

# GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide  
SB 10.04.2020

## FEAST OF TABERNACLES – LEV. 23:41-43

### Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

Sukkot or Tabernacles was the 7th Feast of the Lord. The Word "Feast" Means A Divine Appointment, or An Appointed Time. The "ot" on the end of the word "Sukkot" makes it plural. If it is singular it is Sukkah. To help understand this, think of it as Tents or temporary dwelling places. It is also known as the Feast Of The Nations, for on Yom Kippur Israel was to make atonement for themselves, and then 5 days later the Priests would also make atonement for the 70 Nations. This is why they slew 70 bulls on Feast Of Tabernacles, one bull for every Nation. Note that in Genesis 10, Noah had 70 grandsons, representing the Nations. So, from the very beginning God wanted to save and redeem the whole world. God's heart and plan from the beginning was to save the nations. He would use the nation Israel to point the way. If the Nations had known, they would not have destroyed the Temple; they would have put armies around it to Protect it! Isn't it just like the devil to get the Nations to destroy the very thing God is using to make Atonement for them! Today we will look at the final Feasts of The Lord and especially Tabernacles. Let's get into our study...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most or spoke to you from Pastor Ray's message this last weekend?
2. What is your favorite holiday and why?
3. Do you have any special occasions you celebrate annually with family, aside from traditional holidays? If so, what is the purpose of those celebrations?

### Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LEVITICUS 23:15-25 (TRANSITION FROM PENTECOST TO THE FALL FEASTS)

The Feast of Weeks or Pentecost is the last Feast of the Spring. As Pastor Ray mentioned the first 4 spring Feasts point to Christ's first coming and the last 3 feasts to His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming. There are NO Feasts during the summer which represents the church age. During the Feast of Weeks, also known as Pentecost, the Jews were supposed to show gratitude for God's provisions by bringing gifts, by setting aside times for worship, and by making provision for the poor. Originally this festival was connected to the wheat harvest; the people were completely dependent on God for a prosperous harvest, and therefore for life itself. Just as bread sustains a person's physical life, a relationship with Jesus Christ gives spiritual life. When we come to saving faith in Jesus, we also receive the Holy Spirit who continues to nourish our souls day after day.

1. What was the purpose of the Feast of Weeks?

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2. What connection do you see between the Feast of Weeks and Jesus? Read John 6:22-35.
3. Why is it also significant that God chose this festival as the time to send His Holy Spirit to indwell His people? How is the Spirit like bread in our lives?

### **HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LEVITICUS 23:23-25 (THE 3 FALL FEASTS)**

1. In Leviticus 23:23-25 we read about the Feast of Trumpets. Read 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Who blows the trumpet in these verses, and what will happen to us when it is blown?

The Feast of Trumpets celebrated the end of the harvest. During the postexilic time, this day became the Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah). The sound of the trumpet reminded the Israelites to assemble in God's presence for spiritual service. Trumpet blasts are important in the end time when events surrounding Christ's second coming will be preceded by angels blowing trumpets announcing His arrival and His final work over sin. We believe that since Jesus literally fulfilled the first four Feasts, He will probably literally fulfill the last three, so it's quite possible that one of these Feast of Trumpets we will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air!

### **HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LEVITICUS 23:26-44.**

1. What was the purpose of the Day of Atonement, and how is it connected to Jesus?

The Day of Atonement was set aside as the only day of the year when the high priest could enter the holy of holies and appear before the Ark of the Covenant. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest offered sacrifices to seek God's forgiveness for the sins of the people. The Day of Atonement served this purpose until the crucifixion of Jesus, at which time animal sacrifices for sins were no longer required thanks to the bodily sacrifice of Jesus Himself.

2. What was the purpose of the Feast of Tabernacles, and what stands out to you about the people's celebration? Read Exodus 40:34-38 for the historical context to the tabernacle.
3. Read John 1:14-18. How does this passage explain the connection between the Feast of Tabernacles and Jesus?

The Feast of Tabernacles was primarily a thanksgiving festival showing gratitude for God's provision (Ex 34:22) and closing out the agricultural year. This feast also emphasized God and man dwelling together, since it pointed back to the time in the wilderness when God dwelt among His people in the tabernacle. Through Jesus, God took up residence among His people, and Jesus sent His Spirit to do the same thing today.

### **Applying God's Word**

**What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.**

**Pastor Ray stated "Did you know that Jesus May Have Actually Been Born In The Feast Of Tabernacles! During that time the Jews would have all been in Tents outside. There would have been thousands of Sukkahs dotting the hillsides all around the village of Bethlehem! Jesus came and "Tabernacled" among us, God Himself in Human flesh. Now everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved**

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**and He will come and Tabernacle inside our bodies and we become the tent! John 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and did tabernacle among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten of a father, full of grace and truth. [Young's Literal Translation – YLT]"**

1. Why is it important for our faith that we see the connections between the Old Testament feasts and celebrations and Jesus?
2. What new truths about God did you learn from Leviticus 23? How can those truths enhance your worship?
3. Know that these Feasts were "divine appointments" how can you apply the truths from the Feasts to our lives today?

**PRAYER** - Close in prayer, thanking God that Jesus was always a part of His plan as the means for our salvation and eternal life.

*"And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. "  
Rev. 21:3*

### **NOTE ON THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES:**

The Feast of Tabernacles takes place on the 15th of the Hebrew month Tishri. This was the seventh month on the Hebrew calendar and usually occurs in late September to mid-October. The feast begins five days after the Day of Atonement and at the time the fall harvest had just been completed. It was a time of joyous celebration as the Israelites celebrated God's continued provision for them in the current harvest and remembered His provision and protection during the 40 years in the wilderness.

As one of the three feasts that all "native born" male Jews were commanded to participate in, the Feast of Tabernacles is mentioned multiple times in Scripture, sometimes called the Feast of the Ingathering, the Feast to the Lord, or the Feast of Booths (Exodus 23:16; Deuteronomy 16:13). As one of the pilgrim feasts (when Jewish males were commanded to go to Jerusalem), it was also the time when they brought their tithes and offerings to the Temple (Deuteronomy 16:16). With the influx of people coming to Jerusalem at that time, we can only imagine what the scene must have been like. Thousands upon thousands of people coming together to remember and celebrate God's deliverance and His provision, all living in temporary shelters or booths as part of the requirements of the feast. During the eight-day period, so many sacrifices were made that it required all twenty-four divisions of priests to be present to assist in the sacrificial duties.

We find God's instructions for celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles in Leviticus 23, given at a point in history right after God had delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt. The feast was to be celebrated each year on "the fifteenth day of this seventh month" and was to run for seven days (Leviticus 23:34). Like all feasts, it begins with a "holy convocation" or Sabbath day when the Israelites were to stop working to set aside the day for worshiping God. On each day of the feast they were to offer an "offering made by fire to the Lord" and then after seven days of feasting, again the eighth day was to be "a holy convocation" when they were to cease from work and offer another sacrifice to God (Leviticus 23). Lasting eight days, the Feast of Tabernacles begins and ends with a Sabbath day of rest. During the eight days of the feast, the Israelites would dwell in booths or tabernacles that were made from the branches of trees (Leviticus 23:40–42).

The Feast of Tabernacles, like all the feasts, was instituted by God as a way of reminding Israelites in every generation of their deliverance by God from Egypt. Of course, the feasts are also significant in that they foreshadow the work and actions of the coming Messiah. Much of Jesus' public ministry took place in conjunction with the Holy Feasts set forth by God.

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The three pilgrim feasts where all Jewish males were commanded to “appear before the Lord in the place he chooses” are each very important in regards to the life of Christ and His work of redemption. We know with certainty that the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are symbolic of Christ’s atoning sacrifice on the cross. Likewise, we know that Pentecost, which marked the beginning of the Feast of Weeks, was the time of Jesus’ bodily ascension. And most scholars would agree that the Feast of Tabernacles is symbolic of Christ’s Second Coming when He will establish His earthly kingdom.

There are also some who believe that it was likely during the Feast of Tabernacles that Jesus was born. While we celebrate Christ’s birth on December 25, most scholars acknowledge that this tradition was begun in the fourth century AD by the Roman Catholic Church and that the exact day of Jesus’ birth is unknown. Some of the evidence that Jesus might have been born earlier in the year during the Feast of the Tabernacles includes the fact that it would be unlikely for shepherds to still be in the field with their sheep in December, which is in the middle of the winter, but it would have been likely they were in the fields tending sheep at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. The strong possibility that Jesus was born at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles is also seen in the words John wrote in 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.” The word John chose to speak of Jesus “dwelling” among us is the word tabernacle, which simply means to “dwell in a tent.”

Some believe it is very likely that John intentionally used this word to associate the first coming of Christ with the Feast of Tabernacles. Christ came in the flesh to dwell among us for a temporary time when He was born in the manger, and He is coming again to dwell among us as Lord of Lords. While it cannot be established with certainty that Jesus was born during the Feast of Tabernacles, some believe there is a strong possibility the Feast of Tabernacles not only looks forward to His second coming but also reflects back on His first coming.