

CHAPTER 9

Sukkot: The Feast of Tabernacles

"On the fifteenth of this seventh month is the Feast of Booths for seven days to the Lord" (Leviticus [Vayikra] 23:34 NAS). You shall celebrate the Feast of Booths seven days after you have gathered in [the ingathering, KJV] from your threshing floor and your wine vat (Deuteronomy [Devarim] 16:13 NAS).

Sukkot, usually translated as "Tabernacles," or the festival of "Booths," occurs for seven days, from Tishrei 15 to 21. There is therefore a quick transition from the high holidays, with their somber mood of repentance and judgment, to a holiday of rejoicing and celebration, for which the people are commanded to build a hut [*sukkah*; plural, *sukkot*) and make it their home. The Torah identifies the *sukkah* (booth) with the temporary dwellings in which the Israelites lived in the wilderness after they left Egypt on their way to the Promised Land (Leviticus [Vayikra] 23:42).

From Yom Kippur to Sukkot

Not coincidentally, the same time period marks the beginning of the construction of G-d's *sukkah*, the *mishkan*, the sanctuary in the desert (Exodus [Shemot] 25:8-9). In Exodus 25:9, the word *tabernacle* is the word *mishkan* in Hebrew. According to tradition, Moses (*Moshe*) again ascended Mount Sinai for 40 days and nights to receive the second set of tablets and descended on *Yom Kippur*, carrying them as a sign of G-d's forgiveness of Israel for the sin of the golden calf, and as a symbol of the lasting covenant between G-d and Israel (Exodus [Shemot] 24:12-18; 34:1-2; 27-28). The following day Moses (*Moshe*) relayed G-d's instructions for building the *mishkan* -- a dwelling place. Material for this portable structure was collected during the days before *Sukkot*, and work was begun on it (the *mishkan* or tabernacle) (Exodus [Shemot] 35; 36:1-7).

Why was the *mishkan* built? The Torah says, "Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them" (Exodus [Shemot] 25:8); to establish the relationship between G-d and Israel, G-d would dwell amidst the people. Therefore the *mishkan*, the tabernacle in the wilderness, was instructed to be built by G-d for Him so He could dwell with His people.

The *Sukkah* and the Clouds of Glory

The *Sukkah* reminds us of the clouds of glory that surrounded Israel during their wandering through the desert on the way to the Promised Land. Everybody then saw the special Divine protection that G-d bestowed upon Israel during those difficult years. As it is written in Exodus (*Shemot*) 13:21, "And the Lord was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night" (NAS).

Spiritual Application (Halacha). G-d desired that the tabernacle in the wilderness be built because He wanted to dwell with His people (Exodus [*Shemot*] 29:44-45). Spiritually speaking, this physical tabernacle was given by G-d to teach and instruct us that He desires to live and dwell with His people by means of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) (1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:1). The clouds represent the believers in *Yeshua* (Hebrews 12:1; Revelation 1:7).

***Sukkot*: Names, Themes, and Idioms**

1. The Season of Our Joy
2. The Festival of Ingathering
3. The Feast of the Nations
4. The Festival of Dedication
5. The Festival of Lights

Understanding *Sukkot*: The Feast of Tabernacles

The Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*) completes the sacred festivals of the seventh month. In contrast to the somber tone of *Rosh HaShanah* and the Day of Atonement, the third feast of Tishrei was a time of joy. Israel had passed through the season of repentance and redemption.

Sukkot is called the "Season of Our Joy." One reason *Sukkot* was a time of joy was that after the season of repentance (*Teshuvah*) and the redemption of *Yom Kippur* came the joy of knowing your sins were forgiven and the joy of walking with G-d, knowing G-d, and being obedient to G-d. Historically, *Sukkot* commemorates the days in the wilderness of Sinai after coming out of Egypt (*Mitzayim*). According to all natural laws, they (the Israelites) should have perished, but were instead divinely protected by G-d.

Prophetically, *Sukkot* is the festival that teaches on the Messianic Kingdom and the joy of that Kingdom.

As mentioned earlier in this book, the Hebrew word *chag* comes from the Hebrew root word *chagag*, which means "to move in a circle, to march in a sacred procession, to celebrate or dance." The joy of *Sukkot* was so great that it became known as "*The Feast*." In non-Jewish circles, *Sukkot* is known as the Feast of Tabernacles. The word *tabernacle* refers to a temporary dwelling place, which is the purpose of the *sukkah*.

Spiritual Application (Halacha). The *sukkah* or booth, symbolizes man's need to depend upon G-d for his provision of food, water, and shelter. This is true in the spiritual realm as well. The booth is the physical body, which is a temporary dwelling place for our souls and spirits (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). We need the food that the Word of G-d provides (Matthew 6:11; 4:4; John 6:33-35); the cleansing, rinsing, and washing that the Word of G-d brings to our lives (Ephesians 5:26); and the shelter of G-d's protection over our lives from the evil one (Matthew 6:13; Psalm [*Tehillim*] 91). Our physical needs will be provided for by G-d if we seek Him spiritually (Matthew [*Mattityahu*] 6:31-33).

The observance of *Sukkot* described in Leviticus (*Vayikra*) 23:40-41 can be seen in Nehemiah (*Nechemiah*) chapter 8. The temporary dwellings or booths are described as a part of the festival. This is in remembrance of when the children of Israel dwelled in booths during their time in the wilderness (Leviticus [*Vayikra*] 23:43).

Isaiah talked about the *sukkah* in Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 4:4-6. The divine order declares that after judgment, *Yom Kippur* (Isaiah 4:4) comes *Sukkot* (Isaiah [*Yeshayahu*] 4:5-6). The command to rejoice at this time is given in Deuteronomy (*Devarim*) 16:13-15.

A *sukkah* is a temporary dwelling place. In First Kings (*Melachim*) 8:27 (NAS), at the dedication of Solomon's temple during the festival of *Sukkot*, Solomon asks, "Will God indeed dwell on the earth?"

The Scriptures say that *Yeshua* became flesh and dwelt (*tabernacled*) among us (John [*Yochanan*] 1:14). He came to earth at His first coming and temporarily dwelt among men.

The Covering of the *Sukkah*

Sukkot is a remembrance of the time in the wilderness when G-d protected, led, and sustained the children of Israel in the wilderness. The wilderness experience was a picture of the Millennium because there was a supernatural environment for the people in the wilderness. The covering was the cloud (Exodus [*Shemot*] 13:17-22; 14:16-20; 16:10; 19:1,9,16; 24:12-16; 40:1-2,35-38). This is known spiritually as the immersion (baptism) into the cloud (1 Corinthians 10:1-2; Hebrews 6:1-2). The cloud was a covering shelter

and protection by day, and was a pillar of fire by night. It was warmth, light, and protection.

Spiritual Understanding (Halacha). The cloud was seen as a *chupah*, a wedding canopy. In Daniel 7:13 it is written, "...the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven...." This is also mentioned in Revelation 1:7-8 and Jude 14. Here we see that the clouds are the believers in Messiah or the righteous (*tzaddikim*). The same can be seen in Hebrews 12:1. Also look at Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 60:8 and Acts 1:9-12.

Remember; the cloud does not only refer to the believers in the Messiah, but was also seen as a *chupah*, a wedding canopy. In Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 4:2, it speaks of the branch of the L-rd. This is defined in Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 11:1 as being *Yeshua*. In Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 11:1, the Hebrew word *netser* is a masculine form translated as "branch." In Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 4:2, the Hebrew word translated as branch is *tzemach*, which is neuter. We can see from this that a marriage is being performed. This is very clear in Jeremiah (*Yermiyahu*) 23:5-6; 33:15-16.

In Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 4:5 it is written, "...for upon all the glory shall be a defence [*chupah*, or wedding canopy]." Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 4:2-6 connects the branch in verse 23 with the cloud in verses 5-6 and the duty that is performed in the wilderness. Isaiah is talking how this would happen during the Messianic Kingdom (Isaiah [*Yeshayahu*] 2:2-4; 4:2-3). Those written among the living in Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*) actually have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 20:12,15; 21:27; Philippians 4:3; Daniel 12:1; Psalm [*Tehillim*] 69:28; Exodus [*Shemot*] 32:31-33).

In Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 4:2, it speaks of the fruit of the earth and those who have escaped. *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) is known as the festival of ingathering and the fruit harvest. In Revelation 7:9-17, we can see those who have come through the great tribulation period (the birthpangs of the Messiah or *Chevlai shel Mashiach*) and who became believers in the Messiah during that time (Revelation 7:14). In Revelation 7:15, they "dwell" with them.

This Greek word, *sk'enos*, means "tabernacle, booth, shelter, or covering." This also appears in Revelation 21:3. This same word, *sk'enos*, which means "tabernacle" or "booth" in Greek, is used to speak of *Yeshua* during His first coming (John [*Yochanan*] 1:14). Notice the protection provided in Revelation 7:16, corresponding to Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 4:5-6, and the fountain of living waters in Revelation 7:17 and 21:4. In Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 4:3, it is written "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy..." (also see Zechariah 14:4,6-9,16-17,20-21). Those who are called "holiness unto the Lord" in Zechariah 14:20 are the same people in Isaiah 4:3 who are called holy.

The clouds in the wilderness are called "the clouds of glory" and the wilderness experience is a picture of the future Messianic age, the Millennium. The *sukkah* was built to teach and understand the thousand-year millennial reign of the Messiah, the Messianic age, the Millennium, or the *Athid Lavo* in Hebrew eschatology.

Understanding the Meaning of Booths/Tabernacles

The Hebrew word for tabernacle is *sukkah*. It means "a booth, a hut, a covering, a pavilion or tent." The Greek word for tabernacle is *sk'en'e*, which also means "a tent, hut, or habitation."

With this in mind, let's look at the context by which the word *tabernacle* is used in the New Covenant (*Brit Hadashah*).

1. *Yeshua* tabernacled (*sukkot*) among us (John [*Yochanan*] 1:14).
2. Peter (*Kefa*) spoke about his body being a tabernacle (2 Peter [*Kefa*] 1:13-14).
3. The apostle Paul (*Rav Sha'ul*) told us that our earthly bodies were earthly houses or tabernacles (2 Corinthians 5:1-5).
4. The tabernacle of Moses (*Moshe*) was a tent of habitation (Acts 7:44; Hebrews 9:2-8).
5. Abraham (*Avraham*), Isaac (*Yitzchak*), and Jacob (*Ya'akov*) lived in tabernacles (tents) (Hebrews 11:8-9).
6. The tabernacle of David was a tent or dwelling place (Acts 15:16; Amos 9:11). This tabernacle was the temple of Solomon (1 Kings [*Melachim*] 5:2-5; 8:1-21).
7. *Yeshua* entered the temple on the Feast of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) (John [*Yochanan*] 7:2,27-29).
8. The Bible speaks of a heavenly tabernacle (Hebrews 8:1-2; Revelation 13:6; 15:5). This heavenly tabernacle will come to earth (Revelation 21:1-3).
9. *Yeshua* was the true tabernacle of G-d (Hebrews 9:11).

So, the booth or *sukkah* was a temporary dwelling place. Historically, it was to remind the people of their exodus from Egypt (*Mitzrayim*) as described in Leviticus (*Vayikra*) 23:42-43. Prophetically, the *sukkah* points toward the future to the Messianic age, the Millennium. Spiritually, a *sukkah* is supposed to remind us that we are but strangers and pilgrims on the earth, this being a temporary dwelling place. So the believer in Messiah is but a stranger and pilgrim on this earth (Hebrews 11:8-10,13-16; Genesis [*Bereishit*] 23:3-4; 47:9; 1 Chronicles [*Divery Hayamim*] 29:10,15; Psalm (*Tehillim*) 39:12; 119:19; 1 Peter [*Kefa*] 1:17; 2:11).

To the believer in *Yeshua*, our earthly physical body is only a temporary tabernacle. At the coming of Messiah, we will receive a new and heavenly house, a glorified body (1 Corinthians 15:39-44,51-57; 2 Corinthians 5:6; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18).

The Festival of Ingathering

Sukkot (Tabernacles) is the fall harvest festival. It begins on the fifteenth of the Hebrew month of Tishrei and concludes on the twenty-second with *Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah*, also called the eighth day, the rejoicing in the Torah. *Shemini Atzeret* functions as the conclusion of *Sukkot*, but it is also a separate festival (this will be discussed in the following chapter).

Like the other pilgrimage festivals, *Sukkot* [tabernacles] has an agricultural element. It marks the time of the harvest, the final ingathering of produce before the oncoming winter. Hence, it is also called *Hag HaAsif*, the festival of Ingathering. As it is written, "You shall celebrate the Festival of In-gathering, at the end of the year, when you gather in your labors out of the field" (Exodus [*Shemot*] 23:16).

Sukkot is the time when the produce of the field, orchard, and vineyard is gathered in. The granaries, threshing floors, and wine and olive presses are full to capacity. Weeks and months of toil and sweat put into the soil have finally been amply rewarded. The farmer feels happy and elated. No wonder *Sukkot* is "*The Season of Rejoicing*." While all of the three pilgrimages are times of rejoicing, *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) is specifically designated as *Zeman simchatenu*, the season of our rejoicing.

Ushpizin

As part of *Hachnasat Orechim*, the *mitzvah* of hospitality, there is a custom of inviting *ushpizin*, symbolic guests, each day to join (the family) in the *Sukkah*. These honorary guests are Abraham (*Avraham*), Isaac (*Yitzchak*), Jacob (*Ya'akov*), Joseph (*Yosef*), Moses (*Moshe*), Aaron (*Ahraham*), and David. One is invited each day.

Spiritual Application (Halacha). As stated earlier, *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) is called the Feast of Ingathering. *Yeshua* told us that the harvest represents the end of the age (*Olam Haze*). This is found in (Matthew [*Mattityahu*] 13:39; Revelation 14:15; Joel [*Yoel*] 3:13). The harvest refers more specifically to people who choose to accept the Messiah *Yeshua* into their hearts and lives (Matthew [*Mattityahu*] 9:35-38; Luke 10:1-2; John [*Yochanan*] 4:35-38; Revelation 14:14-18). G-d is gathering both Jews and non-Jews together to accept the Messiah *Yeshua* into their lives. Most of the people on earth have not accepted *Yeshua* into their lives and are in the valley of decision (Joel [*Yoel*] 3:13-14). What is your decision? Will you accept the Messiah *Yeshua* into your life?

Jeremiah (*Yermiyahu*) sorrowed for a people who were not a part of the harvest in Jeremiah (*Yermiyahu*) 8:18-22. In Jeremiah 8:20 it is written, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." To those who do accept the Messiah, you will experience the *real Sukkot* (Tabernacles) during the Messianic age, the Millennium. Both Jew and non-Jew will live in the Messianic Kingdom. There will also be immortal people such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, and David. There will be mortal people as well who will live with them. The mortal people who will be there are the people who lived through the seven-year tribulation period, the birthpangs of the

Messiah, or the *Chevlai shel Mashiach*, and who accepted *Yeshua* into their hearts and lives. What a joy it will be living with the Messiah during the Messianic era!

The Feast of Dedication

King Solomon (*Shlomo*) dedicated the temple (*Beit HaMikdash*) during *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) (1 Kings 3). Therefore, this festival is also called the Feast of Dedication. It was celebrated after the Babylonian captivity (Ezra 3:1-4).

The Feast of the Nations

Another name for the Feast of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) is the Feast of the Nations. *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) will be celebrated by all the nations on earth during the Messianic age, the Millennium (Zechariah 14:16-18). The future observance of *Sukkot* by the nations of the world rests upon Israel's election and mission. The universal concern of G-d's plan for the Jewish people reaches back to the covenant with Abraham (*Avraham*). In that agreement, G-d promised in Genesis (*Bereishit*) 12:3, as it is written, "...all families of the earth [shall] be blessed [through his seed]." From Abraham (*Avraham*), G-d would raise up a people, Israel, to be a blessing to the nations. That promise was fulfilled through *Yeshua*, the Messiah, as stated in Galatians 3:8,14,16,29. In fact, the greatest evangelism in the history of the world will be by 144,000 anointed members from the tribes of Israel proclaiming the gospel (*basar*) of the Kingdom of Heaven through *Yeshua HaMashiach* (Revelation 14:1-7).

A fascinating and mysterious pattern emerges from the seemingly endless list of sacrifices found in Numbers (*Bamidbar*) 29:12-35. During the week of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles), 70 bullocks were offered on the altar. The connection of the 70 bulls to the 70 nations is taken from Deuteronomy (*Devarim*) 32:8; Genesis (*Bereishit*) 46:27; and Exodus (*Shemot*) 1:1-5. Once again, the association of the nations of the world to *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) is found in Zechariah 14:16-19.

When Jacob (*Ya'akov*) and his family went to Egypt (*Mitzrayim*), there were 70 people who went, and it was there that they became a nation. The nations of the world are associated with *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) in First Kings (*Melachim*) 8:41-43 when Solomon dedicated the temple (*Beit HaMikdash*) during *Sukkot* (Tabernacles). For this reason, the festival is also called the Feast of the Nations.

Another fascinating thing about the sacrifices during *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) is that when the offerings are grouped or counted, their number always remains divisible by seven. During the week, there are 182 sacrifices (70 bullocks, 14 rams, and 98 lambs; 7 divides into 182 exactly 26 times). Add to this the meal offerings, 336 tenths of ephahs of flour (48 x 7) (Numbers [*Bamidbar*] 29:12-40). It is no coincidence that this seven-day

holiday, which takes place at the height of the seventh month, had the perfect number, seven, imprinted on its sacrifices.

Sukkot is a picture of the Messianic Kingdom (thousand-year reign of the Messiah) as the joy, and the number seven was connected to the sabbath, which was also seen as a picture of the Messianic Kingdom. The sabbath (*shabbat*) falls on the seventh day of the week.

Although G-d is concerned for the universal redemption of the nations, those nations who do not turn to G-d will be judged. Either they will not receive rain (Zechariah 14:1-9,16-18), or rain will destroy them and be a curse upon them (Ezekiel [*Yechezekel*] 38:22-23). This is why the traditional Bible reading for the second day of *Sukkot* is Zechariah 14 and Ezekiel 38:14 to 39:16.

The Four Species (*Arba Minim*)

In Leviticus (*Vayikra*) 23:40, it is written, "On the first day you shall take the product of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the L-rd your G-d seven days."

The four species are also called the *Lulav* and *Etrog* (the palm branches and citron). So, "the product of goodly trees" is interpreted by the rabbis to refer specifically to an *etrog* (citron), and the branches, "boughs of leafy trees," and "willows of the brook" have been interpreted as a *lulav* (palm branch), *hadasim* (myrtle), and *aravot* (willows), respectively.

Whether or not *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) was regularly celebrated during the period of the first temple (*Beit HaMikdash*) is not clear. After the return from Babylon, Nehemiah (*Nechemiah*) wrote that from the days of Joshua's (*Yehoshua*) crossing into the land of Israel until his own day, the children of Israel had not built the huts of *Sukkot* (Nehemiah [*Nechemiah*] 8:17). But from Nehemiah's day forward, the festival was celebrated during the time of the second temple (*Beit HaMikdash*). Each celebrant brought an *etrog* or *citron*, the yellow citrus fruit that is about the same size as a lemon, but sweeter and spicier to serve as the "fruit of goodly trees" that is mentioned in Leviticus (*Vayikra*) 23:40. Each brought as well the branches of a palm, of a myrtle, and of a willow. The three branches were held in the right hand and the *etrog* on the left, and they were brought together to be waved east, south, west, north, up, and down. Since the palm branch, or *lulav*, was the stiffest and the most prominent element of the four species, the whole ceremony was called the waving of the *lulav*.

The four plants are also used during the *Sukkot* holiday in making a *hakafa* (circuit) around the congregation standing in the synagogue. The cantor leads the procession, and each man who has a *lulav* and *etrog* follows behind him. During the procession, the cantor recites the *Hoshanah* prayers, asking for blessings on the land and fruit of Israel.

Spiritual Application (Halacha). As part of the Feast of Ingathering, palm branches, myrtle branches, and willow branches are collected and held in the right hand (Leviticus [Vayikra] 23:40). A fourth entity, the *etrog*, representing the Gentiles or non-Jewish believers, is also gathered. These four species are used in a ceremony for *Sukkot* (Tabernacles). At the start of the ceremony, the *etrog* is upside down. The spiritual meaning is, before we came to G-d, we were in a state of being upside down. Through the ceremony, it is turned right side up and joined to the other three. This represents a marriage that is taking place. After we are turned right side up and turn to G-d, we later are joined to Him in marriage.

In Deuteronomy (*Devarim*) 16:14, the *etrog* also represents the stranger; The stranger is the Gentile who has joined himself to Israel (Ephesians 2:11-13). This is symbolic of the great congregation of non-Jewish believers in the Messiah *Yeshua*.

The Celebration of Water Pouring ***(Simchat Beit HaShoevah)***

Simchat Beit HaShoevah, the rejoicing in the house of the water pouring, is a ceremony included in the temple (*Beit HaMikdash*) services not mentioned in the Torah, but given in the Mishnah (*Succah 5*). The water pouring became a focus of the joy that the Torah commands for *Sukkot*. On no other festival were the people commanded to be joyful, and as a result *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) became known as "*the season of our joy*," just as Passover (*Pesach*) is "*the season of our freedom*" and Shavout (*Pentecost*) is "*the season of the giving of the Torah*."

It is written in the Mishnah, that the ritual became elaborated into a colorful and joyous, even riotous, celebration called *Simchat Beit HaShoevah*, "*the rejoicing at the house of the water-drawing*." This ceremony took place every day except for the first festival day of *Sukkot*. The Talmud (in *Sukkah 5:1a-b*) describes this ceremony in detail, including a portrait of venerable sages juggling lighted torches and performing somersaults as part of the celebration. The Talmud states, "*He who has not seen the rejoicing at the place of the water-drawing has never seen rejoicing in his life*." So, the water pouring ceremony became the occasion for an outpouring of intense joy.

The Daily *Sukkot* Ceremony

Each day out of the temple (*Beit HaMikdash*), there was a special ceremony. The priests were divided into three divisions. The first division were the priests on duty for that festival. They would slay the sacrifices found in Numbers (*Bamidbar*) 29. At this time, a second group of priests went out the eastern gate of the temple (*Beit HaMikdash*) and went to the *Motzah Valley*, where the ashes were dumped at the beginning of the sabbath. There they would cut willows. The willows had to be 25 feet in length. After

this, they would form a line with all the priests holding a willow. About 25 or 30 feet behind this row of priests, allowing room for the willows, would be another row of priests with willows. So, there would be row after row of the willows.

The whole road back to the temple (*Beit HaMikdash*) was lined with pilgrims as they went to Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*) to celebrate the festival as they were commanded by G-d to do. *Sukkot* (Tabernacles), along with Shavuot (*Pentecost*), and Passover (*Pesach*), were known as the pilgrimage festivals (Deuteronomy 16:16).

There would be a signal and the priests would step out with their left foot, and then step to the right, swinging the willows back and forth. Meanwhile, a third group of priests, headed by the high priest (*Cohen HaGadol*), went out the gate known as the Water Gate. They had gone to the pool known as "*Siloam*" (John [*Yochanan*] 9:7,11), which means "gently flowing waters." There the high priest had a golden vase and drew the water known as the living water (*mayim hayim*) and held it in the vase. His assistant held a silver vase containing wine. Just as the priests in the valley of *Motzah* began to march toward Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*), so did the priests in Siloam. As they marched toward the city of Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*), the willows made a swishing sound in the wind as they approached the city. The word *wind* in Hebrew is *Ruach*. The word *spirit* in Hebrew is also *Ruach*. Therefore, this ceremony was symbolic or representative of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) of G-d coming upon the city of Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*).

As each of the party reached their respective gates, a trumpet (*shofar*) was blown. Then one man would stand up and play the flute (*the flute represents the Messiah*). The flute player is called "*the pierced one*." The flute is pierced, and *Yeshua* was pierced during the crucifixion (Psalm [*Tehillim*] 22:16; Zechariah 12:10; John [*Yochanan*] 19:34-37; Revelation 1:7).

The flute player led the procession. The pierced one blows the call for the wind and the water to enter the temple. The priests from *Motzah* swishing the willows come into the temple (*Beit HaMikdash*) and circle the altar seven times. The priests that were slaying the sacrifices are now ascending the altar, and they begin to lay the sacrifices on the fires. The high priest and his assistant ascend the altar and all the people of Israel are gathered into the courts around there. The people start singing the song *Mayim*, saying, "With joy we will draw water out of the well of salvation [*Yeshua*]" (Isaiah [*Yeshayahu*] 12:3; *Mishnah, Sukkah 5:1*). The high priest takes his vase and pours its contents on one of the comers of the altar where the horns are. There are two bowls built into the altar. Each bowl has a hole in it. The water and the wine are poured out over the altar as the priests who had the willow start laying the willows against the altar, making a *sukkah* (a picture of G-d's covering).

Messianic Understanding. In this, we have a picture of *Yeshua* as He was on the tree. He was on the altar (tree) when His heart was pierced (John [*Yochanan*] 19:34), then the water and the blood separated and they were poured out. G-d through *Yeshua* was providing a covering (*sukkah*) for all those who would believe in Him.

Wine is representative of marriage, blood, covenant, joy, and the Messiah in Scripture. The priests took the willows to the altar and set them upright on the side of the altar, forming a wedding canopy or *chupah*. The high priest will take his golden vessel and pour out the water on the altar. The assistant will pour out his silver vessel of wine on the altar. When *Yeshua* was crucified on the tree (a type of altar), His side was pierced and out of His heart poured water and blood (John [*Yochanan*] 19:34). *Yeshua* said that He was the living water being poured out during this ceremony (John [*Yochanan*] 7:2, 37-38).

Spiritual Application (Halacha). During the time of *Yeshua*, the Feast of *Sukkot* set a magnificent stage for the preaching of the Messiah. Rain is essential to the growing of crops and Israel, an arid land, prizes rain greatly as a blessing from G-d.

Rain was a prominent feature in the celebration of the Feast of *Sukkot*. The ceremony of the water drawing held a significance much deeper than its agricultural implications. The rain represented the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) and the water drawing pointed to that day when, according to the prophet Joel [*Yoel*], G-d would rain His Spirit upon (all flesh) (Joel [*Yoel*] 2:28-29). The connection of water to this verse is G-d pouring out His Spirit. In the Talmud we read, "Why is the name of it called the drawing out of water? Because of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, according to what is said, "With joy shall ye draw out of the wells of salvation" (Isaiah [*Yeshayahu*] 12:3).

Sukkot was given by G-d to teach us of the Messianic era, the Millennium, when the earth will experience the greatest outpouring of G-d's Spirit.

Hoshana Rabbah (The Great Salvation)

Hoshana Rabbah (literally, the *great hosanna* or the *numerous hosannas*) is the seventh day of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles). *Hoshana Rabbah* should have been a full festival day, but is not because of *Shemini Atzeret*, which follows it. However, it has some special rituals and customs that make the day more like a full festival day than any of the intermediate days. The most important of these (ceremonies) are:

1. The circling of the altar seven times instead of once while carrying the four species and reciting the *Hoshana* prayers.
2. The beating of the willows.

Messianic Understanding. In John (*Yochanan*) 7:37-38, *Yeshua* said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

At this season of *Sukkot*, Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 12:3 was often quoted, as it is written, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." *Yeshua* in Hebrew means "*salvation*."

The drama of the water drawing ceremony took on a new dimension of meaning when *Yeshua* attended the Feast of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles). On the seventh day of the feast, *Hoshana Rabbah*, which literally means "the *great hosanna*, the great salvation," the festival activities were different from those of each of the six previous days when the priests circled the altar in a procession, singing Psalm (*Tehillim*) 118:25. On the seventh day of the feast, the people circled the altar seven times. That is why the day is called *Hoshanah Rabbah*, as the cry, "*Save now!*" was repeated seven times. *Yeshua's* statement in John (*Yochanan*) 7:37-39 was said on *Hoshana Rabbah*.

Spiritual Application (Halacha). Spiritually speaking, in the Bible, there is a link between water and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*). *Yeshua* told the woman at the well to drink of living water (John [*Yochanan*] 4:7-14; 6:35; Matthew [*Mattityahu*] 5:6). This relationship between water and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) is contained in the symbolism of pouring out water. Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 44:3 links the pouring out of water with the pouring out of G-d's Spirit. Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) parallels the thirsty land and links water with the Holy Spirit. The link can also be seen in Joel (*Yoel*) 2:23,28; Acts 2:1-4,14-17; and Ezekiel (*Yechezkel*) 39:22,27-29. Zechariah 14:8 speaks of living waters. Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 12:2-3 speaks of drawing water out of the wells of salvation. Water and the Spirit are connected in Psalm (*Tehillim*) 42:1-4; Zechariah 13:1; and Revelation 7:17. It can also be seen in Ezekiel (*Yechezkel*) 36:24-27.

Yeshua was trying to communicate this to Nicodemus (*Nakdimon*) in John (*Yochanan*) 3:1-6. He also was teaching this during the Feast of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) in John (*Yochanan*) 4:14, which concluded with His statements in John 7:37-39. At the ceremony of the water drawing, the people's attention was focused on the pool of *Siloam*. It was here that *Yeshua* healed a man who had been blind from birth (John [*Yochanan*] 9:1-7). Notice again the statement in John 9:5. This is the last day of the feast (*Hoshana Rabbah*) (John 9:14; Leviticus [*Vayikra*] 23:34-36).

The Festival of Lights (The Light of the Temple)

Another ceremony of the Feast of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) was the illumination of the temple (*Beit HaMikdash*). According to the *Mishnah*, at the end of the first day of the Feast of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles), the priests and the Levites went down to the court of the women. Four enormous golden candlesticks were set up on the court (50 cubits high) with four golden bowls placed upon them and four ladders resting against each candlestick. Four youths of priestly descent stood at the top of the ladders holding jars containing about 7.5 gallons of pure oil, which they poured for each bowl (*Mishnah, Sukkah* 5:2). The priests and Levites used their own worn-out liturgical clothing for

wicks. The light emanating from the four candelabras was so bright that the *Mishnah* says in *Sukkah* 5:3 that there was no courtyard in Jerusalem [*Yerushalayim*] that was not lit up with the light of the libation water-well ceremony (*Beit Hashoevah*).

The mood was festive. Pious men, members of the *San Hedrin*, and heads of different religious schools would dance well into the night, holding bright torches and singing psalms of praise to G-d. Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*) glistened like a diamond that night and her light could be seen from afar.

Spiritual Application (Halacha). Spiritually speaking, the light represented the *shekinah* glory that once filled the temple where G-d's presence dwelt in the Holy of Holies (1 Kings 8:10-11; Ezekiel 43:5). During this time, the temple (*Beit HaMikdash*) was thought of as "the light of the world." In the brilliance of this gloriously lit temple, *Yeshua* cried in John (*Yochanan*) 8:12 that He was "*the light of the world*."

In addition, during this festival of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) and this time, in the court of the women of the temple between the four posts of light, the accusers brought to *Yeshua* the woman caught in the act of adultery (John [*Yochanan*] 8:1-11). *Yeshua* forgave the woman and proceeded to write a message on the ground (John [*Yochanan*] 8:5-9). What did *Yeshua* write? The answer is in Jeremiah 17:13. In these things, we can see that *Yeshua* taught the people the messages of the festivals during the festivals.

Israel: A Light (Witness) to the Nations

Israel was chosen to be G-d's light to the world (Deuteronomy [*Devarim*] 7:6-8). The mission that G-d chose for Israel was one of service to G-d. The reason is very simple. G-d wanted a people out of the world whom He could use and work through to show His glory to the world. That is why He chose Israel and that is what every follower of the Messiah is chosen to be. In doing so, G-d could reveal His redemptive plan to the whole world so the world could see that G-d and His Messiah *Yeshua* are light (John 1:1-4; 1 John 1:5). Israel was to be a witness (light) to the world. This can be seen in the following Scriptures: Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 43:1,10,12,14; Luke 24:44-49; and Acts 1:1-8. Israel's mission was to proclaim to the world that the G-d of Israel is the only true G-d and there is no other Savior but He (Acts 4:10,12).

Israel as a corporate nation failed in her mission to be a witness to the world. Not only were the people disobedient to the commandment of G-d, but they also did not become a light to the world. On the contrary, the world as a corporate people have always hated the Jewish people.

As individual members who believed and followed after G-d, the Jewish people were faithful to their task. We only need to consider the faithfulness of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the prophets, and the kings such as David and Solomon. In fact, consider the very Bible which you are able to read today; it was written by faithful Jewish servants

of G-d led by the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) of G-d. Most of all, the greatest light and witness the world has ever known was Jewish. His name is *Yeshua*, the Messiah! Because Israel birthed the Messiah, they, in essence, have been a blessing to all nations through Him (Genesis [*Bereishit*] 12:3; Galatians 3:8,14,16,29).

Although Israel corporately failed in her mission, this is not a permanent failure. It is a temporary setback to her destiny of being a blessing to all nations, which will be accomplished during the thousand-year reign of the Messiah known as the Messianic Kingdom or the Messianic age. Israel still remains G-d's chosen people (Romans 11:25-29), and still has a role to play in the future of the world (Romans 11:12,15). The prophet Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) spoke of a future time when Israel would be used by G-d to bring the message of Messiah to the nations, for the nation of Israel will have a central part in the thousand-year reign of the Messiah (Isaiah [*Yeshayahu*] 62:1-5). Israel will be a blessing to all nations at this time (Malachi 3:12; Ezekiel [*Yechezkel*] 34:23-30; Zechariah 8:11-15; Isaiah [*Yeshayahu*] 19:23-25). Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*) will be the spiritual focal point of the world and this time will be Israel's "Golden Age," during the Messianic era, because the King of Jerusalem, the Prince of Peace, will reign in Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*) (Isaiah [*Yeshayahu*] 2:2-4; 52:9-10; 62:7-8, Micah [*Michah*] 4:1-3; Psalm [*Tehillim*] 102:18-21; 125:1-2; 137:5-6). The day is coming when a restored and renewed Israel will once again be a light to the nations, for the destiny of Israel is linked to the destiny of the world!

The Birth of *Yeshua* During *Sukkot*

The Scriptures seem to indicate to us that *Yeshua* was born during the festival season of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles). In fact, I believe that He was born on the Feast of *Sukkot* (which is Tishrei 15 on the biblical calendar, and is analogous to our September/October). With this in mind, let's look for some evidence of this in the Bible.

In Luke 1:5, Zachariah (*Z'karyah*) is a priest (*Cohen*) of the division of Abijah (*Avijah*). What does this mean? Israel was divided into 24 districts at the time of *Yeshua*. Each of these districts sent two representatives to officiate at the temple during the weeks of the year. In First Chronicles (*Divery Hayamim*) 24, the first division of the priests would serve in the first week of the year, which would be both in the month of Nisan and the month of Tishrei since both months begin the new year. As we saw earlier in this book, Nisan is the first month in the religious calendar set up by G-d in Exodus (*Shemot*) 12:2 and Tishrei is the first month of the year according to the civil calendar.

During the third week in the month of Nisan, the priests from all 24 districts would come to the temple to help during the week of Passover (*Pesach*). This would also be the case for the festival of Pentecost (*Shavuot*) and for the festival of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) when all males were required to go to Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*) as specified by G-d in Deuteronomy (*Devarim*) 16:16. In First Chronicles 24:10, we see that *abijah* was the eighth division or course of priests. The course of *abijah* would minister during the tenth

week of the year. Remember, the weeks of Passover and *Shavuot* would not be counted because all the priests were required to go to Jerusalem then. In Luke 1:9-10, we see that Zacharias is burning incense. This is done in the room of the temple known as the Holy Place. As the incense (which represents the prayers of G-d's people [Psalm (*Tehillim*) 141:2; Revelation 8:3-4]) is being burned by the priests in the temple, 18 special prayers are prayed. These 18 prayers would be prayed every day in the temple. One of these prayers is that Elijah (*Eliyahu*) would come. This is important because it was understood by the people, as G-d established, that Elijah (*Eliyahu*) would precede the coming of the Messiah as stated in Malachi 4:5.

These 18 special prayers would be prayed twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. In Luke 1:11-13, the angel appeared on the right side of the altar and told Zacharias that his prayer was heard and John (*Yochanan*) the Immerser (Baptist) would be born. John (*Yochanan*) the Immerser (Baptist) was not literally Elijah (*Eliyahu*), but was of the spirit of power of Elijah (Luke 1:17).

Allowing two weeks for the laws of separation that G-d commanded in Leviticus (*Vayikra*) 12:5; 15:19,24-25 after going back to the house (Luke 1:23) and then going forward nine months (Sivan [tenth week] + 2 weeks + 9 months) puts the birth of John (*Yochanan*) during the festival of Passover (*Pesach*). This is an extremely important point because during the service for Passover, which is called the *Passover Seder*, the people are instructed by G-d to go to the door during one part of the service and look for Elijah (*Eliyahu*) while the Passover meal is eaten. The cup is called the cup of Elijah. The understanding of Elijah preceding the coming of the Messiah was the basis for the question in Matthew (*Mattityahu*) 17:10-13.

In Luke 1:26 during the sixth month of Elisabeth's (*Elisheva*) pregnancy, the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary (*Miryam*). This should have been around the twenty-fifth of Kislev, otherwise known as *Chanukah*. During the time of the first century, *Chanukah* was known as the second *Sukkot*. During the time of *Chanukah*, all of the *Sukkot* prayers are prayed once again. Mary's (*Miryam*) dialogue with the angel Gabriel is found in the *Sukkot* liturgy today. If you calculate from the twenty-fifth of Kislev and add eight days for the festival of *Chanukah* plus nine months for Mary's (*Miryam*) pregnancy, this will bring you around the time of the festival of *Sukkot*, or Tishrei 15. On Tishrei 22, known as *Shemini Atzeret* or the eighth day, *Yeshua* was circumcised (Luke 2:22-23; Leviticus [*Vayikra*] 12:1-3).

Other Evidences of Yeshua's Birth During Sukkot

As we have stated earlier in this chapter, the Feast of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) is called "*the season of our joy*" and "*the feast of the nations*." With this in mind, in Luke 2:10 it is written, "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings [*basar* in Hebrew; otherwise known as the gospel] of great joy [*Sukkot* is called the 'season of our joy'], which shall be to all people [*Sukkot* is called 'the feast of the

nations']." So, we can see from this that the terminology the angel used to announce the birth of *Yeshua* were themes and messages associated with the Feast of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles).

In Luke 2:12, the babe (*Yeshua*) was wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. The swaddling cloths were also used as wicks to light the 16 vats of oil within the court of the women during the festival of *Sukkot*. So, swaddling cloths are associated with the festival of *Sukkot*.

Notice also in Luke 2:12 that the baby *Yeshua* was laid in a manger. The word *manger* is the Greek word *phatn'e*. It is the same word translated as "stall" in Luke 13:15. By seeing how the word is used in Luke 13:15, we can see that the Greek word *phatn'e* means a place for hitching cattle. The Hebrew word for stall is *marbek*, which can be found in Amos 6:4 and Malachi 4:2. In Genesis (*Bereishit*) 33:17 it is written that Jacob journeyed to *Sukkoth* and made booths (the word booth in this passage is the Hebrew word *sukkah*; the plural is *sukkot*) for his cattle. So we can see from these passages how the word booth (*sukkah* or *sukkot*) was used by Jacob (*Ya'akov*) for his cattle in Genesis 33:17, and how the Greek word for manger or "stall," *phatn'e*, was also used to refer to hitching cattle in Luke 13:15. *Phatn'e* is the same word translated as "manger" in Luke 2:12, where *Yeshua* was laid at the time of His birth.

During the Feast of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles), G-d required that all male Jews come to Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*) (Deuteronomy [*Devarim*] 16:16). For this reason, the city would be overcrowded with people and would explain why Mary (*Miryam*) and Joseph (*Yosef*) could not find lodging in and around Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*) (Luke 2:7). Bethlehem, the place where *Yeshua* was born, is only about four miles from Jerusalem.

The last evidence I will give for the birth of *Yeshua* during *Sukkot* according to the Scriptures is in Matthew (*Mattityahu*) 2:1. There we see that wise men come from the East to visit *Yeshua*. The land of the East is Babylon, where the largest Jewish population was at the time of the birth of *Yeshua*. These Jews were descendants from the captivity when King Nebuchadnezzar defeated Israel and took the Jews to Babylon to serve him. Babylon is referred to as the land of the East in Genesis (*Bereishit*) 29:1 and Judges (*Shoftim*) 6:3. The wise men in Matthew (*Mattityahu*) 2:1 were rabbis. The rabbis, also called *sages*, are known in Hebrew as *chakamim*, which means wise men. The word in Matthew (*Mattityahu*) 2:1 in Greek is *magos*, which is translated into English as "Magi." *Magos* in Greek is the Hebrew word *ravmag*. *Ravmag* comes from the Hebrew word *rav*, which means "rabbi." It should also be noted that the Greek word *magos* can also mean scientist, counselor, scholar, or teacher. The rabbis were scholars or teachers of the Jewish law. *Yeshua* was referred to as "Rabbi," or "Teacher" in John (*Yochanan*) 1:38,47,49; 3:2. So, we can see that the wise men were Jewish rabbis coming from Babylon to witness the birth of *Yeshua*.

A question we can ask ourselves is, "What made the rabbis make the journey from Babylon to Bethlehem to witness the birth of *Yeshua*?" The answer is given in Matthew (*Mattityahu*) 2:2, as it is written, "...we have seen His star in the east...."

One of the requirements during the time of *Sukkot* was to build an outside temporary shelter and live in it during this festival season. This shelter is called a booth, or *sukkah*. The *sukkah* had to be built with an opening in the roof so the people could see the stars in heaven. This is another reason for why the rabbis would be looking for, and thus seeing, the star in the sky when it appeared. In addition, there was a prophecy in Numbers (*Bamidbar*), as it is written, "...a star shall come forth from Jacob..." (Numbers [*Bamidbar*] 24:17 NAS). King Herod inquired about where the Messiah would be born in Matthew (*Mattityahu*) 2:4. He was told in Bethlehem (Matthew [*Mattityahu*] 2:5-6), based upon the prophecy in Micah 5:2. In Matthew 2:10 it is written, "When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." Once again, remember that *Sukkot* is called "the season of our joy." In Matthew 2:2, the rabbis saw the star from the East. Salvation was seen by the Jewish people as coming from the East. *Yeshua* descended from the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:5). The tribe of Judah was positioned on the east side of the tabernacle of Moses (*Moshe*) in the wilderness. Finally, in Luke 2:32, *Yeshua* is called a light to the Gentiles. Once again, *Sukkot* is called "the festival of lights" and "the festival of all nations."

Therefore, by studying and understanding the festival of *Sukkot* and the themes and messages that G-d desired to be conveyed during this festival, enables us to read the Bible in a new light; it enables us to understand that *Yeshua* was born during the season of *Sukkot* and that He is the Star we are all called to see with our (spiritual) eyes!

Spiritual Significance of the Feast of *Sukkot*

One of the most outstanding truths of the Feast of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) involves the seasonal rains in Israel. The prophet Joel (*Yoel*) tells us that the former and latter rain would come in the first month (Joel [*Yoel*] 2:23). This is because Passover (*Pesach*) is the first month in the religious or sacred calendar, and *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) is the first month in the civil calendar. So Israel has two first months in the same year because of the special calendar that G-d set up in Exodus (*Shemot*) 12:2.

Hosea (*Hoshea*) 6:3 tells us that the coming of the Messiah will be as the former and latter rain on the earth. We just saw in the previous section that *Yeshua* came to earth (was born) during the festival of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles), the first month of the civil calendar, and died at His first coming during the first month (Nisan) on the sacred calendar. His second coming will also be in the first month of the civil calendar, Tishrei. *Yeshua* will return to earth during the fall of the year.

G-d promised Israel that upon their obedience to the covenant He made with them at Mount Sinai (Exodus [*Shemot*] 34:10; Deuteronomy [*Devarim*] 5:2; 29:12-15), that He would give them the rains in their due season (Deuteronomy [*Devarim*] 11:10-17). No rain was a sign of judgment and the curse of G-d on the land as well as on the people (1 Kings [*Melachim*] 8:33-43; 17:1-7; 18:41-46; Proverbs [*Mishlai*] 16:15; Amos 4:6-13;

Joel [*Yoel*] 1:10-12). Today, the land of Israel is becoming green once again (Isaiah [*Yeshayahu*] 35:1; Ezekiel [*Yechezekel*] 36:24-38; Joel [*Yoel*] 2:18-27).

The rain is a type of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) being poured out upon all flesh (Acts 2:1-8,14-21; Joel [*Yoel*] 2:23,28-29). The Word of G-d (*Torah*) is likened to the rain (Deuteronomy [*Devarim*] 32:1-3; Isaiah [*Yeshayahu*] 55:8-12; Ephesians 5:26). The Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) is also likened to the rain (Joel [*Yoel*] 2:21-32; Acts 2:1-8,14-21; James 5:7; John 7:37-39). Rain is associated with righteousness in Hosea (*Hoshea*) 10:12. G-d has made His righteousness available for all who believe on the Messiah (Romans 3:21-22; 5:17).

Yeshua is the rain that came down from Heaven as well as the living water and the fountain of living water spoken of in John (*Yochanan*) 4:4-6,10-14,20-24; and Revelation 21:6 and 22:1-5,17. *Yeshua* desires that we drink of the water He gives, which results in everlasting life (John 4:14) that we might be filled (Matthew 5:6).

Rain also speaks of revival, restoration, and returning to G-d (*Teshuvah*) and trusting (*emunah*) in Him. Just as the rain came after Elijah prayed seven times for it (1 Kings [*Melachim*] 18:41-46), the great rain or outpouring of G-d's Holy Spirit will come when the believers in the Messiah will earnestly pray to G-d that it be done. G-d has already declared that He would pour out His Holy Spirit during the seventh month, which is a spiritual picture of the end of the age (*Olam Hazeih*). So far, we have for the most part seen only showers of blessing (Ezekiel [*Yechezekel*] 34:26). The greatest outpouring of G-d's Spirit is yet to come. The feast of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) and the rain speaks of a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit of G-d, a universal outpouring of His Spirit. This outpouring will be accompanied by signs and wonders and manifestations of the gift of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) as well as a revelation and illumination of the Word of G-d beyond all that has ever been seen in the history of the congregation of believers (*kehilat*) in the Messiah. This outpouring will touch every nation, both Jew and non-Jew. The believer in the Messiah who is living at the time of the latter rain is called to seek the L-rd and ask Him to send rain on the people of the earth (Zechariah 10:1; Psalm [*Tehillim*] 46:4; 65:9-10; Jeremiah [*Yermiyahu*] 5:23-24; 31:10-14).

The fullness of this feast in the seventh month will be experienced at the coming of the Messiah when He will rule and reign on the earth during the Messianic age, the Millennium, called the *Athid Lavo* in Hebrew eschatology. This time will be a time of joy for all believers in the Messiah *Yeshua* and will be the age of Israel's glory.