



PASSIONFORTRUTH

WHERE NEW LIFE BEGINS

JESUS, TRIBULATION AND TABERNACLES

The Feast of Tabernacles, the Birthday of Christ, the Water Libation Ceremony, and Judgment Day—what do these have in common? This seemingly diverse set of events is deeply interconnected through the biblical festival known as the Feast of Sukkot, the last of the seven annual feast days on God's calendar. In this article, we will explore the profound prophetic and spiritual significance of the Feast of Tabernacles and how it ties into the broader story of redemption, the birth of Christ, and the ultimate destiny of humanity.

The Feast of Tabernacles: A Brief Overview

The Feast of Tabernacles, also called Sukkot, is the seventh and final feast described in Leviticus 23. It is celebrated on the 15th day of the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar and lasts for eight days. It is a time of great joy and thanksgiving, commemorating both the harvest and God's provision for Israel during their 40 years in the wilderness. Sukkot is a unique festival that includes rituals involving temporary shelters (sukkot) and a water libation ceremony, with layers of symbolism that point toward both Israel's past and future.

Not Just a "Jewish" Feast

A common misconception is that these feast days are solely for the Jewish people. However, as Leviticus 23:2 states, "These are the feasts of the Lord," not merely the feasts of Israel. They belong to God and serve as divine appointments for His people, including early Christians who continued to observe these feasts until they were gradually replaced by Romanized customs.

The early Christians, including Gentiles, understood these feast days as part of God's redemptive timeline. For them, celebrating Sukkot wasn't just about remembering Israel's history, but also about looking forward to the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan in the Messiah, Yeshua (Jesus). This is why, even today, many Christians around the world observe Sukkot as a rehearsal for the coming Kingdom of God.

The Prophetic Significance of Sukkot

Sukkot is rich in prophetic meaning, as it foreshadows key events in both the first and second comings of Christ. The celebration of Sukkot revolves around themes of dwelling, gathering, and joy, all of which are prophetic indicators of God's plan for humanity.

1. The Birth of Christ

One of the most surprising connections to Sukkot is the likely timing of the birth of Christ. While December 25th has traditionally been celebrated as Jesus' birthday, this date has roots in pagan festivals. Many biblical scholars, when looking at the clues in Scripture and Jewish customs,

conclude that Jesus was actually born during Sukkot. The Gospel of John hints at this connection when it says, "The Word became flesh and *dwelt* among us" (John 1:14). The word "dwelt" is derived from the Greek word for "tabernacled," pointing to Jesus' birth as a fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles, where God literally "tabernacled" among humanity.

2. The Water Libation Ceremony



One of the most joyous parts of the Feast of Tabernacles in ancient times was the water libation ceremony. Each morning, priests would draw water from the Pool of Siloam and pour it out on the altar in the Temple while prayers for rain and blessings were offered. The Talmud remarks that "one who has never witnessed the rejoicing at the place of the water drawing has never seen true joy in his life."

The water ceremony symbolized God's provision of physical rain and pointed to the ultimate spiritual outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

In the New Testament, during Sukkot, Jesus stood in the Temple on the last day of the feast and declared, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water'" (John 7:37-38). Jesus used this moment to reveal Himself as the source of living water, the ultimate fulfillment of what the water libation ceremony represented—God's Spirit being poured out on all who believe in Him.

3. Judgment Day and the Eighth Great Day

While Sukkot is celebrated for seven days, there is an additional day known as Shemini Atzeret, or "the Eighth Great Day." This extra day is symbolic of eternity, pointing beyond the millennial reign of Christ to the new heaven and new earth that God will establish after the final judgment.

The eighth day also alludes to a future time of ultimate renewal, the completion of God's redemptive plan. The prophetic timeline outlined by the feast days points to a millennial Sabbath rest, during which Christ will reign for 1,000 years. After this, the final judgment (also known as Judgment Day) will take place, and those who belong to Christ will enter into eternal life. This parallels the symbolism of the eighth day, which is separate and distinct from the first seven days of Sukkot, indicating a new beginning and the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan.

The Feast of Tabernacles and the Gathering of Nations

One of the most striking elements of Sukkot is its universal focus. In biblical times, 70 bulls were sacrificed during the festival, representing the 70 nations of the world. This foreshadowed the gathering of all nations to worship the one true God in His Kingdom. Zechariah 14:16 prophesies that in the future, all nations will come to Jerusalem annually to celebrate Sukkot, marking it as a time of global unity under God's reign.

This connects to the marriage supper of the Lamb in the Book of Revelation, where believers from every tribe, tongue, and nation will be gathered to celebrate the final redemption in Christ. Sukkot, therefore, serves as a rehearsal for this end-time gathering, when God's people will dwell with Him forever in perfect harmony.

Sukkot as a Rehearsal for Eternity

The Feast of Tabernacles is far more than an ancient Jewish festival—it is a divine appointment that points to the culmination of God’s redemptive plan for humanity. Through Sukkot, we see the birth of Christ, the promise of the Holy Spirit, and the ultimate destiny of mankind to dwell with God in the new creation. It is a time to celebrate God’s provision and to look forward to the day when He will gather all nations to Himself. In the end, Sukkot offers a profound prophetic picture of the coming Kingdom, where every tear will be wiped away, and God will dwell among His people forever.

The connection between the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) and the profound symbolism within Christianity is rich with meaning. As believers in Christ, there are deep prophetic connections to this feast, pointing to our role as the temporary dwelling places of God and our identity as His tabernacles. This article explores these connections, drawing insights from both the Old and New Testaments to help illuminate the significance of this ancient festival for Christians today.

We Are God's Temporary Dwelling Place

The concept of a tent or tabernacle is central to Sukkot, symbolizing a temporary dwelling. This theme parallels the spiritual truth that we, as believers in Christ, are temporary vessels or homes for God’s presence. In the book of Acts, chapter 2, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples as tongues of fire, reminiscent of the pillar of fire over the Holy of



Holies in the Tabernacle of Moses. This moment marked the transition of God’s dwelling place from a physical temple to the hearts of His people, just as His presence once resided in the Garden of Eden.

The tabernacle in Moses' time was the dwelling place of God, but now, through Christ, we are His living tabernacles. We carry His presence within us, and just as Yeshua (Jesus) covers and protects us, He is also our spiritual tabernacle, shielding us in a world filled with chaos.

The Feast of Tabernacles and the Water Libation Ceremony

A significant and often overlooked element of Sukkot is the ancient **water libation ceremony**. This tradition was a profound celebration in Jewish culture, marked by immense joy and significance. The Talmud records that those who witnessed this ceremony had never experienced true joy like it in their lives.

Every morning during Sukkot, water would be drawn from the **Pool of Siloam**—the same pool where Jesus healed the blind man. This pool was a place of ritual cleansing, where worshippers would immerse themselves, become ritually pure, and ascend to the Temple Mount in new white garments. This imagery of cleansing and renewal parallels the spiritual transformation that Christ brings into the lives of believers. In the same way, the Pool of Siloam represents Christ, who purifies us before we come into the presence of God.

The water libation ritual involved pouring water and wine down the altar, with channels leading the liquids to the base of the altar, where they mixed. This is profoundly symbolic of the **blood and water** that flowed from Jesus' side when He was pierced on the cross (John 19:33-34). The mixing of blood and water represents both Christ's sacrificial death and the cleansing power of His Word—emphasizing that salvation requires both the blood and the living water, as symbolized in Christ's death.

Levitical Cleansing of the Leper: A Foreshadowing of the Cross

The cleansing ritual for a leper in Leviticus 14 holds remarkable prophetic connections to the crucifixion of Jesus. The priest was instructed to take two clean birds, cedarwood, scarlet, and hyssop—elements that would later be associated with Christ's sacrifice. One bird would be killed over running water, and the other bird, after being dipped in the blood, would be set free in the open field. This imagery reflects the death and resurrection of Christ—the pure bird (Christ) is killed, and the living bird (us) is set free, cleansed by His sacrifice.

Yeshua's Proclamation During Sukkot

In **John 7:37-38**, Yeshua made a powerful declaration during the last great day of the Feast of Tabernacles: "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." This statement was made in the context of the water libation ceremony and points to the deeper spiritual meaning of Sukkot. Yeshua was declaring Himself as the true source of living water, offering eternal life and spiritual renewal to all who believe in Him.

The Light of the World: The Temple Candelabra

During Sukkot, a massive candelabra was erected in the Temple courtyard, its light illuminating the surrounding area for miles. This light represented God's presence and His future promise to bring light to the entire world. The wicks of this candelabra were made from the old high priestly garments, symbolizing that God's light would reach the four corners of the earth.

In **John 19:23**, as Yeshua hung on the cross, the soldiers divided His garments into four parts. This action is deeply symbolic, as it mirrors the high priestly garments torn for the wicks of the candelabra, signifying that Yeshua is the **Light of the World**, whose sacrificial death illuminates the path to salvation for all humanity.

The Transfiguration and Sukkot

When Yeshua was transfigured before Peter, James, and John in **Matthew 17**, Peter suggested building tabernacles (sukkahs) for Yeshua, Moses, and Elijah. This request highlights the connection to the Feast of Tabernacles and the belief that Yeshua's glorified presence during the transfiguration was a foretaste of the coming Kingdom. The temporary sukkah was a reminder that our current dwelling is not our permanent home; we are looking forward to the eternal kingdom where we will dwell with God forever.

Sukkot and Revelation: A Glimpse of the Future

The prophetic significance of Sukkot extends into the book of Revelation. In **Revelation 22:14-17**, we are given a glimpse of the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan: the marriage supper of the Lamb, where all who thirst can freely drink from the water of life. This is a direct connection to the water libation ceremony, symbolizing the eternal satisfaction and life that comes from Christ.

In the millennial reign, Sukkot will continue to be celebrated, as prophesied in **Zechariah 14**, where nations will be required to observe the feast, or face consequences like drought.

Conclusion: A Call to Rediscover the Feasts

The Feast of Tabernacles is not merely an ancient Jewish tradition but carries profound meaning for Christians today. It points to the past, where God dwelt among His people in the tabernacle, the present reality of Christ dwelling within us, and the future hope of His eternal Kingdom. Through the lens of Sukkot, we see that Yeshua is our tabernacle, our living water, and the light of the world. By understanding and observing these feasts, we can deepen our appreciation of God's redemptive plan and strengthen our faith. As believers, we are called to remember not just by reflecting, but by actively participating in these prophetic celebrations, looking forward to the day when we will dwell with God forever.



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