

“The Feast of Tabernacles”
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Note: Unless otherwise indicated, all Scriptures are from the NIV Bible.

APPOINTED FEASTS AND GOD’S LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Leviticus 23:4 "These are the LORD's appointed feasts, the sacred assemblies you are to proclaim at their appointed times..."

“And God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years...’” Genesis 1:14 (NKJV).

“God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day” Genesis 1:5 (NKJV).

- New Month begins New Moon
- Exodus 12:2 “This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year...”
Spring begins the new year.

God’s redemptive plan is illustrated in various feasts God ordained. These feasts are called *moedim* in Hebrew, meaning “appointments.”

The seven annual appointed times found in Leviticus 23 begin to unfold in springtime.

Feasts 1 – 3: Passover, Unleavened Bread, and First fruits - They illustrate the redemption accomplished in Jesus’ first coming.

Feast 4: Pentecost speaks of “the Body of Christ being established in the earth.”

Feasts 5 – 7: In the fall, at the seventh month of the biblical year, we observe Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and The Feast of Tabernacles, also known as Feast of Booths. These focus our attention on the period of time yet to come, the consummation of God’s redemptive program.

The Feast of Tabernacles

Leviticus 23:39-43 "So beginning with the fifteenth day of the seventh month, after you have gathered the crops of the land, celebrate the festival to the LORD for seven days; the first day is a day of rest, and the eighth day also is a day of rest. On the first day you are to take choice fruit from the trees, and palm fronds, leafy branches and poplars, and rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. Celebrate this as a festival to the LORD for seven days each year. This is to

be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come; celebrate it in the seventh month. Live in booths for seven days: All native-born Israelites are to live in booths so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.' So Moses announced to the Israelites the appointed feasts of the LORD.”

The Feast of Tabernacles or Booths

The Hebrew word “Tabernacle” as used here is “Sook-Kaw,” and means “a hut of entwined boughs.”

The Feast of Tabernacles was the most joyous season of the year.

Deuteronomy 16:13-17 “Celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles for seven days after you have gathered the produce of your threshing floor and your winepress. Be joyful at your festival--you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levites, the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns. For seven days celebrate the festival to the LORD your God at the place the LORD will choose. For the LORD your God will bless you in all your harvest and in all the work of your hands, and your joy will be complete.

Three times a year all your men must appear before the LORD your God at the place he will choose: at the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Weeks and the Festival of Tabernacles. No one should appear before the LORD empty-handed: Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you.”

As Recorded in Nehemiah

Nehemiah 8:14-18 “They found written in the Law, which the LORD had commanded through Moses, that the Israelites were to live in temporary shelters during the festival of the seventh month and that they should proclaim this word and spread it throughout their towns and in Jerusalem: "Go out into the hill country and bring back branches from olive and wild olive trees, and from myrtles, palms and shade trees, to make temporary shelters"--as it is written.

So the people went out and brought back branches and built themselves temporary shelters on their own roofs, in their courtyards, in the courts of the house of God and in the square by the Water Gate and the one by the Gate of Ephraim. The whole company that had returned from exile built temporary shelters and lived in them. From the days of Joshua son of Nun until that day, the Israelites had not celebrated it like this. And their joy was very great. Day after day, from the first day to the last, Ezra read from the Book of the Law of God. They celebrated the festival for seven days, and on the eighth day, in accordance with the regulation, there was an assembly.”

The Feast of the seventh month reminded them of the first month; the end reminded them of their beginning. Tabernacles reminded them of Passover.

The Greek word for Tabernacle is “Skene” and means “a tent or cloth hut,” and it is translated “habitation, tabernacle.”

1. It is used of the body of Christ in His incarnation when “the Word was made flesh and dwelt (tabernacle) among us.”

“And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us. And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of *the* Father, full of grace and of truth” John 1:14 (MKJV).

2. Peter used it of his own physical body when he was about to die and spoke of it as the putting off of his tabernacle.

“But I think *it* right, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by a reminder, knowing that the putting off of my tabernacle is soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me”

2 Peter 1:13-14 (MKJV).

3. The Apostle Paul also spoke of our physical body as being an earthly house, a tabernacle in which we groan, waiting for our house from heaven.

“For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our dwelling-place out of Heaven... He who has worked in us for this same thing *is* God, who also *is* giving to us the earnest of the Spirit”

2 Corinthians 5:1-2, 5 (MKJV).

So the believer is but a pilgrim and stranger in this world, looking for a city whose builder and maker is God, even as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob looked for it.

“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out into a place which he was afterward going to receive for an inheritance. And *he* went out, not knowing where he went.

By faith he lived in the land of promise as a stranger, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs of the same promise with him. For he looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God” Hebrews 11:8-10 (MKJV).

The Rain and the Harvest Time

There were two great seasonal rains, so there were two great harvest seasons. Rains and Harvests were really inseparable. No rain, no harvest.

- The rains were always the seal of the Covenant, the token of God’s blessing.
- No rain was judgment and the curse of God on the land as well as on the people.

Deuteronomy 11:13-17 “So if you faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today--to love the LORD your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul-- then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and olive oil. I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied. Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them. Then the LORD's anger will burn against you, and he will shut up the heavens so

that it will not rain and the ground will yield no produce, and you will soon perish from the good land the LORD is giving you.”

The Word of God is like rain.

"For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it." Isaiah 55:10-11 (NKJV).

- Symbolic of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the revelation of the Word of God.
- Rain speaks of revival refreshing and restoration.

Former and the Later Rain

“Be glad then, you children of Zion, And rejoice in the LORD your God; For He has given you the former rain faithfully, And He will cause the rain to come down for you— The former rain, And the latter rain in the first *month*” Joel 2:23 (NKJV).

“Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter *and* former rain to the earth” Hosea 6:3 (NKJV).

The Great Harvest

Jesus is concerned about the bringing in of the final harvest by the church before He returns the second time.

Luke 10:2 “He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.””

The Husbandman Waits

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh” James 5:7-8 (KJV).

“But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn” Matthew 13:29-30 (KJV).

“Tabernacles with its trumpets, Day of Atonement and Ingathering sets forth the final operations of the Lord God in the earth prior to and at the second coming of Christ. It sets forth the gathering of the saints unto the Lord, the perfection of the church by the power of blood

atonement and the final harvest of souls before Christ comes. The fullness of the feast of the seventh month overflows into the seventh Day of the Lord, the Kingdom age, and will be enjoyed for all eternity.” The Feasts of Israel, by Kevin J. Conner, p. 72.

Matthew 28:18-20 “Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."