



Sukkot

Joyous Union

Three times a year all your men are to appear before the Sovereign LORD, the God of Israel.

(Exodus 34:23)

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

I. Introduction

A. Sukkot is one of three mandated pilgrimage festivals required for all Jewish males

1. The last one if you count using God's Biblical Calendar (starts in the spring)
2. Is a preview of Yeshua as the Bridegroom in the Millennial Kingdom

B. A two-fold reminder

1. Sukkot was a celebration of the recently completed Fall harvest—in this case known as the Feast of Ingathering
2. Was also a reminder of God's protection during their 40 year journey from Egypt to the Promised Land—in this case known as the Feast of Booths

II. Union—then

A. Logistics

1. In the 1st Century, the population of Jerusalem was about 80,000 people
 - a. In addition, tens of thousands made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem from all over the land
 - b. Assuming the pilgrimage from Galilee
 - 1) distance 40 miles approximately
 - 2) time walking 4-5 days
 - 3) elevation of Jerusalem 2600 feet; Sea of Galilee -686 feet; total rise 3286 feet
 - 4) was a really serious undertaking
2. The booths (Sukkot) reminded the people of God's actual protection during their wanderings
 - a. Also of the symbolic need to trust God for everything

B. A time of great rejoicing

1. The time of sobriety (Trumpets), and repentance (Atonement) was past
2. Thankfulness for a bountiful harvest and God's great blessings

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. (Deuteronomy 16:14-15)

 - a. A time of remembrance of the travails of the wilderness
 - b. Consideration of God's blessings
3. Our life may contain struggles
 - a. We don't feel like rejoicing
 - b. But God is with us in our trial and is coming again physically in the age to come

C. Present themselves

1. At least as important as celebrating the festival was appearing before the Lord
 - a. Implies humble obedience; willingness to put aside pride, arrogance, self-determination
2. Was an opportunity to hear from the Lord and gain humble insight
 - a. "What would you say to me today, Lord?"

III. Union—now

A. We are also on a pilgrimage to our own Promised Land.

All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them. (Hebrews 11:13, 16)

1. We are strangers in a strange land; in the world but not of it.
2. This age has challenges and difficulties, but Yeshua is with us and is coming again
3. He went through the great pain of crucifixion out of His love you

B. Consider the great blessings showered upon us

1. When celebrating remember to focus on Him as the reason
2. Take a moment every day to consider the great blessings God has given us
3. We have been released from our own captivity

- a. Many of us have come through or are going through difficult times

I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope. Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:19-23)

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. (2 Corinthians 4:7-10)

- b. God is alive and well in the Sukkah of our body; God will never forsake us

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of [your problems], for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. (Deuteronomy 31:6).

4. We have been brought to our own Promised Land; an eternal intimate relationship with Yeshua

C. Yeshua is our Most Treasured Possession

1. We should make modern pilgrimage for frequent spiritual adjustment
 - a. The world constantly intrudes
 - b. We deceive ourselves
 - c. Pilgrimage not to Jerusalem, but to living, intimate communion with Yeshua
2. We are His living sukkah
 - a. Through the Holy Spirit, He speaks to us, and guides and shapes our lives
 - b. Never abandons or forsakes us
3. The Jews presented themselves three times a year before the Lord
 - a. Do we seek approval?
 - 1) These festivals provide an opportunity to present ourselves before the Lord and ask His assessment of our lives
 - 2) We all stumble in many ways (James 3:2)
 - b. Do we seek direction? Are we in.....
 - 1) Paralysis—I'm not moving God until you tell me where to go
 - a) Rebellious, unwilling to do anything unless God forces the situation
 - 2) Presumption—I'm moving God, but You send me course corrections
 - a) Proudful, self-determining, flesh-oriented
 - 3) Partnership—be careful and fully submitted to Him
 - a) Submitted and humble
 - b) Talking to Him, seeking help

- c. Do we seek connection?
 - 1) Pride and ownership are off the table
 - 2) “God, where is my heart deceived?”
 - 3) “What is it that keeps me from coming into closer communion with you?”

IV. Union—coming

A. We will rise to meet our Lord in the air

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. (1Thessalonians 4:16-17)

B. We will be in consistent worship of the Lord; even the survivors of the nations which persecuted Israel will worship Yeshua.

Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles [Sukkot]. (Zechariah 14:16)

C. The overcomers will be administering the Lord’s Kingdom as leaders and governors

I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (Revelation 20: 4)

D. The Lord will teach us directly and we will teach His ways to those in the Millennium

“He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths. “For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3b)

E. The earth will be filled with peace

They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore (Isaiah 2:4b)

F. All the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Habakkuk 2:14)

G. Lifespans will be significantly extended.

No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed” (Isaiah 65:20)

V. Application

A. Harder times are coming, but God is faithful

1. God has work for us to do as those times approach
2. Many unbelievers will take offense against God as the upcoming challenges unfold
 - a. FOLD
 - 1) Fear—causes us to run away from God and make poor decisions
 - 2) Offense—causes us to blame God
 - 3) Lust—often we self-medicate against the pain in order to escape (Luke 21:34-36)
 - 4) Deception—many false teachers and prophets will lead many away from God
3. Believers who are ready will have understanding and instruct many in tumultuous times
 - a. We will teach the truth about what is happening
 - b. But we will be persecuted

Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered. (Daniel 11:33)

- 1) Used to think “instruct” was primarily related to explaining why the Great Tribulation is necessary
- 2) Now am convinced that it relates to getting oil—the development of intimacy with God

B. Sukkot is the perfect time to draw near to God

1. We should seek oil, i.e., develop intimate communion with Him (see the Parable of the 10 Bridesmaids in Matthew 25:1-13)
2. Remember all the wonderful things He has done for us; consider His blessings

C. Remember, Yeshua is our Bridegroom!

1. Yeshua, our Lord, loves and desires to be with us
Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me. (Revelation 3:20)
2. He will cleanse us and make us ready
Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: “Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.” (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God’s holy people.) (Revelation 19:7-9)
 - a. Will we press in our turn away from God?
3. We prepare ourselves for our husband by living out our salvation
Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. (Philippians 2:12-13)

D. Sukkot is a foreshadow of our millennial time with Yeshua

1. How does that inform the way we live our lives?
 - a. Shock us now—I would rather God guide me to change now than when it’s too late at the judgment seat
2. In the light of this is there any way we are displeasing the Lord?
3. When we reach the Bema seat, what will be Yeshua’s assessment of our lives?
4. We must make ourselves ready
 - a. Continually seek time with God
 - 1) Schedule it
 - 2) Use Scripture to inform our prayer
 - b. Seek the oil of intimacy
 - c. Talk to Him regularly
 - d. Seek revelation from Him
 - 1) Acknowledge our heart issues
 - 2) Ask him to remove barricades and barriers