



Feast of Tabernacles



Reading: Nehemiah 8

[Note: For names legend see *References* at the end of this article]

About the Festival

Sukkot (Hebrew: סוכות or סוכות Hebrew pronunciation: [su'kot], *sukkōt*; traditional Ashkenazi spelling: *Sukkos/Succos*), commonly called the **Feast of Tabernacles** or in some translations the **Festival of Shelters**, and known also as the **Feast of Ingathering** (חג האסיף, *Chag HaAsif*), is a biblical holiday celebrated on the 15th day of the seventh month which varies from late September to late October.

During the existence of the Jerusalem Temple, it was one of the Three Pilgrimage Festivals (Hebrew: שלוש רגלים, *shalosh regalim*) on which the Israelites were commanded to perform a pilgrimage to the Temple.

The names used in the Torah are *Chag HaAsif*, translated to "Festival of Ingathering" or "Harvest Festival", and *Chag HaSukkot*, translated to "Festival of Booths". This corresponds to the double significance of Sukkot. The one mentioned in the Book of Exodus is agricultural in nature—"Festival of Ingathering at the year's end [תקופה תקופה]" (**Exodus 34:22**)—and marks the end of the harvest time and thus of the agricultural year in the Land of Israel.

Tquwphah תְּקוּפָה f. (from קוּף i.q. נָקַף No. 3) *circuit*, as of the sun, Psalm 19:7; hence *the course* of time, of season (Gesenius, 1979)

The more elaborate religious significance from the Book of Leviticus is that of commemorating the Exodus and the gathering and dependence of the People of Israel on the will of Elohim (**Leviticus 23:42–43**). (Wikipedia contributors, 2020, June 28)

The Scriptural Festival of Tabernacles

1. INTRODUCTION

We read in **Leviticus 23** that the weekly Sabbath and **all the Feasts** listed in that chapter are called '**the Feasts of יהוה**.'

Lev.23:1 And יהוה spoke unto Moses, saying,

2: Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, **Concerning the feasts of יהוה**, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even **these are my feasts**.

3: Six days shall work be done: **but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of יהוה** in all your dwellings.

4: **These are the feasts of יהוה**, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons...

Towards the end of the chapter we read these words concerning the **Feast of Booths** and the **Last Great Day**:

Lev.23:39: Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto יהוה seven days: on the **first day shall be a sabbath**, and on the

eighth day shall be a sabbath.

40: And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before יהוה your Elohim seven days.

41: And ye shall keep it a feast unto יהוה seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month.

42: Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths:

43: That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am יהוה your Elohim.

44: And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of יהוה.

2. WHAT WAS יהוה 'S REASON?

The Almighty's reason for commanding this extraordinary annual drama concerning '**booths**' is spelled out in:

verse 43: That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am יהוה your Elohim.

WHY, I venture to ask, did the Almighty Elohim want future generations of Israelites to go through this procedure year after year simply to learn that their bygone ancestors dwelt in booths for 40 years? Surely a short study of Exodus would teach them that fact! I'm sure it would. There must be deeper reasons for this command. Let's try to find them. The word '**booth**,' incidentally, is defined in Strong's dictionary as follows:

05521 **cukkah** {sook-kaw'}

AV - tabernacle 12, booth 11, pavilion 5, cottage 1, covert 1, tents 1; 31

1) thicket, covert, booth

1a) thicket

1b) booth (**rude or temporary shelter**)

Sook-kaw: from which comes the feast's Hebrew name '**Sucloth**.'

Just outside this marquee is a '**sook-kaw**' in which you may care to spend a few moments of prayer and meditation. It will give you some idea of what I am talking about. (BDB, 2005)

3. BACKGROUND HISTORY

Before we attempt to ponder the Almighty's reasons for giving this unusual command, let us first look back at what took place in the wilderness of Sinai those many years ago. Most Christians already know the facts; but I'll list them nonetheless:

Israel's Hurried Departure from Egypt

There was blind panic in Egypt when **Yahweh** authorised the slaughter of the firstborn in every unbelieving Egyptian home. Next day the Israelites were virtually '**thrust out of Egypt**;' and they were totally unprepared for what lay ahead.

Exodus 12:30: And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

31: And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, **and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve יהוה**, as ye have said.

32: Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and **be gone**; and bless me also.

33: And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men.

Guidance / Light / Shade

Exodus 13: 20: *And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness.*

21: *And יהוה' went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night.*

Bitter Waters!

Three days later Israel met its first test: **no water!** The healing of the '**bitter waters of Marah**' is proof that Yahweh can - and will - heal His obedient people in the wilderness.

Exodus 15:22: *So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went **three days in the wilderness, and found no water.***

23: *And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were **bitter**: therefore the name of it was called Marah.*

24: *And the people murmured against Moses, saying, **What shall we drink?***

25: *And he cried unto יהוה'; and יהוה' shewed him **a tree**, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, **and there he proved them.***

26: *And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of יהוה' thy Elohim, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: **for I am יהוה' that healeth thee.***

27: *And they came to **Elim, where were twelve wells of water**, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters.*

Exhausted Food Supplies

Within a month of leaving Egypt, Israel had exhausted its food supplies. Starvation literally stared them in the face; or so they thought. The Israelites had expected to be in the Promised land within a few days; and here they were - one month later without food - still in the burning wilderness. The next test was linked to keeping the Sabbath day.

Exodus 16:1: *And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on **the fifteenth day of the second month** after their departing out of the land of Egypt.*

2: *And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness:*

3: *And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to Elohim we had died by the hand of יהוה' in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to **kill this whole assembly with hunger.***

4: *Then said יהוה' unto Moses, **Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.***

The Almighty is well able to feed His people in the wilderness. No need for the regular visit to the supermarket. He fed several million Israelites with '**bread from heaven**' for 40 years in the wilderness of Sinai! He is well able to do that again when the time comes. Remember that vital fact about the '**Bread from Heaven.**'

Fiery Serpents

Numbers 21: 5 *And the people spake against Elohim, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.*

6: *And יהוה' sent **fiery serpents** among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.*

7: *Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken*

against יהוה, and against thee; pray unto יהוה, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.

8: And יהוה said unto Moses, **Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.**

9: And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

No Wells of Water

When they left Elim, they left those 12 wells of water. Now they were in the real desert.

Exodus 17:1: And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of יהוה, and pitched in Rephidim: and **there was no water for the people to drink.**

2: Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, **Give us water that we may drink.** And Moses said unto them, *Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt יהוה?*

3: And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, *Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?*

4: And Moses cried unto יהוה, saying, *What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.*

5: And יהוה said unto Moses, *Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.*

6: **Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink.** And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

7: And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted יהוה, saying, **Is יהוה among us, or not?**

The Almighty is well able to provide water for His people in the wilderness. No need for wells or a connection to the water mains. **Yahweh** provided water from the **Rock** for several million Israelites and their cattle for 40 years! He can do the same for us if need be. Remember that vital fact about the **Rock**.

The People Murmured

Sad to say, for all the miracles:

- The parting of the Red Sea
- The Pillar of Cloud and Fire
- The water from the smitten Rock
- The Bread from Heaven etc.

many Israelites complained; they murmured. They murmured in their tents, openly and silently to their relatives and friends. Things weren't going the way they had expected; and as far as they could see, Moses was to blame. Little did they realise that murmuring against Moses was murmuring against יהוה! **Murmuring is a fatal malady.** At that time it resulted in the death of millions.

Numbers 14:26: And יהוה spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

27: **How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur AGAINST ME? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur AGAINST ME.**

28: Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith יהוה, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you:

29: Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, **which have murmured against me.**

4. WHAT WAS יהוה' 'S PURPOSE?

But back to our question. What was Yahweh's purpose in giving this command?

That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am יהוה your Elohim.

The Almighty's purpose is: that by going through this '**Tabernacle experience**' each year, all true believers will realise what a powerful Person is יהוה Elohim of Israel. And much more than that; Israel would, when recounting those experiences, learn that יהוה did all this **through His Son Yeshua the Messiah**. That is the message the Almighty wants His people to learn.

Because:

- **Yeshua is the Way:** Messiah saith unto him, *I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John:14:6)*
- **Yeshua is the Bread of Life:** *John:6:35: And יהושע said unto them, I am the **bread of life**: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*
- **Yeshua is the Water of Life.** *John 4:13: יהושע answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: 14: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. 1Cor:10: 3: And did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4: And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and **that Rock was Christ.***
- **Yeshua is the Light of the World:** *John:8:12: Then spake יהושע again unto them, saying, **I am the light of the world**: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*
- **Yeshua is the cure for the serpent's sting:** *John 3: 14: And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16: For יהוה so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*
- **Yeshua is our Shelter:** *Luke13:34: O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!*

5. THE SECOND EXODUS

No Christian will doubt but that these facts need to be understood by the world, especially by people of Israel. To be sure '**Israel is the chosen of Elohim;**' but many do not recognise their Messiah's part in that wilderness experience. Too long have they known the details of their history but failed to recognise their Saviour.

There is yet another reason why the Almighty wants His followers to keep Tabernacles. It is a reason which concerns all end-time believers in the Elohim of Israel. The reason is this:

- **The Almighty Elohim of Israel is going to lead His people into the wilderness a SECOND TIME!**
- He is once again going to meet with them '**face to face!**'
- He is going bring us under the '**bond of the covenant;**' that is He will write His holy law on the tablets of our hearts; and only then will we obey Him as we ought to.
- At that time He is going to '**purge out the rebels, the murmurers;**' those who are continually finding fault with the laws Elohim gave mankind through His servant Moses. These rebels will not enter the **Kingdom of יהוה!**

Where do we find this defined? Not surprisingly, in both the Old and the New Testaments. I quote:

Old Testament

- Ezekiel 20: 33:** *As I live, saith the Master יהוה, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you:*
34: *And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out.*
35: ***And I will bring you into the WILDERNESS OF THE PEOPLE, and there will I plead with you face to face.***
36: *Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Master יהוה.*
37: *And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will **bring you into the bond of the covenant.***

New Testament

- Revelation 12: 1:** *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:*
2: *And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.*
3: *And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.*
4: *And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.*
5: *And she brought forth a **man child**, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto Elohim, and to his throne.*
6: ***And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of Elohim, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.***
7: *And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,*
8: *And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.*
9: *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*
10: *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of Elohim, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our Elohim day and night.*
11: ***And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.***
12: *Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*
13: *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.*
14: ***And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.***
15: *And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.*
16: *And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.*
17: ***And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of יהוה, and have the testimony of משיחיהויה Messiah.***

The latter part of this prophecy has not been fulfilled.

- The '**man child**' is יהושע **Messiah**. He has already been caught up to heaven, to the throne of יהוה.
- The '**woman**' is the wife, Israel. She is seen standing on the '**moon**,' which means that she takes her stand on the sacred calendar, which is governed by the moon. She is scheduled at some future date to be borne on '**eagles wings**' into the wilderness. *Exodus 19:4: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on **eagles' wings**, and brought you unto myself.* This is not a rapture to heaven; but to a place on earth, out of the reach of the Devil, where she is divinely **protected** and **nourished** for a period of 1260 days or three and a half years.

Can יהוה Elohim of Israel do it again? Can He protect and feed His people for three and a half years in the **wilderness of the peoples**? I'm sure He can. He who fed ancient Israel for 40 years is well able to protect, feed and illuminate the camps of His end-time followers for a few years; out of the reach of Satan the dragon.

SUMMARY

The **Week of Tabernacles (Booths)** is kept year after year to instruct and remind true believers:

- That **Yahweh will once again Tabernacle with His people**, meeting them face to face as He did with ancient Israel in the desert of Sinai. Remember that His Tabernacle (Tent) was in the very middle of the camp. Indeed, every feature of that physical Tabernacle and the services held in it represented some **spiritual function** the Saviour would fulfil. The Bible tells us that יהושע **Messiah** is the **Tabernacle of יהוה!** He is יהוה in human flesh!
- That **Yahweh can provide literal and living water from the Rock - Yeshua the Saviour.**
- That He can rain down literal and **living bread** from heaven via His **Son Yeshua, the Bread of Heaven, the Living Bread!**
- That He can protect His people from Satan the dragon as surely as He protected ancient Israel from the Pharaoh.
- He can do all this for three and a half years; yea for three and a half trillion years! The length of time is immaterial.

The Question Is

Do you believe He will do this for you in the near future? Do you really believe that the Almighty Elohim of Israel can - and will - intervene to save His beleaguered '**wife**' by taking her into the wilderness as He did to ancient Israel? Do you believe that? Well, that is what the Scriptures teach; and that is what Tabernacles is all about.

- Tabernacles looks back to ancient Israel's wanderings in the desert of Sinai.
- Tabernacles looks forward to the **Coming Exodus**, when true Israelites will be nourished and miraculously protected for three and a half years from Satan the Dragon!
- Most importantly, tabernacles reminds us of spiritual realities realised in **Yeshua the Messiah, the Tabernacle of יהוה, the Almighty יהוה in a human body. He is the Rock of our Salvation. He is the Water of Life, the Bread of Life. He is the One who died on the pole, the cross to save us from the Serpent's deadly sting!**

It is important that you believe these things - vitally important.

May **Yahweh** open our eyes to the message of Tabernacles; and may He grant us the faith and strength to always believe in His only begotten **Son Yeshua, the Tabernacle of יהוה!**

Sincerely,

Elder: *David B Loughran*

October 1999

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To The Saints of the Assemblies Of Yahweh

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Names Legend: יהוה' = GOD, LORD; Elohim = God; *Master = Lord*; ישוע יהוה = *Yeshua = Jesus*

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