

# TABERNACLES

A Guide for Christian Understanding and Celebration

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590 Forest Lawn Drive  
Marion, OH 43302

Special  
Planning  
Guide  
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"Behold, the Tabernacle of God is among His people, and He will dwell among them."

REVELATION 21:3

YOU SHALL REJOICE BEFORE  
THE LORD YOUR GOD...

## THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES BEFORE CHRIST - RECALLING LIFE BEFORE A HOMELAND

The Feast of Tabernacles is the pinnacle of appointed times. It is to the other festivals what the Sabbath is to the other six days of the week, and is a picture of the coming kingdom, when the entire world will live in peace and brotherhood under the rule of the righteous Messiah King.

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## CHRIST IN THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES - GOD COMES TO EARTH, ONLY TO BE REJECTED

Tabernacles is simply the most joyful and festive of the Lord's feasts. It is also the most prominent, being mentioned more often than any other. It also serves as an excellent backdrop to the teachings we find about Messiah in John, chapters 7-9.

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## THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES IN THE FUTURE - GOD COMES TO EARTH, ONLY TO BE ACCEPTED

Two things are true of our God: he rarely works the way we think he will, and just when you think he's defeated, he wins. It was the same with Jesus!



The primary activities of the Feast of Tabernacles are building and living in a tent ("tabernacle", "sukkah"), celebrating by waving the "lulav" (branches) at a worship gathering, and a sabbath day of rest.

*Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'"*

JOHN 7:37-38



## FEAST OF TABERNACLES BEFORE CHRIST - LIFE BEFORE A HOMETOWN (from pg. 1)

Five days after the Day of Atonement, on the 14th day of the Hebrew month of Tishri, the Feast of Tabernacles begins. It is seven days long. The first day is a special sabbath and the eighth day is another sabbath. This is the seventh festival on the seventh month and is seven days long. In the Bible, seven is the number indicating "completion", thus the timing of this final celebration of the Lord.

The Hebrew name of the festival is *Sukkot* (סוכות, pronounced "sue coat"), a word that means "shelters, stables or huts." The same word is often translated into English as "tabernacles" or, less correctly, "booths." The name is based on the commandment for God's people to dwell in temporary shelters for the seven days as a reminder of the post-exodus years when Israel lived in desert huts, following God in the wilderness. The temporary shelter is referred to as a *sukkah* (סוכה), which is the singular form of the plural word *sukkot*, the name of the holiday.

Sukkot is a time of joy and celebration, a time to celebrate the harvest and revel in God's goodness. Being associated with the harvest, the holiday is also termed the "Feast of Ingathering". The joyous mood of *sukkot* is a huge shift from the serious and sad tone of Yom Kippur, during which sins are confessed before the Lord. Sukkot is so joyous, comparatively, that Jewish liturgy often refers to it as "the season of our rejoicing." In fact, the rabbis used to say that a person who had not been to Jerusalem during Sukkot did not know what rejoicing really meant. The commandment to live in a tabernacle (*sukkah*) is meant to remind us

that God is our provider, sustainer and protector. Sukkot is an annual opportunity to revel in God's goodness and take delight in our redemption.

Sukkot before the time of Messiah was celebrated to remind God's people of the fact that He is the provider of their prosperity. As they were about to come into the promised land, they needed a way to recall their humble beginnings and that

God is the reason they were able to inherit the promised land. In times of prosperity, it would be easy to forget God. Sukkot would limit that possibility with a yearly reminder of this. With it falling at the time of the harvest, the festival was aptly placed at a time when the nation might take credit for the harvest themselves instead of crediting God for the provision of bountiful food.

In addition to the huts they were to construct and live in for the week, the people of God were also to bring before the Lord in the Temple, a small collection of harvest items, waving them and thus crediting Him with providing a good harvest for the year. This handful of items consisted of a citrus fruit called an "etrog", which is citrus, willow and myrtle branches and a lulav (palm frond). A celebration called the Hosianah-Rabbah included the presentation of these four species of plants, the singing of psalms, especially Psalm 118, and joyful dancing. This



ceremony much resembled what we as western Christians would envision happening during our Lord's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem on "Palm Sunday".

There were two other aspects to the Temple service that relate to the Lord's eventual fulfillment of Sukkot in Messiah's coming. The first is a tradition of a Water-Libation Ceremony and the second is the Temple-Lighting Ceremony. The water libation ceremony was based in Scripture of Isaiah 12:3 "Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation". The ceremony was meant to be a plea for rain in the coming months as well as to look forward to the time of Messiah and the salvation He would bring. Water from a flowing stream ("mayim-chayim" or "living water") would be brought during the seven day holiday to the temple altar and poured out as a sacrifice.

The second Temple tradition that would take place is that of the Temple-Lighting ceremony. Four massive menorahs would be placed on the Temple grounds and lit. There light was so great as to light most of Jerusalem and the surrounding countryside. Ladders were used to light the oil lamps and the wicks were made of older priestly garments. The light given by these menorahs were meant to be a reminder of the Shekinah light that was present as God dwelt in the Tabernacle as the Israelites traveled in the desert and how the light of God descended upon Solomon's Temple when it was finished.

We will continue to discuss in the next section how Jesus used these ceremonies and the Feast of Tabernacles itself to show proof of His identity as the One sent by God to save mankind.



"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

*John 8:12*

**CHRIST IN THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES -  
GOD COMES TO EARTH, ONLY TO BE REJECTED (from page 1)**

To God dwelling amongst his people certainly brings joy to a celebration. As Christians, we know that God came to dwell with us in human form through Messiah Jesus. As we are also likely aware, not all Jews believed in Jesus at His first coming. Our Lord did, however, used the Feast of Tabernacles as an opportunity to witness his Messiahship to his people.

His very presence was witness to the fact that God came to live amongst his people. His body was a tabernacle of God while he was with us. Later, after he returned to heaven, he sent the Holy Spirit to dwell within believers, making them a tabernacle of God on earth. Both the example of our Lord coming to earth and leaving his Holy Spirit to dwell in those who believe in him, are further fulfillments of the feast of Tabernacles.

The most obvious areas of Scripture that explain how our Lord is seen in the feast of Tabernacles are those of John chapter 7 through chapter 9. In these chapters, Jesus is attending the feast of Tabernacles. As mentioned in the previous section, there are three traditions that took place at the Temple that he used to point those present to him as their Messiah. First, he had previously been welcomed into Jerusalem by a crowd shouting a portion of Psalm 118: "Hosanna in the highest, blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord." This was a premature, but obvious, reference of their belief in Jesus as the anointed One (messiah) from God who was to dwell with and save Israel. Recall that palm fronds and the other species of plants were waived as Jesus entered Jerusalem. This was none other than the same

ceremony that takes place in the Temple during the feast of Tabernacles. The same imagery was appointed to Jesus in Revelation 7:9-10.

The second way that Jesus pointed his people towards the fact that he was their Messiah was by speaking in relation to the water-libation ceremony. Isaiah in chapter 12:3 had previously stated "therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation." Recall that during this water ceremony, the priest would travel down to the nearby pool of Siloam and draw a sample of "living water" where people were gathered because of the belief they could be healed by God at that particular pool. As the water was brought up by the priests, and the people waited for the water to be poured at the base of the altar, Jesus interrupted the ceremony in John 7:37-39, thus directing them to him as the true source of their salvation.

*"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. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."*

The third way Jesus pointed his people towards himself was through the temple lighting ceremony. In John 8:12 he takes an opportunity to claim that the true light that has come to dwell among men is that of himself. In addition to this, we can recall how at his transfiguration he was seen in the bright light of glory that was copied by the menorahs on the temple grounds during the feast of Tabernacles.

*"Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"*

*And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.*

ZECHARIAH 12:9-10

## **THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES IN THE FUTURE - GOD COMES TO EARTH, ONLY TO BE ACCEPTED (from page 1)**

If you have ever received a strange look when you tell someone that the Lord is coming back soon, realize that there will be a day where everyone will agree that He is here and His name is Jesus (Hebrew: Yeshua).

Up until this point, the feasts have helped us to realize God's plan for us and for all who will put their faith in him. We began with Passover, the representation of God saving his people both physically and spiritually from slavery. We then preceded to unleavened bread, an example of how we are to walk pure lives following our belief in God our Savior. Following our death to self, we arise to new life at the third feast, firstfruits. We find that we are the first fruits in God's plan of redemption through Jesus Christ. In being part of that plan, he then gives us strength to endure through a long waiting period until he comes again by granting us his Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Then comes the long summer of witnessing to others about this available salvation in Jesus name until we reach the fall feasts. The feast of trumpets comes suddenly at a time that is difficult to pin down exactly. This feast is a representation of the trumpet that will suddenly call believers up to the Lord before a very difficult time for the rest of the earth. This is called "the rapture", or snatching away of believers from the earth. Following this rapture and a degree of difficulty, the Lord will send the Angels to once again blow the trumpet. This will be a time where his people, Israel, are in their greatest hour of need. Without his help, they would be destroyed. With His return, He will bring those who have been raptured and others still on the earth with him to the great battle of Armageddon. This battle will take place in Israel and the battle will be won by the Lord's armies. Because Israel is saved through Messiah Jesus, they will recognize him

as their Messiah and feel remorse over their initial rejection of him at his first coming. All will be well as he takes his rightful place in the temple as Lord and King and rules the world from there. Several scriptures help us see this final age of God "Tabernacling", or dwelling, with his people (see Zechariah 12:9-10, above).

In addition to Jesus and Israel being present near the temple, all the inhabitants of the year will make pilgrimage to Jerusalem during those times mentioned in the Bible. Just as we add Marion Bible Fellowship celebrate yearly, a similar form of worship will be practiced in the thousand year reign of Jesus after his return. Therefore, you will be quite familiar with what is to happen as God sets up his kingdom on earth and rules from the Temple in Jerusalem. Consider the following Scripture:

*"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. 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." (Zechariah 14:16-17)*

Additional to this, God's perfect glory, called the "Shekinah Glory", will return to the Temple as the following Scriptures indicate:

*"My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore." (Ezekiel 37:27-28)*

*"And I will be to Jerusalem a wall of fire all around, declares the LORD, and I will be the glory in her midst." (Zechariah 2:5)*

Our Lord's glory is something to look forward to and something to continue to celebrate and anticipate each and every year. Enjoy your feast of Tabernacles! Shalom.

## The Scriptural Basis for Tabernacles / Sukkot

### Living in huts and rejoicing before the Lord:

“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “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. On the first day shall be a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work. 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. 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, 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.

“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. 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. 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. You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All native Israelites shall dwell in booths, 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.” (Leviticus 23:33-43)

The Reading of the Law Required every 7th year:

“And Moses commanded them, “At the end of every seven years, at the set time in the year of release, at the Feast of Booths, when all Israel comes

to appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Assemble the people, men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, and be careful to do all the words of this law, and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as you live in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.”

Deuteronomy

31:10-13

### Jesus and the healing of the blind man during the Feast of Tabernacles:

John Chapter 7, 8 and 9

Compare: Isaiah 32:15; 44:3; 59:21, Ezekiel 11:19; 36:27; 39:29, Joel 2:28-29. (Holy Spirit and water in salvation)

(References to the Water Ceremony and how it points to Him and the Temple Lighting Ceremony and how it points to Him - healing the blind man using the living water of Siloam’s pool uses both water and gives the man “light”)

### Future Fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles:

God dwelling in the Temple once again and all people coming to celebrate at the Temple.

Isaiah 4:5-6

Isaiah 27:12-13

Ezekiel 37:27-28

Zechariah 12:10

### What to do during Tabernacles:

- ◆ Read the associated Scriptures
- ◆ Attend two services
- ◆ Wave a palm frond in thankfulness to the Lord
- ◆ Witness to others because of His soon return (YOU are the light of the world - Matthew 5: 14-16)
- ◆ Build a sukkah (hut) and spend time in it!

## For the Holiday - Psalm 118

His Steadfast Love Endures Forever

1 Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!<sup>2</sup> Let Israel say, "His steadfast love endures forever."

3 Let the house of Aaron say, "His steadfast love endures forever."

4 Let those who fear the LORD say, "His steadfast love endures forever."

5 Out of my distress I called on the LORD; the LORD answered me and set me free.

6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?

7 The LORD is on my side as my helper; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me.

8 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man.

9 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

10 All nations surrounded me; in the name of the LORD I cut them off!

11 They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side; in the name of the LORD I cut them off!

12 They surrounded me like bees; they went out like a fire among thorns; in the name of the LORD I cut them off!

13 I was pushed hard, so that I was falling, but the LORD helped me.

14 The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation.

15 Glad songs of salvation are in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the LORD does valiantly,

16 the right hand of the LORD exalts, the right hand of the LORD does valiantly!"

17 I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the LORD.

18 The LORD has disciplined me severely, but he has not given me over to death.

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.

20 This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it.

21 I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

22 The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

23 This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

24 This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Save us, we pray, O LORD!

O LORD, we pray, give us success!

26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD.

27 The LORD is God, and he has made his light to shine upon us. Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar!

28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God; I will extol you.

29 Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!

# PLANNING GUIDE FOR THE TABERNACLES (SUKKOT)

## Sukkot/Feast of Tabernacles Opening Celebration

- Dinner at 6pm
- Celebration with Lulavs (palm branches) at 7pm
- Camp Sukkah - Join us for a full night of "tabernacling" (camping) on the lawn of the church after the service.

**The Following Day is a Sabbath**, so join us for a formal liturgical prayer service, study the Scriptures, take personal time to rest and visit with friends and family.

- Join us at member homes for a **Progressive Dinner** from 6pm - 9pm. Some members have constructed Sukkot, so come eat and enjoy their efforts.

## Great Deliverance Evening Service

One week after Tabernacles ones, we celebrate the great deliverance and look forward to Messiah's return in a special way at this evening celebration.

**The Following Day is a Sabbath**, so join us for historical readings that bring back the days of the early believers and look forward to the Kingship of Messiah.

**Join the Tabernacles Celebration!**

**Marion Bible Fellowship  
590 Forest Lawn Drive  
Marion, OH 43302**



# Marion Bible Fellowship



*“Proclaiming Jesus as Savior, Messiah and Lord  
and the Bible as the Rule for Life.”*

***The Fall Feasts  
Educational Issue***

## TABERNACLES/ SUKKOT

The Seventh Feast  
of the Lord

FROM:

MARION BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

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Marion, OH 43302