



Sukkot

5781

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The High Holiday and the Feast of Tabernacles 5781

When one examines the **Feast of Trumpets** and the **Day of Atonement**, two thoughts should come into a person's mind: *Judgment* and *Forgiveness*. The order of these two thoughts are important, as usually it is the reality of G-d's judgement that causes a person to seek forgiveness from Him. In this article, I would like to focus upon the third appointed time known as Sukkot, i.e. the **Feast of Tabernacles**. This festival is mentioned in Zechariah chapter 14,

"And it will come about all who remain from all the nations who come against Jerusalem will go up each year to worship the King, the L-rd of Hosts and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles." Zechariah 14:16

The setting for this verse is after the war of *Armageddon* (War of Gog and Magog), i.e. the Millennial Kingdom. The King mentioned in this verse above will actually be Messiah Yeshua. Hence, one learns that there is a special connection between the *Feast of Tabernacles* and the Millennial Kingdom. The primary message of Sukkot is the necessity for each person to live in a manner that demonstrates one's trust and dependence upon the L-rd. In the book of Revelation, during the entire Millennial Kingdom, Satan will be bound. Throughout these thousand years, Yeshua will reign over a Kingdom of Righteousness, where all Kingdom residents will experience and know the King Who enforces the will of G-d.

It is important for the reader to understand that the Millennial Kingdom will represent what G-d intended the world to be under the leadership of Israel. However, because the Children of Israel rejected G-d and chose to assimilate and become like the nations, G-d's purposes were not manifested in this world. The emphasis of the Millennial Kingdom will be for those who are born during these thousand years. They will only know a righteous world and they will witness with their eyes the *King of Righteousness*, Yeshua. When one of these individuals should err (sin) and violate a commandment of G-d, there will be a swift response from the King. The individual will have two options: The first is to confess their action as sin and offer up at the Temple a sacrifice. Please note that such sacrifices during the Millennial Kingdom are offered to Yeshua and in regard to His death on the tree (Cross). In the same way that the sacrifices that occurred prior to Yeshua's death pointed forward to the Cross, so too will the sacrifices in the Millennial Kingdom point backward to the Cross. In other words, Millennial sacrifices are made in memorial to the sufficiency of Messiah's death, which perfectly redeemed the sinner from G-d's judgment eternally. If a person violates the Law of G-d in the Millennial Kingdom, and will not make such a memorial sacrifice, then the second option will be instituted which is judgment. The message the reader should learn is that the Millennial Kingdom will indeed be a time of perfect Justice and Righteousness, which will be maintained by Yeshua, and those who will rule and reign with Him—believers who took part in the Blessed Hope, i.e. the Rapture and those who were resurrected just prior to the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom (see Revelation 20:4,6).

Although Satan will be bound for the entire one thousand years of the Millennial Kingdom, one reads in Revelation 20:3 that after the conclusion of this Kingdom, it is necessary for Satan to be released for a little while. Why is this? The Scripture states that he will be released from his prison and go forth and deceive the nations. It is vital that each of us understand why this is necessary. Those born during the Millennial Kingdom will experience firsthand the righteous rule of G-d and they will see with their eyes the King, Yeshua. At the

end of Millennial, each person born during the Millennial will have to make a decision concerning Yeshua. Do they trust in Him and want to serve Him and be part of the the New Jerusalem, the final and eternal state of the Kingdom of G-d or will they believe the deceit of Satan and join him to make war against the saints and the Holy City? In other words, just like Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden had to choose whether to believe in G-d or accept the lies of Satan, so too will those born in the Millennial, in fact all humanity must answer this question.

What is shocking is the large number of those individuals who in fact join with Satan. The reader is told that this number is like the sand of the sea. Such people do not want righteousness nor the will of G-d; rather, they want their will and by trusting in themselves they are easily deceived by the enemy. I hope the reader sees the correlation between this prophetic account from the book of Revelation and the message of the *Feast of Tabernacles*.

HaShem placed the Children of Israel in the desert for 40 years for two reasons. The first was for the generation of unbelief, i.e. those who would not trust and depend upon G-d to die out in this wilderness. The Biblical lesson is clear, failing to trust in G-d (His saving message of the Gospel) brings death. The second reason for the 40 years was to instill faith and dependence upon G-d in the next generation.

It is truly tragic that today the vast majority of believers do not know anything about the appointed days (the festivals) of the L-rd. I remember quite clearly speaking in one European city to a group of believers and found out that none of them had heard about the Feast of Tabernacles. I learned this because as I was teaching, I mentioned this festival and received a questioned asking what was the Feast of Tabernacles? This person was the exception, no one in this congregation (church) had heard that there was a seven day festival in the Bible to commemorate the forty years the Children of Israel were in the desert. I actually met with resistance as I shared about the message of this appointed day. When I had the people turn to John chapter seven to show that it is impossible to understand this section and the words of Yeshua without first knowing about the Feast of Tabernacles, they were quite emphatic that this Festival was a “Jewish Festival” and did not have any relevance for the Church.

This brings us back to the passage from Zechariah chapter 14 where is it emphasized that also the Gentiles will keep / observe Sukkot during the Millennial Kingdom. From this section of Scripture, the reader learns an important Biblical principle. Zechariah, in the next few verses (Zechariah 14:7-19), reveals that those who keep the Feast of Tabernacles will receive rain, and those who do not will be punished. It is most significant that the word that the vast majority of translations render as “*punishment*” in verse 19 is actually the Hebrew word **תַּאֲזַח** which relates to sin.

In our days, without a Temple in Jerusalem, it is impossible to keep Sukkot or for that matter any other of HaShem’s appointed days. However, this should not lead a believer to assume that these Biblical festivals no longer have relevance. One must remember the words of Paul when he wrote,

“All Scripture is G-d-breathed (inspired) and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for training in righteousness; in order that complete should the man of G-d be, for every good word having been completely equipped.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17

One who has true faith in the Messiah will want to completely serve G-d and will certainly agree with Paul that a believer must utilize ALL SCRIPTURE, and under the leadership of

the Holy Spirit, apply the Word of G-d to one's life. In doing this, the believer will be serving G-d not in the oldness of the letter; but rather in the newness of the Spirit (see Romans 7:6). Biblically the concept of "new" or "newness" relates to a Kingdom character as John, in the book of Revelation, when he beholds the Kingdom states, "...all things are new." (see Revelations 21:5). This means that as believers, we are called to demonstrate in our behavior obedience to the Kingdom intent of all the Biblical commandments. This is what Paul meant when he stated, *that those who walk not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, fulfill the righteousness of the Torah* (see Romans 8:4).

Here is what should be the guiding principle of the believer's life:

A desire to demonstrate one's faith, trust, and dependence in G-d, by applying the truth of the word of G-d to one's life; in order that G-d is glorified and others are blessed in the Name of Yeshua.

May each of us utilize the truth of the Fall Festivals into our lives and experience the joyful response of the G-d of Israel, to Him be the glory, the honor, and the praise, now and forever, Amen!