

One of the seven feasts that God commanded the children of Israel to observe is the Feast of Tabernacles. The other six are:

1. The Passover
2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread
3. The Feast of Firstfruits
4. The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)
5. The Feast of Trumpets
6. The Day of Atonement
7. The Feast of Tabernacles – the final and seventh feast.

Each feast held profound spiritual significance and practical meaning in the lives of the Israelites. God instructed them to observe these feasts for their benefit, not merely as times for eating and drinking, as is often misunderstood today. These feasts were meant for prayer, worship, and remembrance of God's mighty works—especially His deliverance of Israel from Egypt and His care in the wilderness. God commanded that these days remain holy forever (Leviticus 23:41).

Today, we will focus on the last feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, its importance for the Israelites, and its relevance for us in the New Covenant.

God's Purpose in the Wilderness

When God led Israel out of slavery in Egypt, He intentionally guided them through a long, challenging wilderness journey. It wasn't that a shorter route to the Promised Land was unavailable; rather, God had a divine purpose: to humble their hearts, teach them dependence on Him, and demonstrate that He is not only the God of fertile lands but also the God of the wilderness.

He wanted them to understand that life is not sustained by bread alone, nor by material comfort (Deuteronomy 8:1-6):

“Be careful to obey all these commands I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and enter and possess the land the Lord promised... Remember how the Lord your God led you for forty years in the wilderness... He humbled you, tested you, and in hunger fed you with manna... to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”

In the wilderness, Israel had no permanent homes or markets. To

meet their needs, they built temporary shelters, or tabernacles, which served as protection during their nomadic journey. These were not permanent structures because they were travelers, moving from place to place. For forty years, they lived in these temporary shelters.

When they finally entered the Promised Land, God promised that they would no longer dwell in temporary shelters or rely on manna alone. They would have abundant, diverse foods and inhabit cities with large, permanent homes, enjoying prosperity and favor. Yet God foresaw their hearts: once they ate and prospered, they might forget Him. To prevent spiritual forgetfulness, God commanded that the Feast of Tabernacles be observed annually, as a time of remembrance and worship.

Observance of the Feast

At the end of each seventh year in the Jewish calendar, all Israel would leave their homes and build small booths or tabernacles near their houses, just as they had in the wilderness. Families would dwell in these shelters for seven days to remember God's miraculous provision and protection in the wilderness (Nehemiah 8:14-18; Deuteronomy 31:10-13).

Key points of observance included:

- Dwelling in temporary shelters to remember dependence on God.
- Rejoicing in God's power and faithfulness.
- Teaching children God's commands and the Torah, ensuring the next generation knew His ways.
- Reflecting spiritually rather than indulging in material pleasures.

This feast was not a celebration of food and wine, nor a social party. It was a solemn time of worship, reflection, and teaching.

Spiritual Significance for New Covenant Believers

The Old Covenant feasts were shadows pointing to New Covenant realities (Colossians 2:16–17). Just as God delivered Israel from Egypt, we are delivered from slavery to sin through Christ. Baptism symbolizes our liberation, just as crossing the Red Sea (1 Corinthians 10:1–2) did for Israel.

Like Israel's testing in the wilderness, God allows trials in our lives to strengthen our faith and dependence on Him. Observing spiritual "tabernacles" in our hearts—times of reflection and worship—helps us remember God's faithfulness and provision through difficulties.

We are called to celebrate God's goodness regularly in our lives:

- Set aside time to reflect on His works.
- Remember the trials He brought you through and how He delivered you.
- Teach younger generations to trust and obey Him.

Just as the Feast of Tabernacles was a memorial of God's faithfulness, our personal times of worship and remembrance keep us aligned with God's will and help us avoid spiritual forgetfulness.

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever." (*Psalm 118:1*)

Application:

Observing God's feasts, or remembering His mighty works in our own lives, is a way to honor Him. Set aside intentional moments to reflect, pray, and worship. Let your "tabernacle" be the dwelling place of God in your heart. Teach your children the ways

of the Lord, remembering that spiritual remembrance strengthens faith for generations.

Blessings in the Lord. Share this message with others and inspire them to reflect on God's goodness.

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