

I. Fall Feasts

A. As we looked at last week, the seven annual feasts of God are to be understood as both historically and presently relevant. From their onset, they spoke of an ultimate fulfillment of the redemptive work of Jesus as Messiah. Universally, Christian theologians view the spring feasts as being primarily fulfilled in the first coming of Christ. The fall feasts are viewed as being primarily unfulfilled and so we look to a future fulfillment of them in the second coming of Christ.

1. Prophetic Clarity - It is critical for believers to understand that prophecy is given so we can have clear understanding and concrete hope in their fulfillment. Therefore, it is not biblical to view future fulfillments of prophecy as being left up to total speculation. That heart posture is not in alignment with Godliness or wisdom. Even though many in the church view this posture on prophecy as virtuous, it is absolute folly.
2. It is not lost on anyone that the spring feasts were fulfilled to the exact day during Christ's first coming. Jesus was crucified on Passover as the sacrificial lamb, buried during unleavened bread, raised from the dead on Firstfruits, and sent the Holy Spirit 50 days later on Pentecost. Therefore, wisdom and understanding should inform us that these unfulfilled feast days are extremely significant and will be fulfilled in the future.

II. Feast of Tabernacles Overview

A. The last of the annual feasts of God is the feast of tabernacles or booths (Sukkot in Hebrew). Occurring on the 15th day of the 7th month (after the fall harvest has come in), God instructed that all of His people celebrate this feast by constructing a temporary shelter and live in it for seven days. They were structured to gather one fruit and 3 types of branches from different types of trees and bind them together and present them as a wave/praise offering to the Lord each day of the feast. When introduced in Exodus, it is referred to as the “feast of the ingathering” of the final harvest. Then, in Leviticus, God expanded its meaning to the “feast of tabernacles”. Unlike the other six feasts, this feast is explicitly called "The Season of Our Joy," where rejoicing with the community, servants, and foreigners is commanded.

B. Traditional Observations

1. Feast of Remembrance - The primary mandate for this feast is an active exercise in remembrance. God commanded the people to live in booths so that all future generations would remember that the Israelites lived in temporary shelters and God provided for their practical needs supernaturally during that time. For 40 years, the Israelites had no permanent cities, solid foundations, or fortified walls. Living in a shelter causes us to gain perspective and strip away the false security of stone houses and remember how fragile, and exposed we actually are. It also reminds them that God took them from living in temporary shelters to permanent homes in the promised land. (Lev. 23:42-43)
2. Feast of Final Harvest - This feast was to be held in celebration right after the final harvest gathering of the year. It is because of this, that this feast is also known as the feast of the ingathering. In the ancient Near East, the agricultural year did not end in December, but rather in the autumn when the final crops were brought in right before the winter rains began.

C. Significant Moments in the Old Testament During the Feast of Tabernacles

1. Dedication of Solomon's Temple - (1 Kings 8:2)
2. The Nehemiah Restoration - (Neh. 8)
3. The Maccabean Restoration - (Dan.

III. Tabernacles in the Gospels

- A. A few highly dramatic, meaningful rituals took place during the feast of tabernacles in the gospels that are easily missed. In Jesus' day, tradition had transformed the agricultural harvest into an electric, week-long spiritual and national event. Jesus acknowledged these rituals and participated in them. They pointed to Himself as the ultimate fulfillment of the feast's future implications.

1. Water of Life Ceremony - This was the absolute peak of joy during the feast. Every morning, a grand procession led by the High Priest marched down to the pool of Siloam, to draw fresh water in a golden pitcher. The water was then poured out over the altar, alongside wine, proclaiming the future fulfillment stream of living water that will flow from the throne of the Messiah, restoring all things in the future. (John 7)

2. The Illumination of the Temple - Every evening during the festival, four massive 75-foot-tall golden lampstands were lit in the Temple's Court. The light was so intense that it reportedly illuminated every courtyard in Jerusalem, celebrating the pillar of fire that guided Israel in the wilderness, and looking forward to the illumination of the entire world that will come from the Messiah Himself as He restores all things. (John 8:58)
 3. I AM Statement - These two moments led to major tension during the festival that culminated in a fierce debate over Jesus' authority. When the religious leaders questioned His status relative to Abraham, Jesus delivered one of His most shocking proclamations: "Very truly I tell you, before Abraham was born, I am!" By using the divine name "I AM", the name God used to reveal Himself to Moses, Jesus explicitly claimed equality with Yahweh while referencing Himself as the God who commanded the feast of Tabernacles, causing the crowd to pick up stones to execute Him for blasphemy before He slipped away. (John 8:58)
 4. Blind Man Healed - This miracle took place immediately following the Feast of Tabernacles, acting as a direct, physical demonstration of Jesus' claim, *"I am the water of life and the light of the world."* When Jesus and His disciples encountered a man who had been blind from birth, the disciples asked if the blindness was caused by the man's own sin or his parents' sin. Jesus rejected both ideas, stating that it happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. Jesus then performed the miracle using a specific, symbolic process. Making clay from dirt and spit, putting it over his blind eyes (spiritual and physical). Then, commanding him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam (sent). The result was the man was healed of both physical and spiritual blindness and granted physical and spiritual life by the water of life and light of the world. (John 9:7)
- B. Peter Wants to Build Tabernacles at the Transfiguration - Both Matthew and Mark open the transfiguration account with the highly unusual detail, "After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John...". The high holy day of the feast of Atonement occurs exactly five days before the start of the Feast of Tabernacles. Immediately before this six-day countdown, Peter had made his famous confession that Jesus is the Messiah. Many scholars theorize Peter's confession happened on the day of atonement, placing the Transfiguration "six days later" right in the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles. Peter's sudden blurted request to

build three sukkot (booths/tabernacles) makes perfect sense if the hillsides around them were already dotted with temporary shelters. (Matt. 16:16;

IV. Christian Future Perspective

A. In Christian eschatology (the study of end times), the Feast of Tabernacles prophetically foreshadows the final, ultimate stage of God's redemptive timeline. While the spring feasts were fulfilled by Jesus' first coming, the fall feasts—culminating in Tabernacles—point directly to His second coming and the establishment of the eternal kingdom. The future fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles spans three major prophetic ultimate promises.

1. The Ingathering (Harvest) of God's People - The "Feast of Ingathering" celebrates the absolute end of the agricultural harvest year. Prophetically, this ultimately represents the final harvest of humanity which will find a partial fulfillment upon the return of Jesus and total fulfillment at the end of the Millennial age. Jesus used this exact agricultural vocabulary, stating that *"the harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels"*. (Matt. 13:39)
2. The Millennial Rule and Reign of Messiah - Zechariah explicitly states that the Feast of Tabernacles will become a mandatory global celebration during the future messianic reign on earth. The prophet Zechariah was shown a time after the return of Jesus when the survivors from all nations will travel to Jerusalem annually. During this period, the festival acts as a celebration of Christ's physical reign and a prophetic proclamation of the coming full integration of the perpetual dwelling place of God with men forever.

"Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord Almighty, and to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles."
Zec. 14:16

3. The New Heavens and Earth, Gods Perpetual Dwelling - The ultimate, eternal fulfillment of the feast appears in the final chapters of the Bible

even though it has been promised since the fall of Adam. The temporary, fragile huts of tabernacles give way to a permanent, heavenly dwelling place. The Apostle John watches as all the hopes of men and angels culminates with the New Jerusalem descending to earth and hears a loud voice declaring the absolute fulfillment of this feast's ultimate meaning:

"Behold! God's dwelling place [tabernacle] is now among the people, and he will dwell [tabernacle] with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God." Rev. 21:3