

Week #:	61	Text:	- - - - -	Title:	Hebrew Roots: Sukkot
Songs:	Come Bless the Lord				
	Shout to the Lord				
	Better Is One Day – Kutless				
	Here I Am to Worship				

**Hebrew Roots: Sukkot**

**Feast of Tabernacles**

(With excerpts from the book, *His Glory Revealed* by John Hagee)

God has always wanted to “tabernacle” among us from the very beginning as we see in these verses:

Genesis 2:8

They heard the voice of ADONAI, God, walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, so the man and his wife ... among the trees in the garden.

Exodus 25:8, 9

And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle

John 1:14

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

God had such a special relationship with the first man and woman that He came every evening to the garden. He hated it when that had to end. Years later, God chose one man to have covenant with. That man was Abraham. By the time that Moses and the children of Israel had escaped Egypt, God was once again trying to bridge the gap between Himself and man by creating the Law and building a place He could dwell with man (the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle). This, too, failed, but God knew He was going to send His only Son to bridge that gap. I think it is funny that God, when He set up this feast to remind the children of the tents they lived in for 40 years, He was actually setting the stage for His Son to come and Tabernacle (or Sukkot) among men and establish another covenant.

While researching the Feast of Tabernacles for this lesson, I realized the book, “His Glory Revealed” by John Hagee, was a rich resource. Most of this lesson was taken from that book.

“The Hebrew word for “feast,” moed, means “a set or appointed time.” Of very similar meaning is mikrah, indicating “a rehearsal or recital.” Each feast, like a dress rehearsal, offers a significant portrait of part of God’s prophetic plan. The combined seven feasts, divinely instituted shortly after the people of Israel had left the slavery of Egypt, would be a spiritual blueprint of what lies ahead for Israel, Jerusalem, and the rest of the world.

The Feast of Tabernacles, known today as Sukkot, is held by divine decree on the fifteenth through twenty-first days of Tishri, September or October on the Julian calendar. The festival begins after the ingathering of the fall harvest and is the happiest of the Biblical feasts. It celebrates God’s bounty in nature and God’s protection, symbolized by the fragile booths in which the Israelites dwelled in the wilderness.”

Leviticus 23:1-2, 33-44

Adonai said to Moshe (Moses), 2 “Tell the people of Isra’el: ‘The designated times of Adonai which you are to proclaim as holy convocations are my designated times....

33 Adonai said to Moshe (Moses), 34 “Tell the people of Isra’el, ‘On the fifteenth day of this seventh month is the feast of Sukkot (Tabernacles) for seven days to Adonai. 35 On the first day there is to be a holy convocation; do not do any kind of ordinary work. 36 For seven days you are to bring an offering made by fire to Adonai; on the eighth day you are to have a holy convocation and bring an offering made by fire to Adonai ; it is a day of public assembly; do not do any kind of ordinary work....

39 ““But on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered the produce of the land, you are to observe the festival of Adonai seven days; the first day is to be a complete rest and the eighth day is to be a complete rest. 40 On the first day you are to take choice fruit, palm fronds, thick branches and river-willows, and celebrate in the presence of Adonai your God for seven days. 41 You are to observe it as a feast to Adonai seven days in the year; it is a permanent regulation, generation after generation; keep it in the seventh month. 42 You are to live in sukkot for seven days; every citizen of Isra’el is to live in a sukkah, 43 so that generation after generation of you will know that I made the people of Isra’el live in sukkot when I brought them out of the land of Egypt; I am Adonai your God.”

44 Thus Moshe (Moses) announced to the people of Isra’el the designated times of Adonai.

“The Feast of Tabernacles is also called the Feast of Lights. To commemorate the pillar of fire that led the children of Israel by night, at the end of the first day of the feast the Priests and the Levites went down to the court of the women where four huge golden candelabra had been placed on bases fifty cubits high. [That is 75 feet high.] Each candelabrum had four branches and each branch terminated in a huge basin in which rested a twisted wick—made of holy garments the priests had worn in the previous year. While the Levites and priests sang praises and waved torches, sixteen young men of priestly descent climbed ladders in order to pour more than seven gallons of pure oil into each basin. When the great wicks were kindled, the light from the flames was so intense that Mishnah says there was no courtyard in Jerusalem that was not lit up with the light.”

Some might be unfamiliar with the word “Mishnah” so I got the following definitions from Google search:

**Mishnah** – an authoritative collection of exegetical material embodying the oral tradition of Jewish law and forming the first part of the Talmud.

**Talmud** – The body of Jewish civil and ceremonial law and legend comprising the Mishnah and the Gemara. There are two versions of the Talmud: the Babylonian Talmud (which dates from the 5th century AD but includes earlier material) and the earlier Palestinian or Jerusalem Talmud.

**Gemara** – A rabbinical commentary on the Mishnah, forming the second part of the Talmud.

John Hagee goes on to say: “How fitting that Jesus stood in the midst of His people and proclaimed, “I am the light of the world” John 9:5 (NKJV).”

While researching this scripture I noticed two things:

- 1) It happened on the day following the Festival of Tabernacles (John 7:37 says, “Now on the last day of the festival...” and John 8:1 & 2 says, “But Yeshua went to the Mount of Olives. At daybreak, he appeared again in the Temple Court...”)

- 2) Jesus said this twice. The first time was recorded in John 8:12, “Yeshua spoke to them again: “I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light which gives life.” And again in John 9:5 but this time, He found a blind man and healed him as an object lesson for the still unbelieving people (John 9:1-5 says, “As Yeshua passed along, he saw a man blind from birth... Yeshua answered, His blindness... happened so that God’s power might be seen at work in him. As long as it is day, we must keep doing the work of the One who sent me; the night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” Jesus said this while the image of the great lights burning in the courtyard was still fresh in the people’s minds.

## TREE LIMBS

God was very specific about the four limbs the people were to wave. Leviticus 23:40 says, “On the first day you are to take choice fruit, palm fronds, thick branches and river-willows, and celebrate in the presence of Adonai your God for seven days.” Every one of these have a hidden meaning.

John Hagee tells the significance: “The use of the lulav and etrog, is an ancient practice that dates from the time of the second Temple. The lulav and Etrog are also called the four species – citron, palm, myrtle, and willow. The identification of the four species is based on Leviticus 23:40: “And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook...” The Etrog, or citron, remains a separate entity, but the branches are bound together around one palm branch and called the lulav.



The Etrog is a yellow citrus fruit about the size of a lemon, but not as sour. For generations, as the Jews celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles, they held the lulav in one hand and the Etrog in the other, waving them in all four directions, north, south, east, and west.



Over the years, in an effort to understand why God commanded this ritual, the Jews have ascribed various meanings to the four species. One belief is that all four species cannot exist without water, and the Feast of Tabernacles did include prayers for rain to ensure that next year’s harvest. Another idea is that the four species represent Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, or that they represent four classes of Jews. The first class, represented by the tasty, fragrant citron, is made up of those Jews who have knowledge of the Torah and do good deeds.”



“The palm date has taste, but no smell, so it represents Jews who know the Torah but do not practice good deeds. “

“The myrtle has aroma, but no taste, so it represents Jews who perform good deeds but do not know the Torah...”

“...and the willow has neither taste nor aroma, so it portrays Jews who neither know Torah or do good deeds.”



“I believe, however, that the true meaning is found in the way these items are used in the Sukkot ceremony. At the beginning of the ceremony, the etrog is

held upside down and in the opposite hand, but by the end of the service it is turned right side up and joined with the lulav.

I believe that the citron may represent the Gentiles who have been brought into covenant with God through Jesus Christ. As Paul wrote to the Ephesians, at one time we were “without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now, in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” (2:12-13 NKJV).

There is one other image from the Temple celebration of Sukkot that I’d like you to see. To commemorate the drawing of water from the rock at Horeb (Exodus 17:1-7), on the morning of the first day of the festival and everyday thereafter, a priest carried a large golden ewer from the temple mount down to the spring of Siloam. Surrounded by jubilant worshipers, he drew water from the pool, then returned to the Temple, walking through the water gate, which led to the inner court. A great cheering crowd waited for him near the altar. Priests blew the ceremonial silver trumpets, and other priests chanted the words of Isaiah: “Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation” (12:3 NKJV). Don’t miss the significance... “salvation” in Hebrew is Yeshua, the same word we translate “Jesus.”

On the first through the sixth days, the priest and his joyful professional circled the altar once, but on the seventh day they circled the altar seven times! The highlight of the ceremony occurred when the priest stood and poured the water on the altar. While the water washed away the blood of the morning sacrifices, a long line of priests, all bearing willow branches, sang psalms of praise. Eddie Chumney (author of “The Feast of Tabernacles” web site, chapter 9) reports that the Talmud describes the ceremony in detail, including a portrait of venerable sages juggling lighted torches and performing summersaults as part of the celebration. The experience was one of intense and total joy, so much so that the Talmud says whoever has not been in Jerusalem for this ceremony has not experienced real joy! The water ritual, known as Simcha Bet Ha-sho-evah (the Rejoicing of the House of Drawing Water) prophetically illustrates the time when the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon Israel.”



Isaiah 44:3 says:

For I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit on your descendants, my blessing on your offspring.

What happened to the Feast of Tabernacles before the children of Israel went into captivity, the Feast of Tabernacles during the time of Jesus, present day Sukkot, and what will happen in the future.

John Hagee’s book, “His Glory Revealed”, covers these subjects so well, so we will be quoting more portions of this book.

“In the years after Moses taught the people about God’s commandments concerning the Feast of Tabernacles, the festival degenerated into little more than a drunken party. The people did not focus upon making booths, but followed their pagan Canaanite neighbors as they celebrated the conclusion of the fall harvest—paying particular homage to the grapes from their vineyards.

Jewish scholar Hayyim Schaues writes that when the prophet Amos visited the temple at Beth-El during the autumn festival, “the revelry that he saw made such an unfavorable impression upon him that he condemned the sanctuary and the entire ritual of the festival. Hosea, who appeared as a prophet in the kingdom of Israel a short time after Amos, also protested against the

bacchanalia of the autumn festival. The same festival doubtless took place in the kingdom of Judah, for Isaiah, who lived in Jerusalem, tells us that all, even priests and prophets, were drunk in the sanctuary.”

Amos 5:21-27

I hate, I utterly loathe your festivals; I take no pleasure in your solemn assemblies. 22 If you offer me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; nor will I consider the peace offerings of your stall-fed cattle. 23 Spare me the noise of your songs! I don't want to hear the strumming of your lutes! 24 Instead, let justice well up like water, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. 25 Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings in the desert forty years, house of Isra'el? 26 No, but now you will bear Sikkut as your king [Sikkuth] and Kiyun [Kiyyun], your images, the star of your god, which you made for yourselves; 27 as I exile you beyond Dammeseq [Damascus],” says Adonai Elohei-Tzva'ot [God of hosts]—that is his name.

Hosea 9:1

Don't rejoice, Isra'el! Don't enjoy yourselves as other peoples do; for you have gone whoring away from your God, you love being hired as a whore on every grain-floor.

Isaiah 28:7-8

But there are others reeling from wine, staggering about because of strong liquor; cohen [priest] and prophet reel from strong liquor, they are confused by wine. Led astray by strong liquor, they err in their visions and stumble when judging. 8 All tables are covered with vomit and feces, not a single place is clean.

John Hagee goes on to say:

“Israel was soon sent into exile. Years later, as the people returned from their Babylonian captivity, the books of the Law were opened, read and understood. And just as Nehemiah had Ezra read instructions about how to keep the Feast of Trumpets, Ezra also taught the people about the Feast of Tabernacles (Nehemiah 8:14-18).”

Nehemiah 8:14-18

14 They found written in the Torah that Adonai had ordered through Moshe [Moses] 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 [Jerusalem], “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 [Ephraim] Gate. 17 The entire community of those who had returned from the exile made sukkot and lived in the sukkot, for the people of Isra'el had not done this since the days of Yeshua [Joshua] the son of Nun. So there was very great joy. 18 Also they read every day, from the first day until the last day, in the scroll of the Torah of God. They kept the feast for seven days; then on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the rule.”

John Hagee continues:

“This was the Feast of Tabernacles, or Booths, properly instituted. By the time of Christ, Sukkot (Hebrew for “booths”) was one of the two great pilgrimage festivals. The people knew the festival by many different names: the Feast of Ingathering (in reference to the completed harvest), the Feast of the Nations (in reference to Zechariah’s prophecy that the Gentile nations would come to Jerusalem to celebrate it), and the Festival of Lights. Just as Jews from all over the world came to Jerusalem for Passover, so they came for the Feast of Tabernacles. By donkey, camel, chariot, and on foot, they traveled in huge caravans and small parties, eager to celebrate and rejoice in what God had done for them.

As they traveled along the hot and dusty roads, they sang the psalms of ascent. (See Psalm 84, for example).”

## Psalm 84

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! 2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. 3 Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God. 4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah. 5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. 6 Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools. 7 They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God. 8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah. 9 Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed. 10 For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. 11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. 12 O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.” According to the website, [usefulbible.com](http://usefulbible.com), “The word ‘ascent’ means a step, or an upwards climb. The ‘Songs of Ascent’ is the ancient title of a collection of 15 Psalms (sacred songs). They begin at Psalm 120 and they end at Psalm 134.

Bible students do not really know why these songs have this title. But here is the most likely explanation.

- God’s law includes a rule that \*Jewish men should go to Jerusalem for the sacred holidays each year. There are three such occasions, called Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (Deuteronomy 16:16).
- Probably, these songs were for the men to sing as they travelled. Of course, they did not have modern methods of transport. Most of them walked. And as they walked, they sang these songs.
- Their journey might take 3 or 4 days, or longer, if they were from the north of Israel. And some people even travelled from other countries to get to Jerusalem. They might travel for a few weeks, or even months.
- Some of the journey had to be \*uphill, because Jerusalem is at the top of a hill. That is why these are the songs of “ascent” (an upwards climb).”

## **Jesus attended the Feast of Tabernacles:**

The book of John tells an interesting story about Jesus attending the Feast of Tabernacles:

### John 7

Jesus at the Feast of Booths (Tabernacles)“ After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him. 2 Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at

hand. 3 So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. 4 For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." 5 For not even his brothers believed in him. 6 Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil. 8 You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come." 9 After saying this, he remained in Galilee.

10 But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private. 11 The Jews were looking for him at the feast, and saying, "Where is he?" 12 And there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said, "He is a good man," others said, "No, he is leading the people astray." 13 Yet for fear of the Jews no one spoke openly of him.

14 About the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching. 15 The Jews therefore marveled, saying, "How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?" 16 So Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. 17 If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority. 18 The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood. 19 Has not Moses given you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?" 20 The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill you?" 21 Jesus answered them, "I did one work, and you all marvel at it. 22 Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. 23 If on the Sabbath a man receives circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man's whole body well? 24 Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.".....

### **The purpose for this Feast:**

The purpose for this Feast was for us to realize the earth and this earthen body in particular is not our final home:

2 Cor 5:1

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Peter 1:14

Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

Hebrews 11:10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God.

Revelation 21:3

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them.

This verse tells us about God's plan for "Tabernacling" among us in the future.

God even gave a prophecy concerning the Feast of Tabernacles:

A prophecy is given concerning the Feast of Tabernacles in Zechariah that will happen during the Millennial Reign of Christ.

Zechariah 14:1-5, 16-19

### **The Coming Day of the Lord**

Look, a day is coming for Adonai when your plunder, [Yerushalayim] (Jerusalem), will be divided right there within you. 2“For I will gather all the nations against Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) for war. The city will be taken, the houses will be rifled, the women will be raped, and half the city will go into exile; but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.”

3 Then Adonai will go out and fight against those nations, fighting as on a day of battle. 4 On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which lies to the east of Yerushalayim; (Jerusalem) and the Mount of Olives will be split in half from east to west, to make a huge valley. Half of the mountain will move toward the north, and half of it toward the south. 5 You will flee to the valley in the mountains, for the valley in the mountains will reach to Atzel. You will flee, just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of ‘Uziah king of Y’hudah (Judah). Then Adonai my God will come to you with all the holy ones....

16 Finally, everyone remaining from all the nations that came to attack Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) will go up every year to worship the king, Adonai-Tzva’ot (Lord of Hosts), and to keep the festival of Sukkot (Tabernacles). 17 If any of the families of the earth does not go up to Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) to worship the king, Adonai-Tzva’ot (Lord of Hosts), no rain will fall on them. 18 If the family of Egypt doesn’t go up, if they refuse to come, they will have no [annual] overflow [from the Nile]; moreover, there will be the plague with which Adonai will strike the nations that don’t go up to keep the festival of Sukkot (Tabernacles). 19 This will be Egypt’s punishment and the punishment of all the nations that don’t go up to keep the festival of Sukkot (Tabernacles).”

So we see this Feast is so important to God He demands mankind keep it during His 1,000 year reign and then it goes on to say whichever nation refuses shall be greatly punished.

The Feast of Tabernacles is the last feast listed in Leviticus 23 and represents the Millennial (1,000 year) reign of Christ on earth when Jesus will “tabernacle” with us here on earth. HALLALUJAH!!!! AMEN!!!!



