

Feast of Tabernacles



“Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine.” (Deuteronomy 16:13)

FEAST OF TABERNACLES

In the sacred Scriptures, the annual seven-day Feast of Tabernacles is also called the Feast of Ingathering and the Feast of Booths.

“... and the feast of ingathering ... is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.” (Exod. 23:16)

**“Ye shall dwell in booths seven days....”
(Lev. 23:42)**

The Book of Deuteronomy describes the Feast of Tabernacles as follows:

“Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine:

“And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates.

**“Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice.”
(Deut. 16:13-15)**

What was the purpose or the meaning of this feast? The Israelites dwelled in booths to represent their separation from Egypt in the Exodus and the period of their sojourn in the Wilderness of Sinai before entering the Land of Promise. They first dwelled in booths at Succoth, which was on the Egyptian side of the Red Sea, and their temporary abode continued on into the wilderness condition. Not only did the Feast of Tabernacles remind them of God's providential leadings, but also it was a feast of rejoicing, thanksgiving, and the making of vows to the Lord.

“Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty.” (Deut. 16:16)

The Mosaic Law required all Israelite males above a certain age to observe three feasts each year “in the place” God designated. (Of course that place later became Jerusalem.) The three feasts were the “feast of unleavened bread,” the “feast of weeks,” and the “feast of tabernacles.”

The first feast, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, was associated with the Passover. However, the reference was not merely to the eating of the Passover lamb, which occurred in one

night, but to the whole seven-day feast that followed. The Feast of Unleavened Bread or Passover was the beginning of the ecclesiastical year of the Jews. The second feast, the Feast of Weeks, was related to Pentecost. Seven sabbaths (seven times seven days, that is, 49 days) were counted out on the calendar to point up the fiftieth day, which was called Pentecost (Lev. 23:15,16). In fact, the word "Pentecost" means "fifty." The third feast was the Feast of Tabernacles.

To get a proper understanding of the relationship of the feasts, we should keep in mind that, as previously stated, Passover occurred at the start of the Israelites' ecclesiastical year, specifically in the month of Nisan or Abib, signifying "green ears" (Exod. 13:4).

"And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." (Exod. 12:1,2)

On the fourteenth day of the first month, Abib, the service began with the killing of the Passover lamb, which was originally eaten on the fifteenth day (Exod. 12:6,8). In the New Testament, at the time of the First Advent, the antitype of the Passover lamb was fulfilled in Jesus. Accordingly, it is stated, "Christ our

passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7). Aside from the all-important lesson with Jesus, the primary lesson of the Feast of Passover was the sparing or passing over of Israel's firstborn on the night of the tenth plague—even though, subsequently, the entire nation was mightily delivered through the Red Sea. In other words, the passing over of the nation through the sea was a secondary lesson, despite the fact that great numbers of Israelites were rescued.

Then came the Feast of Pentecost, which was approximately in the middle of the period between the beginning of the ecclesiastical year in the spring and the beginning of the civil year in the fall. What significant event happened on the Day of Pentecost in the beginning of the Christian or Gospel Age? The Holy Spirit came upon the waiting disciples (Acts 2:1-4). After Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension, the disciples waited in an upper room according to instruction. On the fiftieth day, the Day of Pentecost, God showed His recognition and acceptance of the Church, based upon Jesus' previous sacrifice and death on Calvary, by shedding forth the Holy Spirit upon the waiting disciples. The blessing on the Church began at that time; that is, officially, from a technical standpoint, the Lord started to deal with the consecrated of the Gospel Age as a group from that moment on.

While the Feast of Passover emphasized primarily the passing over of the firstborn of Israel, the cardinal lesson taught was the death of the lamb. Jesus is the “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). The firstborn were spared in the Feast of Passover by the sprinkling of blood and by *partaking of the lamb*, and so in antitype, *Christ* is personally emphasized in the first feast. And the second feast, the Feast of Pentecost, emphasizes in antitype the Lord’s dealings with *the Church* and the attendant blessings in the Gospel Age.

“Also on the *tenth day* of this seventh month there shall be a *day of atonement*: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

**“Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The *fifteenth day* of this seventh month shall be the *feast of tabernacles* for seven days unto the LORD.”
(Lev. 23:27,34)**

In reading these verses, we notice that the Feast of Tabernacles occurred *after* the Day of Atonement. The Feast of Tabernacles began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, whereas the Day of Atonement occurred on the tenth day of the seventh month. Both were observed in the seventh month of the *ecclesiastical* year of the Hebrew calendar. However, from the standpoint of the *civil* calendar, the beginning of the seventh

month was the first day of the year. And so we find that Jews today recognize the first day of the seventh month as Rosh Hashanah, that is, the start of the new year on the civil calendar.

From a practical standpoint in Old Testament times, the Day of Atonement represented Israel's atonement as a people as the result of the sacrifices on that day. It represented their cleansing from sin and the beginning of their civil calendar year. Thus the nation of Israel regarded the Day of Atonement as the most important day of the year.

The Israelites observed the three feasts—Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles—with different attitudes or emotions. (1) The Feast of Passover was a time of *great solemnity*. The Israelites ate the lamb in haste because the commemoration pertained to the very deliverance of their lives. And in antitype, Christ is pictured in connection with the roasting of the Passover lamb. The fiery trials he endured leading up to his death, as well as his crucifixion, are all embraced in the sprinkling of blood and in the roasting. (2) In the Feast of Pentecost, there was a *measure of rejoicing* to a limited class of anointed ones, to the Jew first and then, later, to the Gentile. (3) The Feast of Tabernacles pertained to the end of the harvest of the wine and the corn and the bringing of them into the garner. It was a time of *great rejoicing* for the Israelites. Vows were made, and recognition and thanksgiving

were given to Jehovah for all that He had done. Therefore, while the feast was solemn from the perspective of being mandatory, it was, as the last of the three feasts, like the filling out of the divine program in the Israelites' lives. In other words, each year at this time, the people felt that God's purpose had been fulfilled upon them.

“Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.

“And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.

“And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month.

**“Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths.”
(Lev. 23:39-42)**

The Feast of Tabernacles represented Israel's *national* appreciation for God's providences on their behalf. In review, the emphasis of the Feast of Passover was the death of the lamb,

which brought about the deliverance of the firstborn class and, later, the nation. The death of that lamb pictured *Jesus' death* on Calvary. In the Feast of Pentecost, the main antitypical feature was the recognition and development of *the Church*. With the Feast of Tabernacles, however, the antitype pertains primarily to the *world's* future recognition and appreciation of Christ as their Savior. In the Kingdom reign, all will know the Lord God from the least unto the greatest, and all will have to recognize His Son (Jer. 31:34). At that time, mankind will realize God's providences on their behalf, as evidenced in the other feasts. They will see that Christ's sacrifice and death on the Cross, as well as the suffering and development of the Church, were all incidental to and preparatory for the blessings to be conferred on them. In the seventh month in the type, the nation publicly recognized that its national sin had been atoned for, and in the antitype, the blessings of the Kingdom will come to the people in the fullest sense of the word after they recognize that the blood of Christ had atoned for them (Matt. 6:10).

Lessons from the Feast of Tabernacles can be viewed two ways. One way is from the standpoint of the Church's tabernacling condition or sojourn during the Gospel Age; that is, the experiences of the Israelites in the Wilderness of Sinai, going from place to place, picture the experiences of the gospel Church in its journey toward and its ultimate entrance into the land of Canaan,

the Land of Promise—heaven. Moreover, the wilderness experience and sojourn represent the Church's experience during *seven* stages of development. The symbolic seven churches in the second and third chapters of the Book of Revelation show seven successive developments of God's dealings with His people down through the Gospel Age, which finally terminate in glory and resurrection.

During the Feast of Tabernacles, there was a special sabbath or convocation on the first day and also on the eighth day. When viewed from the standpoint of lessons for the gospel Church, the first day represents the holy convocation or gathering and the blessings that came at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the waiting Church. The apostles and disciples subsequently went on their way rejoicing in the truth, and thus began the Gospel Age. The eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles represents the conclusion of the Gospel Age and hence the new beginning of life beyond the veil. The eighth day is a symbol of resurrection as well as of a new beginning. Just as there are seven days in a week and the eighth day begins the next week, so here the eighth day represents the Church in resurrection glory, at the time of their rejoicing, following the conclusion of the antitypical Feast of Tabernacles or sojourning period of the Gospel Age. The first day was a time of rejoicing, but the eighth day will be a time of even greater rejoicing.

A similar lesson of the Feast of Tabernacles can be applied to the millennial or Kingdom reign of Christ, when blessings will come to the human race. With the saving of the world of mankind and their sojourn, the first seven days of the feast represent the seven Creative Days (Gen. 1:3–2:3). The eighth day, then, would be the age beyond the Millennium, the new beginning of an unending great day and time of rejoicing in resurrection. From this standpoint, the world is journeying not only to the resurrection change but also to the age beyond the Millennium, when, according to the Gospel of Luke, those who are accounted worthy to attain that age will not die or marry or be given in marriage any more. This condition will follow their introduction into the eighth Creative Day, a time of great rejoicing with bows of victory in connection with their deliverance (Luke 20:34-36).

These pictures are deep and can be considered in multiple ways. From the *practical* standpoint, the eighth day is the Day of Atonement, which will occur after the harvesting of the firstfruits of the earth. In the New Testament, Jesus is described as being personally the *first* of the firstfruits unto God. He was the anti-typical wave or sheaf offering on the sixteenth day of Nisan; he was the sheaf cut out of the field in death and then resurrected and changed to glory (Lev. 23:9-12). In addition, those comprising the overcoming Church are a kind of “firstfruits unto God” (Rev. 14:4). Thus there is a *firstfruits class* consisting of Jesus first and

later his Church, but *after*-fruits are also implied, that is, a harvesting of *others* (1 Cor. 15:20-23). The after-fruitage, the general harvest, applies to the world of mankind and their salvation, which will follow the development and the glorification of the firstfruits class.

Numbers chapter 29 furnishes details about the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles from the *sacrificial* standpoint. Not only were the Israelites to make and dwell in booths and have a feast of rejoicing, but also they were to offer animals—and the animals have a signification.

“And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work, and ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days.

“And ye shall offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD; *thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year; they shall be without blemish.*” (Num. 29:12,13)

The fifteenth day of the seventh month was a holy convocation in which no servile work was done, and the Israelites kept a feast for seven days. On the first of the seven days, they offered a burnt offering that consisted of thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year.

“And on the second day ye shall offer *twelve young bullocks*, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without spot.” (Num. 29:17)

On the second day, the Israelites offered twelve bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs.

“And on the third day *eleven bullocks*, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish.” (Num. 29:20)

On the third day, they offered eleven bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs. And the offering continued for seven days, as follows:

“And on the fourth day *ten bullocks*, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish.

“And on the fifth day *nine bullocks*, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without spot.

“And on the sixth day *eight bullocks*, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish.

“And on the seventh day *seven bullocks*, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish.” (Num. 29:23,26,29,32)

The signification of these sacrifices, which is very interesting, will have to await another occasion, but we notice certain superficial facts immediately. On each successive day of the Feast of Tabernacles, there was a diminishing of the sacrifice

of the bullocks—that is, one less bullock was offered each day for seven days—but the number of rams and lambs remained constant.

<u>Day</u>	<u>No. of Bullocks</u>	<u>No. of Rams</u>	<u>No. of Lambs</u>
1	13	2	14
2	12	2	14
3	11	2	14
4	10	2	14
5	9	2	14
6	8	2	14
7	7	2	14

Time does not permit discussing the rams or the lambs, but we will speak about the bullocks. The diminishing of the bullocks represents the consuming of a sacrifice that takes place during the Gospel Age. The blessings that are to come upon mankind cannot be applied until, first, Christ has selected his Bride class or Church from the world to be kings and priests unto God (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6). At the end of the Gospel Age, after the kings and priests have all been chosen, then will come Jesus' Kingdom reign, in which he, as the Bridegroom, and his Bride will rule over the world and grant the blessings of restitution promised in Holy Writ (Rev. 3:21; Acts 3:21).

Therefore, the thirteen bullocks on the first day represent the initial period of the Gospel Age, the very beginning, when Jesus and the twelve apostles were on the scene ($1 + 12 = 13$). Because of Jesus' imminent death, the number 13 has taken on an unlucky connotation, the thirteenth being our Lord, the condemned one. The thirteen partook of the Last Supper in the Upper Room. It is much like the convicted criminal in the prison cell; that is, before his electrocution, he is given a last big meal. Thus the number 13 signifies that Jesus was with his apostles, but as time went on, he departed the earthly scene and left only the twelve apostles. Therefore, on the second day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the twelve bullocks picture the twelve apostles, who represent the whole Church, which is a multiple of 12 ($12,000 \times 12 = 144,000$), as shown in Revelation 7:4 and 14:1. Stated another way, in the Book of Revelation, the number 144,000 is used to prefigure the number of the "little flock" (Luke 12:32).

As each successive day of the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles rolled on and the Israelites observed the sacrifices, the burnt offering was continually diminished until finally, on the seventh day, only seven bullocks were offered on the altar. Of the eighth day, the most important day of the feast, the account states:

"On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly: ye shall do no servile work therein:

“But ye shall offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD: *one bullock, one ram, seven lambs of the first year without blemish.*” (Num. 29:35,36)

On the eighth day, only *one* bullock was sacrificed, showing that the offering had been consumed, that the Bride class was complete and united with her Lord in resurrection Kingdom glory, *being one with him*. This time setting, soon to reach fulfillment, will take place beyond the veil. It will be a new start, a new period, a new picture.

In summation, the primary lesson of Numbers chapter 29 is that on the eighth day, following the conclusion of the antitypical sacrifice, the world of mankind will recognize that Christ is indeed the Savior. With his Church, he will be revealed in power and great glory, and knowledge of the Lord God and truth will then be abroad in the earth (Rev. 11:15). The world will see, with the eye of recognition and faith, that Jesus is Lord. They will appreciate the fact God allowed the delay in Kingdom blessings and in the termination of the permission of evil so that conditions of darkness would develop the Church. In other words, each member of the Church class needs to be tried and proven before being given the privilege of reigning with Jesus. Following the selection and the glorification of this company will come the promised great “feast of fat things” for the people of earth.

“And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

“And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.

“He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it.

“And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” (Isa. 25:6-9)

While certain prophecies pertaining to the establishment of Christ’s Kingdom indicate that in the future, the Feast of Passover and the Feast of Pentecost may be observed to a certain extent, only *one feast* will be a mandatory requirement: the *Feast of Tabernacles*. Hear what the Prophet Zechariah says:

“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the *feast of tabernacles*.

“And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship

the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.” (Zech. 14:16,17)

In the Kingdom, all nations will be required to send representatives to Jerusalem, the future capital of the world, to observe the Feast of Tabernacles (Isa. 2:2,3; 52:1; 62:7; Jer. 3:17; Joel 3:16,17; Zech. 8:22). The representatives of the nations will gather at the new temple, called Ezekiel’s Temple or the Third Temple, which will be built at the beginning of the Kingdom (Ezekiel chapters 40-44; Psa. 65:4; Hag. 2:6-9).

Praise to our King, who is coming to reign;
Glory to Jesus, the Lamb that was slain.
Life and salvation his empire shall bring,
Joy to the nations when Jesus is King.

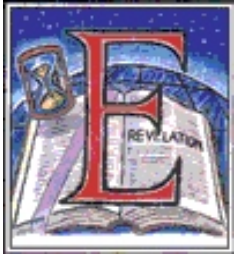
All men shall dwell in his marvelous light;
Races long severed his love shall unite.
Justice and truth from his scepter shall spring;
Wrong will be ended when Jesus is King.

Men shall learn right in his Kingdom of peace;
Freedom shall flourish and wisdom increase.
Foe shall be friend when his triumph we sing;
Sword shall be sickle when Jesus is King.

All shall come back who have lived long ago;
Love like a banner shall over them flow.
Sin shall be conquered as light shines within,
Hail happy day when Jesus is King!

Frank Shallieu

The Keys of Revelation



**END TIME
PROPHECIES
REVEALED**

The curious symbols and visions of the Book of Revelation mystify scholar and layman alike. *The Keys of Revelation* unlocks the secret code

language by presenting a solid flow of interpretation never before captured in any written treatise on the Book of Revelation. Every verse is explained without compromise to politics or organized religion, differentiating between “churchianity” and Christianity.

This 723-page book contains knowledge that will astound the honest reader and cause the humble Christian, seeking after righteousness and truth, to bow down before the Great Creator in thanksgiving . . . for “the time is at hand” to unseal “the sayings of the prophecy” of the Book of Revelation (Rev. 22:10).

