

John, Part 28 – The Revelation of Jesus Christ – The Feast of Tabernacles

Jesus' Galilean ministry lasted 12 to 18 months. During the year of His popularity, Jesus did many miracles and revealed Himself to be the Son of God. As we have noticed, the Jews, specifically the Jewish leaders, became more hostile toward Jesus and increasingly sought to kill him. John 6 begins the season of His withdrawal from Galilee and the year of opposition.

John 7:1 NKJV ¹After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him.

After John 6, there is a period of approximately six months before John 7. Matthew, Mark and Luke show the events of this time.

John 7:2–5NKJV ²Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. ³His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. ⁴For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." ⁵For even His brothers did not believe in Him.

Notice His brother's sarcasm and unbelief. Unbelief blinds the mind and eyes. Since they did not believe or accept Him as the Messiah, all they could see was Jesus their earthly brother. They did not believe that Jesus had done all of the things that were being reported. "*If You do these things, show Yourself to the world, (verse 4).*"

The Jew's Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. Jesus was a Jew and followed the traditions and religious customs of the Jews. He attended the celebrations, feasts, and sacrifices. He walked in obedience to the Law that God gave Israel.

The Feast of Tabernacles is known as the Festival of Sukkot, "The Season of our Joy." The Feast of Tabernacles is the seventh and final feast that God gave Israel.

There are seven feasts of the Lord.

1. **Passover** began the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month of the year (March/April). Passover reminded Israel that God delivered them from Egypt and passed over their houses, Exodus 12:27. (*Christ is our Passover. His blood covers us so that the judgment and wrath passes over us.*)
2. **The Feast of Unleavened Bread** was celebrated in the first month of the Israelite year to celebrate that they came out of Egypt. (*Jesus is the Christian's true Bread of Life.*)
3. **The Feast of Harvest or Firstfruits** was one day after Passover, to celebrate the firstfruits of their harvests. (*Firstfruits is a reminder of Christ's resurrection and the promise of resurrection for all believers.*)
4. **The Feast of Pentecost or Weeks** occurs the day after the seventh Sabbath of Firstfruits (May/June). (*Pentecost is the day the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the church.*)
5. **The Feast of Trumpets** is the tenth day of the seventh month (September/October). It ushered in and consecrated the seventh month as the sabbatical month. (*The blowing of the trumpets is associated with Christ's return.*)
6. **The Day of Atonement** (Yom Kippur) is the tenth day of the seventh month (September/October). The Day of Atonement is when the sins of the priest and people were put away. (*The Day of Atonement represents the redeeming work of Christ and the crucifixion. Hebrews 9*)
7. **The Feast of Tabernacles** (Booths, Ingathering, or Sukkoth) celebrated God's

deliverance and protection and the completion of harvest. (*The Feast of Tabernacles is a testimony of the peace and prosperity of the reign of Christ.*)

Sukkoth is observed in the fall from the 15th to the 22nd of Tishri or October. During the feast, Jewish families construct small hastily built huts in which they eat during the festival.

The Feast of Tabernacles came to be known as the “Festival of Ingathering” of the harvest. The last day of the Feast was a special Day of worship. Worshipers would take up palm branches and have a procession around the reading desk. They would recite prayers and worship God. They make a lulav from palm branches, willows, myrtles and one citron. A citron is a large fruit that is similar to a lemon. During the procession around the table, they would smite palm branches on the ground in remembrance of the smiting stroke of the sacrificial animals.

The Feast of Tabernacles occurred four days after the completion of the Days of Atonement. Sukkot represents a time of renewed fellowship with God.

Nothing just happens in the Bible. After atonement comes days of rejoicing. This is true in Christ.

The Feast of Tabernacles became synonymous with God’s redemption of His people. This feast points to God’s final victory over evil. God’s people, who have lived in the “wilderness,” will live in God’s promised land forever.

Isaiah 53:6 NIV ⁶We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and **the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**

This is a day of giving thanks to God. This is a day for offering praises to God. It is a day of remembering all of God’s gifts. It is a day of rejoicing and celebration. As we come closer to the end of the year, we should begin celebrating all of the victories God has given us. Everyone who experiences Christ’s atonement has a reason to celebrate and rejoice. Everyone who has been blessed and filled with His Spirit should rejoice. He has delivered us from the hand of our oppressors.

The hosts of Israel were commanded to keep the Feasts.

Exodus 23:16 tells us they were to: “Celebrate the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in your crops from the field.”

John 7:2 says: “Now the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles was at hand.”

John 7:6–8 NKJV ⁶Then Jesus said to them, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. ⁷The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil. ⁸You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come.”

Jesus’ brothers could not understand what He was talking about. “My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready.”

Jesus is talking to them about the Atonement and the Feast of Ingathering. The Lord was looking at the time He would pay the price for sins of mankind and the joy that will follow when the harvest comes in.

John 7:9–11 NKJV ⁹When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee. ¹⁰But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. ¹¹Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, “Where is He?”

Jesus’ brothers and the Jewish crowds did not understand what He was doing. His brothers mocked Him and did not believe, John 7:1-9. The Jews who sought Him were not interested in worshipping Him, but in destroying Him.

John 7:12-13 NKJV And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, "He is good"; others said, "No, on the contrary, He deceives the people." However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.

The Jewish crowds had several false beliefs about Jesus, John 7:10-19.

- They said He was only a good man.
- Others said He was a deceiver.
- Others said He was not important enough to defend.
- Others said He was unaccredited and did not know letters, (vs 15).
- Others in the crowd said He has a demon or just another man, John 7:20-31.
- The rulers and authorities said He was another troublemaker, John 7:32-36.

John 7:14 NKJV ¹⁴ Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught.

All of this was going on while the Feast of Tabernacles was in process. For eight days, they were in Judea for celebration and worship of God. They were there to praise God for all of His blessing, deliverance and protection. For eight days, they stood in the presence of the Son of God and did not know it. For eight days, they questioned, debated, and challenged the Son of God. For eight days, they misunderstood everything He said.

John 7:37-39 NKJV ³⁷ On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." ³⁹ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

The last day of the feast Jesus proclaimed the greatest spiritual feast of all. These people had been living with strong religious tradition. They had been keeping the Feasts regularly. They were able to follow the ceremony of the Feast.

Now, Jesus offers rivers of the Holy Spirit that would flow out of them. He said, "Streams of living water will flow out of their heart."

True spiritual joy comes when the Holy Spirit dwells within. There is GREAT JOY when the Spirit begins flowing. True worshipers must worship God in spirit and in truth. Their form and ritual was not satisfying. Let them worship God in Spirit and in truth.

Religion cannot produce this kind of worship. No amount of ceremony or feasting can give this kind of joy. Jesus is talking about rivers of living water. He said these rivers of living water would flow out of you.

The river will flow out when the Holy Spirit is given.

John 7:39 NLT ³⁹ (When He said "living water," He was speaking of the Spirit, who would be given to everyone believing in Him. But the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into His glory.)

Jesus is promising "Living Water." This is the promise of the Father.

Acts 2:39 (Amplified) ³⁹ For the promise [of the Holy Spirit] is to and for you and your children, and to and for all that are far away, [even] to and for as many as the Lord our God invites and bids to come to Himself.

Jesus is talking about Living Water. He is telling them that their praise and worship will be made alive by the Holy Spirit. He is talking about real worship and praise. He is giving something better to the believer. They will have real joy. They were at the Feast of Tabernacles and were supposed to be giving their highest praise for what God had given

them.

Once again look at this with me.

First comes the Days of Atonement, when sins are covered.

Then comes the Feast of Sukkot (Tabernacles), which is a week of rejoicing. The Feast of Tabernacles is a time to rejoice over a bountiful harvest.

Christ must die on the cross and make atonement for our sins. Then comes the reward for His suffering. That which is lost is gathered in. We celebrate because we know our sins are forgiven. The Holy Spirit has been given and there is fullness of joy.

We are living in the week of rejoicing. The atonement has been made. The Holy Spirit has been sent. These are days of celebration. The harvest is being gathered and fellowship with God has been restored. There is one more point that this celebration demonstrates.

During the eight days of the Feast of Tabernacles, the people were commanded to dwell in temporary housing. There is an implied message that we cannot afford to miss. Everyone who has been covered by the blood of the Atonement has reason for celebration down here. This celebration is in a temporary house. Very soon we will be celebrating in the heavenly temple of God. These temporary houses will be laid down. The ultimate fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles is the great Day of Ingathering of the harvest. We eagerly wait for the day when the Lord will gather His own unto Him and we shall tabernacle with Him.