



I've been on a new kick lately... it's simple really, but it's also quite profound. It's about enjoying the journey... enjoying the transition. God wants us to even celebrate transition! Many times we think God is frustrated with our progress... but this is only true if we remain on a the top of the mountain when he has called us up to another peak. God has a high tolerance for the valley...He even calls us to celebrate that transition! He's more than tolerant of transition...He's celebratory!!

I. THE SEASON OF OUR REJOICING

- A. Five days after the Day of Atonement comes Sukkot-the Feast of Ingathering or the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:33-43). "Tabernacles" refers to the temporary dwellings that the Jewish people were commanded to inhabit during this holiday. Sukkot is also called the "Season of our Rejoicing" - and for good reason!
- B. Sukkot, like many Jewish feasts, has different levels of meaning. The first is agricultural, as the tabernacles remind us of how the farm laborers in ancient days lived as they worked to bring in the harvest. The second level of meaning is historical, as the holiday commemorates the forty-year period during which the children of Israel were wandering in the desert, living in temporary shelters.
- C. Yet another meaning, however, is fulfilled in Messiah, for there is a wonderful connection between Jesus the Messiah and the Feast of Tabernacles. It is the Kingdom promise associated with Sukkot.

Zechariah 14:16

And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

- D. Understanding the Messianic connection of Jesus to the Feast of Tabernacles even helps us grasp something of the mystery of His Incarnation:

John 1:14

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"

- E. The word "dwelt" here in the Greek means "tabernacle." When He became flesh, Jesus inhabited the temporary shelter of an earthly body, knowing He soon would be required to leave it. Why did He do it? So that we might find a home in Him - not a temporary shelter in the wilderness, but an eternal home in a Kingdom that abides forever.

Jewish Observances:

Families live in booths - temporary shelters constructed of boughs and leafy branches - to remind us of God's protection during the wilderness wandering after the Exodus.

Ushpizin (Aramaic for "guests") - Hospitality is a Sukkot tradition, with people visiting each other in the *sukkah* and eating together.

II. JESUS AND SUKKOT



- A. In Luke 2 Jesus was born on the first day of Sukkot in a sukkah where animals of an Inn keeper gathered and was circumcised the last day of Sukkot at the Temple.
- B. In Matthew 17 Jesus takes Peter, James and John up on a mountain and is transfigured before them as Moses and Elijah show up. Peter remarks that he wants to build booths for them.

Matthew 17

[1] And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. [2] And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. [3] And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. [4] And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." [5] He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." [6] When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. [7] But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear." [8] And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

- C. In John 7 Jesus celebrates Sukkot despite the risk to his own life! Also during this time He proclaims Himself as the Living Water during the annual water pouring ceremony on the Altar by the Priests at the Temple.

John 7

[37] On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. [38] Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'"

- D. At Sukkot you stand in the middle between the end of one chapter and the beginning of another; the end of harvest and the entry into the Promised Land. We recall our past wilderness wanderings and our new home and dwellings. We stand between death and rebirth such a wonderful mystical time of the year. Sukkot is pregnant with meaning past, present and future with prophetic significance that run the gamut of linear and eternal time.

III. THERE IS MORE THAN FREEDOM

Leviticus 23

[33] And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, [34] "Speak to the people of Israel, saying, On the fifteenth day of this seventh month and for seven days is the Feast of Booths to the LORD. [35] On the first day shall be a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work. [36] For seven days you shall present food offerings to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall hold a holy convocation and present a food offering to the LORD. It is a solemn assembly; you shall not do any ordinary work.

[37] "These are the appointed feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim as times of holy convocation, for presenting to the LORD food offerings, burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each on its proper day, [38] besides the LORD's Sabbaths and besides your gifts and besides all your vow offerings and besides all your freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD.



[39] “On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the produce of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD seven days. On the first day shall be a solemn rest, and on the eighth day shall be a solemn rest. [40] And you shall take on the first day the fruit of splendid trees, branches of palm trees and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days. [41] You shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It is a statute forever throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. [42] You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All native Israelites shall dwell in booths, [43] that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.”

[44] Thus Moses declared to the people of Israel the appointed feasts of the LORD.

- A. Consider this 40 year transition! Remember what it was to walk in between slavery and victory. There is a place of freedom I think, where we still have not learned to overcome. And this is the place of transition. It is remembering the time when Israel was brought out of Egypt.
- B. It’s an entire week feast considering transition... As a people we are encouraged to live in booths! Three sides of the booth have branches over the top that allows you to see the stars above at night.
- C. There is more for us! And remembering our roots in the faith is part of it. There is something more than being grateful that God has led us out of slavery. There is more than freedom and wandering. There is PROMISE. But we have to grow up into it. Remembering that our shoes didn’t wear out and coming into what God has for us are two distinct seasons. And this celebration we are in, this feast, exactly corresponds to the word of transition that I released to you last week. Whether we are aware of it, whether we are consciously mindful of the Jewish calendar, we are in the timeline and cycle of God. He is causing us to remember our own transition with Him. He is causing us to stand in the tension—out of slavery but not quite into possession of the promise. He is speaking to His church. He is speaking to us.

IV. THE TABERNACLE OF GOD IS WITH MAN

Zechariah 14

[16] Then everyone who survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths. [17] And if any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. [18] And if the family of Egypt does not go up and present themselves, then on them there shall be no rain; there shall be the plague with which the LORD afflicts the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths. [19] This shall be the punishment to Egypt and the punishment to all the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths.

- A. This is yet to come. We will be part of this. Whole nations will be part of this! Moreover, the theme of God's sheltering tabernacle is most fully expressed in Revelation 21.

Revelation 21



[1] Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. [2] And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. [3] And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. [4] He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

- B. The whole story of God and man is wrapped up, interwoven with this word tabernacle. It's about the dwelling of God with man. It's all about restored fellowship. Renewed wholeness. All of your heart bound to all of His heart. The whole mystery of Jesus is in this proclamation. This is why He was sent. It's more than to die for your sins... It's to restore fellowship with the One who loves your soul... the One who breathed and willed you into existence. It's to once and for all bring together all that was alienated and all that was lost.
- C. When I read this verse in Revelation, all I can see is the utter vulnerability of God. The whole plan is us! To really consider the impact we must have on His heart. I don't think we give this much thought. But meditating on this will change you completely. You impact the heart of God. Think about this. You.
- D. What you think about God can't diminish God and can't add to Him. But what you think about God determines everything about you. And to consider that He has given His heart to you in such a significant way that the extremity of the cross and the mystery of the ages is summed up in restored fellowship with man, restored fellowship with you... it too high and too lofty for me.

Colossians 1

[15] He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. [16] For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. [17] And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. [18] And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. [19] For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, [20] and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

- E. I implore you to consider this costly reconciliation. I implore you to enter into the Tabernacle Feast in all of it's Messianic meaning. Tabernacle with God! May this literally be the "Season of Our Rejoicing."
- F. Make it your highest aim to enjoy fellowship with God every moment of every day. This is the point of it all!