



Message for 9-24 to 9-30-18
Sukkot – Feast of Booths or Tabernacles
Leviticus 23:33-36,
Numbers 29:12
Zechariah 14:1-21
Revelation 7:1-10

Sukkot, the time of our gladness, is the third in the cycle of pilgrimage festivals. On Passover, we celebrate our redemption from Egypt and our freedom from physical bondage. Shavuot commemorates the Giving of the Torah, whereby we gained our spiritual freedom by learning what the Almighty considered to be sin. With Sukkot, the cycle reaches its culmination in an exhilarating outburst of joy and wealth of symbols that evoke memories of divine protection in the past that lift our present to a higher spiritual plateau and that point the way to the Messianic future.

Leviticus 23:41-44

41 You shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It is a statute forever throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. ⁴² You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All native Israelites shall dwell in booths, ⁴³ that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God." ⁴⁴ Thus Moses declared to the people of Israel the appointed feasts of the LORD. (ESV)

"It is a statute forever throughout your generations..."

<05769> עולם *olam* or עולם *olam* (761d)

Meaning: *long duration, antiquity, futurity*

<02708> חוקה *chuqqah* (349d)

Meaning: *something prescribed, an enactment, statute*

Sukkot is the second from the last of the fall festivals and one that many focus on because it is specifically mentioned as one that will be kept during the Messianic Age. The importance of it can be seen in the fact that it is referred to as a **statute forever** throughout your generations. The Hebrew word for statute is *chu-kah*, and it means something prescribed, an enactment, or a statute. A statute is something that is part of the Torah because we are told the Torah contains precepts, commandments, judgments, and statutes. The Torah is more than a set of teachings from our heavenly Father. It is His

covenant forever with His people, Israel. So, if Sukkot is a seven-day Festival that the Almighty gave to us and said it was to be kept forever, then what does forever mean? The Hebrew word for forever is *o-lam*, and it means long duration, antiquity, and futurity. It is past, present, and future. It is something that will never end because when the Almighty makes a covenant with His people, He keeps it even when His people break the covenant.

Sukkot was given to remind Israel of how their ancestors had dwelled in booths during the forty years they had spent wandering in the wilderness. It is also a time to reflect on the future and how we will dwell with the Messiah Yeshua for one thousand years during the Messianic Age. While many disregard the festivals as something they no longer need as believers in Messiah, they are ignoring some of the Lord's most obvious prophetic signs about His plan. His festivals are a map that takes us step by step through His plan from the redemption of His people to our future with Him forever in eternity, and so many who say they are believers in Messiah simply turn their backs on His festivals to follow holidays that have nothing to do with Him according to His Torah and even in the Apostolic Scriptures. Where does it say we are to keep Christmas and Easter? Yet, if we say anything about the lack of Biblical substantiation for these holidays, we are accused of not being "*real believers*." What is a real believer? Isn't a real believer one who has committed themselves to faith in the Son of God, Yeshua? Isn't a real believer one who follows the path laid out for us in the Messiah Yeshua? What I am talking about is the path that follows Torah, the one and only written covenant with the Living God! Sukkot was given to help us remember what our ancestors went through, but more importantly, it shows us what the future holds for us. Yes, the Holy One of Israel holds us in the palm of His hand and guides us through life helping us to find our way in the darkness that is enveloping this world.

Nehemiah 8:14 They found written in the *Torah* that *ADONAI* had ordered through Moshe that the people of Isra'el were to live in *sukkot* during the feast of the seventh month; ¹⁵ and that they were to announce and pass the word in all their cities and in Yerushalayim, "Go out to the mountains, and collect branches of olives, wild olives, myrtles, palms, and other leafy trees to make *sukkot*, as prescribed." ¹⁶ So the people went out, brought them and made *sukkot* for themselves, each one on the roof of his house, also in their courtyards, in the courtyards of the house of God, in the open space by the Water Gate and in the open space by the Efrayim Gate. (CJB)

On their return from Babylon, the remnant of Israel found the Book of the Torah. In its pages, they found the Lord's commands to His people, and they followed the instructions for Sukkot. Obviously, it must have been difficult for the people to go out and gather what they would need to keep Sukkot. When they returned from their captivity in Babylon, they did not want a repeat of what they had gone through for the past seventy years, so they did their best to keep the Torah and all it contained. Among the remnant from Judah, there were some from the other ten tribes now known as Ephraim. This did not mean that all of Ephraim was now within Judah, but it was a representation of the rest of ten tribes that had come to be known as the *Lost Ten Tribes* of Israel. This is a hot button topic for another time, but what we need to understand is that not all of those who had gone into

the Babylonian exile came back when they had the chance to do it. We know this is true because we find remnants of the Jewish people, those who were affiliated with Judah, in countries other than their own where they have lived for many, many years.

Sukkot is a festival of return for the Children of Israel to come back home to unite once more into a nation that places itself under God's covenant rather than that of man. Man tries so hard to get it right, and the harder they try, the worse it becomes. The Lord God Almighty is the King of kings and Lord of all, and He loves His people, those already in Israel and those who will become part of Israel. We must return to Torah and do our best to keep it. The remnant that returned from Babylon under Nehemiah and Ezra did everything they could to return to Torah once they discovered their heritage that had been lost in the exile. This is so true of the Jewish people today. Many keep the traditions of the Jewish people, where some of them are based on Torah, but their faith in God is stagnant. As new generations come up, they find themselves roaming free from the "yoke" of Torah, but some are bound by the rabbinical rules, and some have no connection to God or His Messiah whatsoever.

Matthew 11:29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. [Jer. 6'16] ³⁰ "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (NAU)

Jeremiah 6:16 Thus says the LORD: Stand at the crossroads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. But they said, "We will not walk in it." (NRS)

The Messiah quotes from Jeremiah 6:16 and tells us His yoke is easy and His burden is light. What is it he is referring to when speaking of the yoke and burden? Of course, there can be no confusion about what He is talking about when we read what is written in Jeremiah 6:16. The ancient paths where the good paths lie is the road of Torah. We try our best to walk these ancient paths because they are the foundation that the universe is built. The power of the Almighty is reflected in all He created through His Son Yeshua and by His *Ruach HaKodesh*, His Holy Spirit. These are the three pillars upon which all there is are supported. Walk in the good way, find rest for your souls but, and this is a big but, the people said they would not walk in it, and we know what happened. What was the point in returning from exile only to disobey His covenant again? His yoke is easy, my friends, so make the right choice, and take it upon yourself. In walking the ancient paths, you will learn about God and the relationship that is waiting for you at the end of your journey.

Numbers 29:32-34

32 "On the seventh day seven bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, ³³ with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, in the prescribed quantities; ³⁴ also one male goat for a sin offering; besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering. (ESV)

In Numbers 29:32-34, we see a brief recap of the sacrifices required on the seventh and final day of Sukkot. Many say we no longer should make sacrifices because Messiah died for us bringing an end to the shedding of blood. We need to look to the Torah to see if this is true. What we find is after the death and resurrection of Messiah, His disciples continued to go to the Temple. Did they only go there to teach about Yeshua? We do not see them say anything about no longer having to make sacrifices. They would know that in every sacrifice they would make, they would see their Master, Yeshua. Every time they broke bread together, they would see Him and remember His teachings. Some say the Apostle Paul taught we no longer had to make sacrifices. The question, once again, needs to be asked, if you really believe this, where did Paul have their authority to do this? The only one who could change the Torah was God. Paul was an observant Jew with a lineage connected to the Pharisees. Do you believe he really tossed all that aside to write his own Torah? That would make him no better than the rabbis who took their commentary and elevated it to the same level and sometimes higher than the actual written Torah. Sacrifices will always be needed until Messiah returns and teaches us otherwise, but let us be clear about this: we have no standing Temple today, so no sacrifices can be brought. When the third Temple is built, we will have to decide to follow Messiah and Torah, or reject it and follow our own path rather than the ancient paths God calls good.

Zechariah 14:3-8

3 Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. ⁴ On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward. ⁵ And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him. ⁶ On that day there shall be no light, cold, or frost. ⁷ And there shall be a unique day, which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but at evening time there shall be light. ⁸ On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea. It shall continue in summer as in winter. (ESV)

Revelation 16:16 And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, **Armageddon**. (NKJ)

This is the first of two wars that will take place. The first one is Armageddon and takes place just before the beginning of the Messianic Age. This war is the precursor for the Messianic Age. Then at the end of the Messianic Age, there will be the war of Gog and Magog, which comes once Satan is released from his thousand-year imprisonment. He goes out and deceives the nations, which should tell us that not everyone who is present during the Messianic Age is a believer in the Messiah, even though He will physically be present ruling from Jerusalem. The possibility exists that there will be nations who chafe under His rule, which will be based on Torah, and we are told He will rule with a rod of iron.

717 Ἀρμαγε(δ)δών Armageddon {ar-mag-ed-dohn'}

Meaning: Armageddon = "the hill or city of Megiddo" 1) In Rev. 16:16 the scene of the struggle of good and evil is suggested by that battle plain of Esdraelon, which was famous for two great victories, of Barak over the Canaanites, and of Gideon over the Midianites; and for two great disasters, the deaths of Saul and Josiah. Hence in Revelation a place of great slaughter, the scene of a terrible retribution upon the wicked. The RSV translates the name as Har-Magedon, i.e. the hill (as Ar is the city) of Megiddo.

Revelation 20:7 When the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will come out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, **Gog and Magog**, in order to gather them for battle; they are as numerous as the sands of the sea. (NRS)

Ezekiel 38:2 "Son of man, set your face toward **Gog of the land of Magog**, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him. (NAU)

This the final battle that will herald the coming of the final of the feasts of the Lord, and it will be a time of great rejoicing as we will be entering eternity or the *Olam HaBa*-the World to Come. This last feast is called Shemini Atzeret or the Eighth Day of Assembly, a feast separate from Sukkot because a short time frame takes place after Gog and Magog since we are told that Satan will not be released until the thousand years are ended. It would seem this final festival will be the time once the final war is over, the new heavens and earth are put in place, and all mankind that is left will step into eternity with the Messiah of God leading us in because He knows the way.

Revelation 14:3-8

3 and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. ⁴ It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as first fruits for God and the Lamb, ⁵ and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless. ⁶ Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷ And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water." ⁸ Another angel, a second, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality." (ESV)

The end has come for all things that have existed and taken place during the physical time God gave to mankind. Now all things will be set right because the patience of the Lord God Almighty has finally ended, and Messiah goes forth to do the will of His Father as promised from the beginning. Even before the fall of man, the Father set His plan in motion because He knew man and what he would do. The 144,000 (12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel) are the true witnesses for the Father and the Son. They were redeemed from mankind as the first fruits for God and the Lamb. This brings new meaning

to the Festival of First Fruits, which takes place in the Spring. It might be possible that this spring festival, believed to have already been fulfilled through the resurrection of Messiah Yeshua, might have another application in the setting apart of the 144,000. Remember, the possibility of prophecy having more than one fulfillment is seen in Scripture. Of course, this is speculation on my part, but there are possibilities seen here because the feasts of the Lord are an outline of the plan of God brought to fulfillment by His Son Yeshua, the Messiah of Israel given as a gift to all mankind in order to bring all of those from the nations of the earth into His covenant people Israel. It is not the church or synagogue or any other thing man has built but the Kingdom of God built by the hand of the one He set forth from before the beginning Yeshua HaMoshiach from the tribe of Judah. Hallelujah!

Torah Man says: "Faith and fear can never exist together."

Blessings in Messiah Yeshua,

Mordecai Silver

Rabbi, Etz Chayim-Tree of Life Messianic Congregation

TORAH: LEARN IT, LOVE IT, LIVE IT AS YESHUA DID! PSALM 119. If you are not learning Torah, we invite you to attend Judaic Studies Institute, a Distance Learning Institute for Yeshua based Judaic Studies. Drop us a line at student.support@jsi-edu.org for more information. You can earn a certificate or diploma and take courses to help you grow in your understanding.



**etZ
chayim**
Tree of Life Messianic Ministries

Rabbi Mordecai Silver, Ph.D.

Tel: (866) 874-7250
Fax: (866) 800-2390
www.etz-chayim.org
tolmm@etz-chayim.org

P.O.Box 467, Organ, New Mexico. 88052

