

The Feast of Tabernacles: A Prophetic Celebration of God's Protection, Provision and Promise

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, God reveals His magnificent plan for redeeming a world lost and far from Him because of sin. Often, this plan is communicated through prophetic pictures to help us better understand how that plan will play out—and one of the most profound is outlined in His feasts.

The Lord's Feasts

The feasts—Sabbath, Passover/Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and Tabernacles—are primarily found in Leviticus 23, Numbers 28 and Deuteronomy, but they undergird the whole of Scripture. The most logical place to start when first learning about them is in Leviticus 23:1–2, where God says:

“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations these *are* My feasts’” (Lev. 23:2, NKJV).

Many assume the feasts involve a grand celebration with plenty of food, and although this is true for some of them, the Hebrew word “feast” actually means “appointment.” These holy “convocations” or “gatherings” were special times throughout the year when God desired to meet with His people and be in their midst. Though the Jewish people have been keeping these feasts for millennia, and though they are sometimes referred to as the “feasts of Israel” or “the Jewish feasts,” God was clear at the end of Leviticus 23:2: They are His appointments.

The apostle Paul teaches that these festivals are merely a “shadow of things to come,” but their “reality” or “substance” is Christ (Col. 2:16–17). This means *all* the feasts are important for Christians to understand. Each one points to an aspect of Jesus’ redemptive work, and all together, they paint a picture of God’s plan of salvation over all time.

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However, one feast is particularly interesting for followers of Jesus.

Why Feast of Tabernacles Is Unique

The Feast of Tabernacles (in Hebrew, *Sukkot*), this year from Oct. 16-23, is the last and greatest of all the feasts. God commanded the children of Israel to dwell in *sukkahs* (“booths” or “tents”) for the eight days of the feast set out in Leviticus 23:33–43 to remember and symbolize their 40 years of wilderness wanderings. During that time, they lived in tents, and God dwelled among them in the tabernacle, faithfully providing for them. Today, Jewish people in Israel and around the world celebrate this feast by constructing temporary *sukkahs* under the open sky in their backyards, outside of hotels and restaurants—even on apartment balconies—and eat all their meals inside them, regarding them as homes.

However, this was always the “shadow” of the Feast of Tabernacles. This last feast on God’s calendar points toward a coming day when after returning to the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:3–4, Acts 1:11), Jesus will defeat Israel’s enemies, enter Jerusalem through the East Gate as Israel’s conquering King, and God’s presence will once again dwell among His people Israel, just as the Ezekiel foretold:

“I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever. My dwelling place will be

with them; I will be their God, and they will be My people” (Ezek. 36:26b-27, NIV).

But there’s something even more amazing. Zechariah foresaw a future time when the nations would come up to Jerusalem every year to “worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles” (Zech. 14:16, NKJV). This makes Tabernacles unique—out of all the feasts, it’s the only one where God invites the Gentile nations to also come to Jerusalem to worship Him.

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The Feast of Tabernacles is a prophetic call declaring that throughout the messianic age, the entire world will celebrate this grand feast as it marks the glorious moment when Jesus comes to take up the throne of David in Jerusalem. The apostle John says of this day, “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).

When Christians observe this tradition today, whether in Jerusalem or in spirit from wherever they live, they participate in a dress rehearsal of that future day when all this comes to pass, and God once again dwells among His people.

Celebrate This Year

No doubt we are witnessing Israel’s most critical hour since its founding in 1948—Israel’s very existence is being threatened by enemies who want her wiped from the map. Things may look grim—yet God is working out all things according to His perfect, calculated plan.

Since 1980, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem has hosted a Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Jerusalem to step into this promise that God will bring to fruition. A day is coming when Jews and Gentiles will celebrate God's presence and rule in Jerusalem, just as the prophets foretold. Until then, join the ICEJ Feast of Tabernacles in person in Jerusalem or online to communicate to the Jewish people that they are not alone—and, whether on-site or in spirit, worship the God of Israel in Jerusalem.

Learn more about the ICEJ Feast of Tabernacles celebration at:

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