to the eternal.

THIRTEEN

FROM HERE TO ETERNITY

The Eighth Day and the Dwelling That Remains



On the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you... it is a solemn assembly. - Leviticus 23:36

Seven days Israel dwells in booths. Then comes an eighth day set apart.

Torah calls it an Atzeret - a closing assembly, a day of restraint and gathering. The booths belong to seven days; the eighth day stands beside them and beyond them.

Scripture often places the eighth day at the threshold of something new. A male child is circumcised on the eighth day. After seven days of priestly consecration, Leviticus 9 opens with the words, And it came to pass on the eighth day, as Aaron begins the public ministry of the priesthood and the glory of YHVH appears.

The pattern does not make eight a mystical formula. It simply teaches our eyes to notice that after a completed seven, Scripture sometimes opens a new beginning on the eighth.

Sukkot gives that pattern an extraordinary setting. For seven days Israel lives in temporary dwellings. On the eighth day the command to live in the booth has ended.

The temporary dwelling has done its work.

That is why the eighth day naturally turns our thoughts toward new creation.

Isaiah sees new heavens and a new earth. Peter tells us to look for new heavens and a new earth wherein righteousness dwells. Revelation finally shows the vision in fullness.

John sees a new heaven and a new earth. He sees the holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Then the great voice speaks.

Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men.

The whole journey of Sukkot reaches that sentence.

The wilderness booth was temporary. The Tabernacle of Moses moved from place to place. Solomon's Temple could be destroyed. Our present bodies are earthly tents. Even the present heavens and earth will pass through judgement and renewal.

But the final dwelling remains.

God dwells with His people. They are His people. He is their God. Death is gone. Sorrow is gone. Crying and pain are gone. The former things have passed away.

And the imagery of Sukkot remains. A river of the water of life flows clear as crystal from the throne of God and of the Lamb. The Tree of Life stands beside it. The servants of God see His face. There is no night there, for the Lord God gives them light.

Water and light.

The great images of the Feast have reached eternity.

Then comes the final invitation of Scripture: The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. Let him that heareth say, Come. Let him that is athirst come. Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Sukkot begins with pilgrims going up to Jerusalem.
The Bible ends with the Bride saying, Come.

From booths to the City. From wilderness water to the river of life. From lamps in Jerusalem to a City that needs no sun. From an earthly harvest to the gathering of the nations. From a temporary dwelling to the tabernacle of God with men.

From here to eternity.

CONCLUSION

THE TABERNACLE OF GOD IS WITH MEN

The Feast Reaches Its Substance



Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them. - Revelation 21:3

Sukkot began with a command to remember.

Remember the wilderness. Remember the booths. Remember that the people who now gather harvests once travelled without fields, vineyards or houses of their own. Remember that every good gift came from the God who brought them out of Egypt and travelled with them.

But the Feast never allowed us to remain in the wilderness.

The booth taught us to live as pilgrims. Abraham showed us a man dwelling in tents while looking for a City. Solomon showed us the House filled with glory. John showed us the Word made flesh and tabernacling among us. Paul showed us the Spirit dwelling within an earthly tent.

Then the Gospel brought us to Jerusalem.

The crowds asked, Where is He? Yeshua appeared in the Temple. The Feast filled with water, light, palms, Hallel and cries for salvation. And at the very moment Jerusalem was asking God for water, Yeshua stood and cried to the thirsty to come to Him.

The Rock was in their midst.

The water pointed to Him. The cry Save now pointed to Him. The harvest pointed to Him. The nations pointed to His Kingdom.

Then the seventy went out into the harvest and returned with joy. Zechariah carried us forward to the nations going up to Jerusalem to worship the King. Revelation showed us a multitude from every nation with palm branches before the throne, sheltered by the presence of God and led by the Lamb to living fountains of water.

And finally the temporary booth disappeared.

A new heaven. A new earth. A holy City. A river of life. No night. No death. No exile. No more journey away from home.

Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men.

That is where Sukkot has been leading us.

Past, present and future have converged in the faithfulness of the One who was, and is, and is to come. He dwelt among His people. He dwells within His people. He will dwell with His people forever.

Not merely to a Feast. Not merely to a memory. Not merely to a prophetic scheme.

To a Person.

Yeshua is the Living Water.
Yeshua is Emmanuel - God with us.
Yeshua is the King.
Yeshua is the Lamb in the midst of the throne.

And through Him the desire of God from the beginning is fulfilled: He will dwell with His people, and they will dwell with Him.

The harvest will be gathered. The pilgrimage will be over. The City will remain.

The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. The best is yet to come.

HOW THEN SHALL WE WALK?

Guarding and Celebrating the Appointed Time



Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God. - Ephesians 2:19

Having followed Sukkot from the wilderness to the Kingdom, from Israel dwelling beneath branches to the promise that the tabernacle of God will be with men, the Feast leaves us with a question that cannot remain upon the page. If these are truly the appointed times of YHVH, if they reveal His ways and if their shadows lead us toward Yeshua and the purposes of His Kingdom, how should the people of God receive them now?

The answer need not begin with a catalogue of regulations. It begins with identity. Paul reminds Gentile believers that they were once strangers from the covenants of promise, but through Messiah they have been brought near. In Him the two are made one, and those who were far off become fellowcitizens and members of the household of God. Romans gives us another picture: wild branches are grafted into an olive tree that was already there and become partakers of its root and richness. We have not been given a separate root or a separate redemptive story. In Messiah we have been brought into an inheritance already filled with the acts, promises and appointed times of the God of Israel.

That does not mean pretending that nothing has changed. The New Covenant is not Sinai repeated without Messiah, nor does being grafted in mean that Gentile believers must become culturally Jewish. The sacrifice has been offered once for all, the Spirit has been given, and the dividing wall has been broken down in the creation of one new man. Yet none of

this makes the ways of God empty. Jeremiah speaks of His instruction being written upon the heart, and Ezekiel of His Spirit being placed within His people so that they might walk in His ways. The movement is not from obedience to indifference, but from what stood outside us to what God now works within us.

This helps us hear the language of keeping the Feasts more carefully. Scripture speaks both of guarding what God has appointed and of celebrating His Feasts. Keeping is therefore more than preserving an idea in the mind, but it is also more than reproducing an outward form while missing its purpose. We guard the appointed times because they are God's appointments, and we celebrate them because they are His Feasts. We give them their place, gather around the Scriptures that belong to them, teach their meaning, rejoice in what God has done and rehearse what He has promised still to do.

Paul gives us a beautiful example when he speaks of Passover. "Messiah our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast." He then carries the Feast directly into the life of the believer, calling for the old leaven to be put away and for sincerity and truth to take its place. The coming of Messiah has not made the appointed pattern meaningless. It has revealed its Substance. The shadow is not a rival to Yeshua; it is one of the ways Scripture teaches us to recognise Him, to understand His work and to look toward what is still to come.

This is why Colossians can speak of Feasts, new moons and Sabbaths as a shadow of things to come, with the Substance belonging to Messiah. The appointed times look backward to real acts of God, but they also reach forward. They teach redemption, harvest, awakening, atonement, gathering, dwelling and the Kingdom. They help God's people remember where the story has come from and recognise where it is going. To receive them is not to seek justification by a calendar. It is to receive part of the

Scriptural inheritance through which the Father teaches and matures His household.

That distinction matters. We do not keep the Feasts in order to become the people of God, and we do not use them as badges by which to measure ourselves against other believers. Believers who do not observe the biblical calendar are no less part of the household of God; our standing is in Messiah, not in calendar observance. We keep them because, in Messiah, we have been brought near to the God who appointed them. They are for blessing, for remembrance, for instruction and for maturity. They give us recurring opportunities to proclaim the Kingdom, to encourage one another with the promises of God and to become more aware of the times and purposes revealed in His Word.

For Sukkot this can take a wonderfully simple form. The appointed time becomes an occasion to gather, to share a love feast, to open Torah and the Prophets and then to see their themes unfold through the Gospel and toward the Kingdom. We remember the wilderness and the God who sheltered His people there. We give thanks for His provision. We receive the command to rejoice. We teach our children why Israel dwelt in booths and why a temporary shelter still has something to say to people who live in permanent houses. A sukkah may serve that purpose beautifully, not because its branches make anyone righteous, but because its frailty can preach a truth that solid walls easily allow us to forget: we are pilgrims, and this present age is not our final home.

Yet Sukkot never leaves us beneath the branches. The Feast carries us to the Word who tabernacled among us, to Emmanuel, to the Living Water and to the Spirit dwelling within the people of Messiah. Its harvest turns our eyes toward the greater ingathering. Its joy anticipates the joy of the Kingdom. Its pilgrimage leads toward Jerusalem and the coming King, while its eighth day lifts our sight beyond everything temporary toward

the City that remains. To keep Sukkot is therefore to guard and celebrate this whole testimony, allowing the appointed time to shape our worship, enlarge our understanding and strengthen our hope.

Not every practical question has to be settled before we can begin. There are aspects of the relationship between Torah and the New Covenant that deserve fuller study, and there are ancient commands connected with Temple, priesthood, sacrifice and Land that cannot simply be reproduced as though nothing has changed. But uncertainty at the edges need not become neglect at the centre. What God appointed should not disappear from the life of His people merely because generations have forgotten how to receive it.

Perhaps, then, the question is not simply, "Must I keep this Feast?" Love asks something better. If the Father appointed this time, what does He want His people to remember? What does it reveal of His Son? What does it teach us about His ways, His Kingdom and the hope still before us? How may we guard it, celebrate it in sincerity and truth, and hand its testimony faithfully to those who come after us?

For Sukkot the answer begins in joy. We gather, remember, give thanks, study, teach and look forward. We let the temporary dwelling remind us of the journey, the harvest remind us of the ingathering, the water turn our hearts toward Yeshua and the promise of dwelling lift our eyes toward the Kingdom. In this way the Feast is neither reduced to ritual nor allowed to fade into mere symbolism. It is received as a living inheritance, with Yeshua as its Substance and the Spirit writing its truth upon the heart, for the blessing and maturing of the people of God.

KEY SCRIPTURES



Exodus 3:14-15 - Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh and the covenant Name of YHVH.

Exodus 15:1-2; 17:6 - the Song of Moses refrain and water from the struck rock.

Exodus 23:14-17; 34:22-24 - Sukkot as a pilgrimage Feast and Feast of Ingathering.

Leviticus 23:33-43 - seven days of Sukkot, booths, rejoicing and the eighth-day assembly.

Numbers 20:8-12 - the command to speak to the rock at Meribah.

Numbers 29:12-38 - the offerings of Sukkot and the seventy bulls across seven days.

Deuteronomy 16:13-17 - rejoicing after the harvest and appearing before YHVH.

Nehemiah 8:13-18 - rediscovery of Sukkot after the return from exile.

1 Kings 8; 2 Chronicles 5-7 - dedication of Solomon's Temple in the seventh month and the glory filling the House.

Psalm 118 - Hallel, YHVH as strength, song and salvation, 'Save now,' and the One who comes in the Name of YHVH.

Isaiah 12 - the Song of Moses refrain and drawing water with joy from the wells of salvation.

Isaiah 50:7 - the Servant who sets His face like flint.

Jeremiah 17:13 - YHVH as the fountain of living waters and those who depart from Him written in the earth.

Isaiah 60 - Zion's light and the nations coming to that light.

Ezekiel 37:24-28 - the restored people and God's tabernacle dwelling with them.

Zechariah 14 - living waters from Jerusalem, YHVH as King, and the nations keeping Sukkot.

John 1:14 - the Word made flesh and tabernacling among us.

John 4:7-26 - living water and worship in spirit and truth.

John 7-8 - Yeshua at Sukkot, the Sent One, living water, the eighth-day assembly and righteous judgement.

Luke 9:51-62; 10:1-24 - the journey toward Jerusalem, the seventy, the harvest and rejoicing.

1 Corinthians 10:1-4 - Messiah as the Rock from whom Israel drank.

Colossians 1:27 - Messiah in you, the hope of glory.

2 Corinthians 5:1-8 - the present body as an earthly tabernacle and the hope of what is eternal.

1 John 3:2 - when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 - the New Covenant and the instruction of God written upon the heart.

Ezekiel 36:26-27 - a new heart, the Spirit within, and walking in the ways of God.

Romans 11:17-24 - the wild branches grafted into the cultivated olive tree and sharing its root and richness.

1 Corinthians 5:7-8 - Messiah our Passover and the call to keep the Feast in sincerity and truth.

Ephesians 2:11-22; 3:6 - those once far off brought near, the one new man and the Gentiles made fellow-heirs.

Colossians 2:16-17 - Feasts, new moons and Sabbaths as a shadow of things to come, with the Substance belonging to Messiah.

Revelation 1:4, 8; 4:8 - the One who is, and who was, and who is to come.

Revelation 7 - the innumerable multitude, palm branches, living fountains and God tabernacling over them.

Revelation 21-22 - the New Jerusalem, the tabernacle of God with men, the river of life and the final invitation to come.

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A Feast of Joy
A Message for Today
A Glorious Tomorrow

Sukkot is more than a remembrance of the past.
It is a divine appointment that reveals the heart of God
from the wilderness to the Kingdom – a story of His people,
His presence and His promise to dwell with us forever.

In this booklet we journey through the rich biblical tapestry of the Feast of Tabernacles – from Abraham's tents to the glory in the wilderness, from Solomon's Temple to Yeshua at the Feast, from the water drawing at Siloam to the outpouring of the Spirit, from the sending of the seventy to the nations, and finally to the day when the tabernacle of God is with men.

Sukkot is the Feast of ingathering, of living water, of rejoicing and of the coming Kingdom. It points us to Yeshua – the true Tabernacle, the Living Water, the King who comes – and invites us to look beyond the temporary to the eternal.

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men,
and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people,
and God Himself will be with them."

REVELATION 21:3



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