

## Sukkot

Leviticus 23:33 And spoke to Mosheh, saying, 34 "Speak to the children of Yisra'el, say- ing, `On the fifteenth day of this seventh month is the Festival of Booths for seven days to . 35 `On the first day is a set-apart gather- ing, you do no servile work. 36 `For seven days you bring an offering made by fire to . On the eighth day there shall be a set-apart gathering for you, and you shall bring an offering made by fire to . It is a closing festival, you do no servile work. 37 `These are the appointed times of which you proclaim as set-apart gather- ings, to bring an offering made by fire to , a burnt offering and a grain offering, a slaughtering and drink offerings, as com- manded for every day – 38 besides the Sabbaths of , and besides your gifts, and besides all your vows, and besides all your voluntary offer- ings which you give to . 39 `On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you gather in the fruit of the land, observe the festival of for seven days. On the first day is a rest, and on the eighth day a rest. 40 `And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of good trees, branch- es of palm trees, twigs of leafy trees, and willows of the stream, and shall rejoice before your Elohim for seven days. 41 `And you shall observe it as a festival to for seven days in the year – a law forever in your generations. Observe it in the seventh month. 42 `Dwell in booths for seven days; all who are native Yisra'elites dwell in booths, 43 so that your generations know that I made the children of Yisra'el dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Mitsrayim. I am your Elohim.' " 44 Thus did Mosheh speak of the appointed times of to the children of Yisra'el. (The Scriptures)

Here we see the divine foundation and decree by command of YHWH for the Festival of Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles).

Sukkot is my favorite Scriptural Holiday, my favorite "Feast of YHWH". Note I did not say "Jewish Festival", these Feasts were commanded to be celebrated by ALL of YHWH's people, not just those who are ethnically Jewish. But as we see today it just so happens that Jews are almost the only ones keeping these Feasts of YHWH laid out in Leviticus 23. The predominating philosophy and doctrine among Christians is that the Messiah came to do away with the "Law" (Torah) and the Feast days with it. But this is not what the Messiah Himself said that He came to do.

Matthew 5:17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Torah or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to complete. 18 "For truly, I say to you, till the heaven and the earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall by no means pass from the Torah till all be done. 19 "Whoever, then, breaks one of the least of these commands, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the reign of the heavens; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the reign of the heavens." (The Scriptures)

We will see later that Messiah Himself celebrated this Festival, and also that He was born on this Festival.

I like Sukkot so much because of what I just mentioned above about the Messiah, but also because it might be the Holiday that He will return, He came the first time during Sukkot, so it is very possible that He may come again during Sukkot.

I also like Sukkot because of the beautiful backdrop of the Fall season here in the United States, with its crisp clean air and its multi-colored leaves. Sukkot is also a harvest festival, a chance to thank YHWH for all His bountiful provisions. As a matter of fact, the Pilgrims modeled Thanksgiving after the Festival of Sukkot to thank G-d for the safe journey to the America's, for their new friends the Indians, the Native Americans who taught them how to plant, grow food and hunt. That's why this Festival is sometimes called the "Jewish Thanksgiving".

I like Sukkot because it is a pro-active Holiday which commands you to get involved, to get your hands dirty. You must BUILD a Sukkah (booth/tabernacle).

A sukkah is a 4 walled structure with one wall acting as a door, and you may use one wall of your own house to be a wall of your sukkah. For example, the back patio door is my 3rd wall. You can exit our kitchen and enter right into the sukkah. I built mine having a PCV pipe frame with tarp walls, and a curtain for the door and 4th wall facing East; which is the direction that we pray and sometimes worship. The roof is made up of branches with foliage weaved in between. You can make the sukkah out of almost anything, but the roof has to be organic and you must be able to view the sky through the roof, it reminds you of where your Father (YHWH) is, and that you are not really apart of this world. The sukkah is only a temporary dwelling; it's only up for 8 days. This is to remind us that our stay

here on this earth as well as our physical bodies are frail and temporal.

You must LIVE in it (unless the weather is inhospitable of course). You must have Simcha (JOY). You must TAKE the bouquet of the palm, willow, and myrtle branch along with the etrog (Israel's version of a lemon), and you must WAVE and PRAISE YHWH with them. It's a get back to nature kind of Holiday, where you can camp out one last time before winter. The whole family can get involved; the kids can make decorations for inside of the sukkah and find the branches for the roof. Dad can build the sukkah itself, mom can furnish the inside of the sukkah and make the food as well.

You involve all your senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. It involves your entire being. You can't help but throw yourself into this Feast.

Nehemiah 8:14 And they found written in the Torah, which had commanded by Mosheh, that the children of Yisra'el should dwell in booths in the festival of the seventh month, 15 and that they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Yerushalayim, saying, "Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written." 16 So the people went out and brought them and made themselves booths, each one on the roof of his house, and in their courtyards and in the courtyards of the House of Elohim, and in the open space of the Water Gate and in the open space of the Gate of Ephrayim. 17 And the entire assembly of those who had come back from the captivity made booths and sat under the booths, for since the days of Yeshua son of Nun until that day the children of Yisra'el had not done so. And there was very great rejoicing. 18 And day by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Torah of Elohim. And they performed the festival seven days. And on the eighth day there was an assembly, according to the right-ruling.

Here in Nehemiah chapters eight we see that a portion of Judah has returned from Babylonian captivity. We also see the model for the modern synagogue service, but we also see that Sukkot had not been celebrated since the time of Yehoshuah (Joshuah)! As a result of recognizing this, it started a REVIVAL in the truest sense of the word! And if you really search the Scriptures, you will see EVERY

instance of revival was brought about by re-discovering of the Torah all over again, and or the people recognizing their failing to keep Torah and decide then and there to do it unto YHWH with all their being.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim, and the Word was Elohim. 2He was in the beginning with Elohim. 3All came to be through Him,<sup>a</sup> and without Him not even one came to be that came to be. 4In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. 6There was a man sent from Elohim, whose name was Yohanan. 7This one came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all might believe through him. 8He was not that Light, but that he might bear witness of that Light. 9He was the true Light, which enlightens every man, coming into the world. 10He was in the world, and the world came to be through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. 12But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of Elohim, to those believing in His Name, 13who were born, not of blood nor of the desire of flesh nor of the desire of man, but of Elohim. 14And the Word became flesh and pitched His tent<sup>b</sup> among us, and we saw His esteem, esteem as of an only brought- forth of a father, complete in favour and truth. (The Scriptures)

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (KJV)

We see in this passage of the Renewed Covenant (New Testament) that the word "dwelt" in John 1:14 of the King James version is the same Hebrew word for "tabernacle" is the same word for sukkah. So we can say: "The Word became flesh and placed His sukkah among us." This is a hint to when the Messiah was born, for this is the prophetic fulfillment of this Scriptural Feast of YHWH.

In the Gospel of Luke we see the story of the birth of Messiah.

Luke 1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem;

(because he was of the house and lineage of David:) (KJV)  
Caesar Augustus was a smart guy, he knew that the Jews would be celebrating Sukkot, and that this was a pilgrimage Festival.

Numbers 23:17 Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the L-RD G-d. (KJV)

He knew that all the Jews would be returning to their hometowns and to Jerusalem if at all possible to celebrate Sukkot. So he thought that since everyone would be returning, how convenient it would be to have a census and taxation.

This is why there was no place for Miriam and Yosef (Mary and Joseph) them to stay. According to the Law since Miriam was pregnant with Yeshua they were not required like everyone else to stay in a Sukkah on account of health risk to the Mother and Child. And as it is to this day, it is always life over Law, all the Commandments of Torah can be suspended in a life or death situation except for the matters Murder, Idolatry and Adultery. Yet because there was no room for them in the inn, they ended up fulfilling the commandment of staying in a sukkah. No, sorry to break your romantic Biblical bubble. Yeshua wasn't born in a barn or a cave, but a sukkah. There were animals around because almost all businessmen, in this case and inn keeper, kept animals. Also people were bringing their sacrifices to the Temple so all travelers animals were kept outside as well. If you look at most nativity scenes, you will see that it looks a lot like a sukkah. And isn't it amazing that the "Bread of Life (Jn.6:48)" was born in Bethlehem, meaning, the House of Bread, and was laid in a manger, a feeding trough.

Luke 2:21 And when eight days were completed for Him to be circumcised, His Name was called , the Name given by the messenger before He was conceived in the womb. 22 And when the days of her cleansing according to the Torah of Mosheh were completed, they brought Him to Yerushalayim to present Him to – 23 as it has been written in the Torah of , "Every male who opens the womb shall be called set-apart to " – 24 and to give an offering according to what is said in the Torah of , "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." (the Scriptures)

No Yeshua WAS NOT born on December 25th, this is a date on the solar calendar which we Jews do not use in reckoning the Feast of YHWH. The calendar YHWH goes by is one we keep by the cycles of the moon, a

Lunar calendar. But I will tell you who was born on December 25th; Saturnalia, Mithra, Tammuz, all pagan gods! Hmmm, do you smell a conspiracy here. After all, who choose the date of Decemeber 25th to celebrate Yeshua's birth? Sure wasn't the Jewish Believers! It was the Catholic Church, and sadly the Protestant church never dropped this part of Catholicism when the Reformation took place.

Yeshua apparently was born on Sukkot, and circumcised on Simchat Torah (Rejoicing in the Torah, which is the last day of Sukkot. Simchat Torah is when we read the last portion of the Torah and start all over again back in Genesis one. Yeshua, the Living Torah, the First and the Last, the Aleph and the Tav, was brought into the Abrahamic Covenant of circumcision on the time we rejoice in the Written and the Living Torah!

Matt.7:1 And after six days Jesus (Yeshua) taketh Peter, James, and John (Kefa, Ya'akov and Yochanan) his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,  
2And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.  
3And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.  
4Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus (Yeshua), Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.  
5While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.  
6And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.  
7And Jesus (Yeshua) came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.  
8And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus (Yeshua) only. (KJV)

This passage has been grossly misunderstood by the majority of the Christian community. This passage really makes no sense unless you understand the Torah, Judaism, and Jewish Laws and Customs. Many have thought this passage to say that Kefa (Peter) wanted to build a shrine to worship Yehshua, Moshe and Eliyahu, because the word tabernacle is used making one think of the Tabernacle in the desert. But this is the same word for sukkah. So Kefa was zealous to keep the Commandments, he thought that if Moshe and Eliyahu was staying for the Feast of Sukkot, that he and the other talmidim (disciples) would build each one a sukkah, because it was required by Torah that each

household have their own sukkah.

John chapter 7 also speaks of Yeshua celebrating Sukkot at the risk of His own life. And on Simchat Torah, the last day of Sukkot, which was also the time of year where there was a big ceremony where the Levites would carry water to the Altar to wash it. This is when Yeshua proclaimed Himself as the Messiah and said:

John 7:37... "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (KJV)

So hopefully you've seen the birth of the Messiah in a new light, and hopefully you have seen that Sukkot is for you to celebrate too, it a Feast of YHWH NOT a "Jewish holiday."

Shalom, and Chag Semeach Sukkot!

Peace, and have a Happy Sukkot!

-- Rabbi Yehudah