

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

BIBLE TEXT : Leviticus 23:33-44; Numbers 29:12-39; Deuteronomy 16:13-17; Revelation 14:14-20

LESSON 88 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "The LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice" (Deuteronomy 16:15).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Leviticus 23:33-44 (KJV)

³³ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

³⁴ 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.

³⁵ On the first day *shall be* an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work *therein*.

³⁶ Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it *is* a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work *therein*.

³⁷ These *are* the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day:

³⁸ Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD.

³⁹ 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.

⁴⁰ 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.

⁴¹ 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.

⁴² Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths:

⁴³ That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God.

⁴⁴ And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.

Numbers 29:12-39 (KJV)

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I The Feast of Tabernacles, or the Feast of Ingathering

1 This feast was observed the 15th of the 7th month (October) for seven days at the end of the harvests, Leviticus 23:33, 34;

Exodus 23:16 (KJV)

¹⁶ And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, *which is* in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.

2 The 1st and 8th days were holy convocations and the intervening days were observed with offerings, Leviticus 23:35, 36, 39

3 All Israel were to rejoice over the fruits of the increase as bestowed by God, Deuteronomy 16:13-15; Leviticus 23:40

4 All the males were to appear and each give according to the blessing of the LORD, Deuteronomy 16:16, 17;

Exodus 23:17 (KJV)

¹⁷ Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord GOD.

Exodus 34:23-24 (KJV)

²³ Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel.

²⁴ For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God thrice in the year.

5 Burnt offerings, meat offerings, and sin offerings were made daily, requiring 199 beasts, Numbers 29:12-39; Leviticus 23:37

II The Feast Observed in Booths or Tabernacles

1 The booths were built of boughs of palm trees, thick trees, and willows, Leviticus 23:40;

Nehemiah 8:14-18 (KJV)

¹⁴ And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month:

¹⁵ And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as *it is* written.

¹⁶ So the people went forth, and brought *them*, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim.

¹⁷ And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.

¹⁸ Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day *was* a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.

2 The feast was a memorial of Israel's schooling in the hot, dry wilderness, Leviticus 23:41-44

III The Feast a Type of the "Harvest" in the Last Days

1 The Reaper appears on a white cloud, like the Son of man, with a sharp sickle, Revelation 14:14;

Matthew 24:30 (KJV)

¹² 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:

¹³ 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:

¹⁴ And their meat offering *shall be* of flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals unto every bullock of the thirteen bullocks, two tenth deals to each ram of the two rams,

¹⁵ And a several tenth deal to each lamb of the fourteen lambs:

¹⁶ And one kid of the goats *for* a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, his meat offering, and his drink offering.

¹⁷ And on the second day *ye shall offer* twelve young bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without spot:

¹⁸ And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner:

¹⁹ And one kid of the goats *for* a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and the meat offering thereof, and their drink offerings.

²⁰ And on the third day eleven bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish;

²¹ And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner:

²² And one goat *for* a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and his meat offering, and his drink offering.

²³ And on the fourth day ten bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

²⁴ Their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner:

²⁵ And one kid of the goats *for* a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, his meat offering, and his drink offering.

²⁶ And on the fifth day nine bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the first year without spot:

²⁷ And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner:

²⁸ And one goat *for* a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and his meat

³⁰ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

2 The reaping is proclaimed, because the harvest of the earth is ripe, Revelation 14:15, 16;

Matthew 24:30-31 (KJV)

³⁰ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

³¹ And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Matthew 13:41-42 (KJV)

⁴¹ The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

⁴² And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Mark 4:26-29 (KJV)

²⁶ And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

²⁷ And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

²⁸ For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

²⁹ But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

3 Another reaper appears, an angel also having a sharp sickle, Revelation 14:17;

Matthew 13:49 (KJV)

⁴⁹ So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

4 The reaping of the clusters of the vine is also proclaimed, being fully ripe, Revelation 14:18

5 They are cast into the wine press and trodden without the city, Revelation 14:19, 20;

Isaiah 63:1-4 (KJV)

¹ Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this *that is* glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

² Wherefore *art thou* red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

³ I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people *there was* none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

⁴ For the day of vengeance *is* in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

NOTES:

The successive harvests in the Promised Land covered a long period. They began with the barley harvest in the first month and continued through the wheat harvest. the gathering of the grapes, the olives, the figs the pomegranates, and other fruits, until the seventh month; at which time there was a great ingathering of the bounty which God provided annually for Israel. The feast of tabernacles *was* instituted, in the first place, to remind Israel of God's goodness toward them, and to give them thankful hearts toward Him for His bountiful provision, somewhat similar to our Thanksgiving Day in the fall of the year.

The Observances Ushering In the Feast of Tabernacles

This feast was preceded by the sounding of trumpets on the first day of the seventh month and by the great Day of Atonement on the tenth day which was a day of mourning for Israel, reminding them of their past sins and God's great mercy in providing the Atonement by which alone they were reconciled to Him And then on the fifteenth day began the feast of tabernacles, continuing for seven days and a final convocation added on the eighth day. This was a season of rejoicing and

offering, and his drink offering.

²⁹ And on the sixth day eight bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

³⁰ And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner:

³¹ And one goat *for* a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, his meat offering, and his drink offering.

³² And on the seventh day seven bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

³³ And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner:

³⁴ And one goat *for* a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, his meat offering, and his drink offering.

³⁵ On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly: ye shall do no servile work *therein*:

³⁶ 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:

³⁷ Their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullock, for the ram, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner:

³⁸ And one goat *for* a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and his meat offering, and his drink offering.

³⁹ These *things* ye shall do unto the LORD in your set feasts, beside your vows, and your freewill offerings, for your burnt offerings, and for your meat offerings, and for your drink offerings, and for your peace offerings.

Deuteronomy 16:13-17 (KJV)

¹³ Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine:

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the

praising God for His goodness to them, both materially and spiritually. And how different Israel's destiny might have been, had they retained the spirit of this feast in their hearts and had been obedient to the God unto whom they owed their all. They might then have joined with David in his Psalm of praise: "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters...."

On each day of this feast Israel was to present burnt offerings, meat offerings, drink offerings, and sin offerings unto the LORD; besides their freewill offerings, all of which was to issue out of the gratitude of their hearts. And they were to build booths and live in them during this week to remind them of their days of schooling, after their deliverance out of Egypt, when they dwelt in tents and wandered in the wilderness.

The Typical Significance of the Feast

The feast of tabernacles like the two preceding annual feasts, reaches beyond its lessons to Israel and points out great events centuries ahead in the last days. John the Revelator caught a vision of the Reaper upon a cloud, like unto the Son of man. "And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe" (Revelation 14:15). And to this great day of the "harvest" Jesus Himself also referred, when speaking of the last days: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matthew 24:30, 31). This is the great ingathering of "his elect." And who knows but what the sounding of the trumpets prior to the feast of tabernacles was symbolic of "a great sound of a trumpet" which shall announce the ingathering of God's elect? Also that Day of Atonement bespeaks the Lamb that was slain, without whom there would be no harvest of the elect. The Lamb is the theme of the tribute of praise by that vast throng around the Throne above, "saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Revelation 5:12).

A Second Great Harvest

But the revelator tells us of a second "harvest" which shall take place in the last days. "And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire [bespeaking judgment]; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs" (Revelation 14:17-20). God's wrath toward sin is as infinite as His mercy toward sinners.

Those Who Perished in the Wilderness and Those Who Won the Victory

The booths which were erected and in which the Children of Israel dwelt during the feast of tabernacles reminded them of those forty years in the wilderness, and perhaps reminded that younger generation, which reached the Promised Land, of their

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:

¹⁷ Every man *shall give* as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee.

Revelation 14:14-20 (KJV)

¹⁴ And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud *one* sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

¹⁵ And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

¹⁶ And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

¹⁷ And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

¹⁸ And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

¹⁹ And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

²⁰ And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand *and* six hundred furlongs.

elders who through unbelief failed of their high calling and bleached their bones in the desert sands. It is a fearful thing for one to fall short of his privileges in Christ Jesus. Jeremiah tells us of a people who cried, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jeremiah 8:20). But there were some even in Old Testament times "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (Hebrews 11:33-40).

The Fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles

The first of these three annual feasts, the Passover, was fulfilled to the letter when Jesus entered Jerusalem on the 10th day of the month Abib, and was crucified and died upon the cross just at the hour of the evening sacrifice on the 15th day. The second feast was fulfilled just fifty days later, on the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost descended like a mighty rushing wind, and the hundred and twenty in the upper room were endued with power for service; when the Church was founded, and the Gospel was openly proclaimed to the Gentile nations. The third, the feast of tabernacles, will be fulfilled when the Lord returns, and founds His millennial Kingdom, and the will of God is done in earth as it is in Heaven "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" (Zechariah 14:16).

QUESTIONS

- 1 What time of the year was the feast of tabernacles observed, and what did it celebrate?
- 2 Why did the Children of Israel build booths and dwell in them during this feast? How many days did it continue?
- 3 What day do we observe in our land that is similar to the feast of tabernacles?
- 4 What offerings were presented unto the LORD daily which hallowed this feast? What did the offerings typify?
- 5 What was God's chief aim in instituting the feast of tabernacles for the Children of Israel?
- 6 What teachings in the New Testament does the feast of tabernacles typify?
- 7 What two observances in the seventh month preceded the feast of tabernacles? and how are they fulfilled in New Testament teachings?
- 8 What three major annual feasts were instituted at which the males in Israel had to be present?
- 9 Which of these feasts have been fulfilled? Describe the events which fulfill them.
- 10 When and in what way will the final feast of these three be fulfilled? Quote the Scripture.