

**God Remembered
Zechariah 14:8-21
Chapter 22
“The Feast of Tabernacles”**

The Lord's Triumph and Reign

On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half of it toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea, in summer and winter alike. On that day the Lord will become King over the whole earth — the Lord alone, and his name alone. All the land from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem will be changed into a plain. But Jerusalem will be raised up and will remain on its site from the Benjamin Gate to the place of the First Gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the royal winepresses. People will live there, and never again will there be a curse of complete destruction. So Jerusalem will dwell in security.

This will be the plague with which the Lord strikes all the people who have warred against Jerusalem: their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths. On that day a great panic from the Lord will be among them, so that each will seize the hand of another, and the hand of one will rise against the other. Judah will also fight at Jerusalem, and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be collected: gold, silver, and clothing in great abundance. The same plague as the previous one will strike the horses, mules, camels, donkeys, and all the animals that are in those camps.

Then all the survivors from the nations that came against Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord of Armies, and to celebrate the Festival of Shelters. Should any of the families of the earth not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of Armies, rain will not fall on them. And if the people of Egypt will not go up and enter, then rain will not fall on them; this will be the plague the Lord inflicts on the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Festival of Shelters. This will be the punishment of Egypt and all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Festival of Shelters.

On that day, the words Holy to the Lord will be on the bells of the horses. The pots in the house of the Lord will be like the sprinkling basins before the altar. Every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to the Lord of Armies. All who sacrifice will come and use the pots to cook in. And on that day there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Armies.

As we have already learned from this study, God appointed seven specific feasts for the nation of Israel to always observe. These feasts are commonly called, “The Feasts of The LORD”, and they can be found in the Law of Moses (**Leviticus 23**). These feasts were given not only to commemorate God's leading Israel out from Egyptian bondage and into the promised land, but they also serve as a prophetic timetable of God's redemptive plan to deliver those whom He has chosen into the kingdom of heaven.

There are four feasts that occur in the springtime; namely Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, and Weeks (or Pentecost). These are followed by three fall feasts; Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and The Feast of Tabernacles. The first three feasts occur in rapid succession and correspond with the death, burial, and resurrection of The Passover Lamb, Jesus The Christ. The fourth feast of Pentecost marks the church age. And finally the last three feasts point to the rapture (Trumpets), the cleansing of Israel (The Day of Atonement), and (Tabernacles) representing the Millennial Reign of The King.

After the great battle that will take place around Jerusalem, Jesus will cleanse the earth of the rebellious ones, and set up His kingdom in The Holy City. As we have seen previously, this will come about violently, beginning with Israel's darkest hour followed by its most glorious day. As Zechariah has so eloquently stated,

It will be a unique day known only to The LORD, without day or night, but there will be light at evening. **Zechariah 14:7**

Another way of expressing these back to back end-time events would be to say it will be the Day of Atonement, followed immediately by the Feast of Tabernacles. In the twelfth chapter of Zechariah, we are shown the horror of Israel's final Day of Atonement, in which a remnant of the Jews will come face to face with The True Messiah, that their ancestors pierced (**12:10**), and they will repent and believe in Him. Those who refuse to do so will be destroyed along with all the rest of the world's wicked. It will be a purging of Israel, the likes that has never before been seen.

Christ The King will descend followed by His holy ones and will stand upon The Mound of Olives, causing it to be split in two so that the remnant can escape the carnage that is soon to follow (**Zechariah 14:4-5**). The remnant will run to a place predetermined by The LORD Himself, so that they will be kept safe. Jesus told His disciples in **Matthew 24**, that this would be the worst period in all of human history.

For at that time there will be great distress, the kind that hasn't taken place from the beginning of the world until now and never will again. **Matthew 24:21**

In Israel, the celebration of The Feast of Tabernacles (or booths) is to commemorate when God led His people through the wilderness into the promised land. *The Bible* tells us that He led them with a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day. As they were in the wilderness, a rock followed them wherever they went, and it gave them water in order to survive in the arid country where water was scarce. God's very presence dwelt among His chosen people as they lived in tents, traveling through the wilderness.

Because of these things the feast of Sukkot (tabernacles) incorporates all three of these elements in order to bring to remembrance and to teach the young ones how God was there for them in the midst of their difficult and perilous journey. The people build shelters for themselves out of palm fronds or other materials to signify their nomadic lifestyle in the wilderness. And in the evening, there is a special "lighting ceremony" to serve as a reminder of God's presence as a pillar of fire. In Jesus' day, a giant candelabra was lit at the temple during Sukkot.

Another ritual that the people observed in addition to the booths and lighting ceremony was the procession of libation. The priests would go to the pool of Siloam and dip water into a golden container and carry it in a procession to pour out upon the altar as a reminder of God providing water for His people in the desert. In fact, it was during this very procession on the last day of the festival that a loud voice rang out from the crowd saying:

"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. The one who believes in Me, as The Scripture has said, will have streams of living water flow from deep within him." **John 7:37b-38**

Just in case we might have missed the significance of the return of The Messiah to dwell among His people and The Feast of Tabernacles, Zechariah makes sure to draw the line for us in bold strokes of his pen. He describes the return of King Jesus as the ultimate feast of tabernacles (**Zechariah 14:16-21**), for the Millennial reign of Christ shall be the prophetic fulfillment of the great feast, where God Himself will permanently dwell among His people.

Now, let us back up a few verses and the picture will come even more into focus for us. Zechariah says the last day will be murky until evening, when the light appears (**vs. 7**). Jesus is the light that comes at evening just when things appear to be hopeless, He shines through. Now, remember the ceremony of lights during the feast? Once more, Christ will be the light, or the pillar of fire, as it were, among His chosen people. Now look closely at what Zechariah says will happen after this:

On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half of it toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea, in summer and winter alike. On that day The LORD will become King over the whole earth — The LORD alone, and His Name alone. **Zechariah 14:8-9**

Remember the “libation ceremony” where the Israelites praised God for His life-giving water, and the rains for their crops in the promised land? When Christ returns, He truly will be the source of living water for His people. **“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink...”** This will be the culmination of Israel’s final and lasting feast of tabernacles, when God literally dwells among His people. And Christ shall reign over all the earth. The living waters will flow from Jerusalem to the to the eastern sea (The Dead Sea) and to the western sea (Mediterranean).

And even as those who love The LORD will be consoled with living waters, the enemies of God will come to a horrific end. For The LORD will curse them and even their beasts-of-burden with a horrific plague, causing their flesh and eyes which never stop sinning, and their tongues which blasphemed The Holy One of Israel, to rot away in an instant (**vs. 12-15**). The panic and confusion will be so great on that day that the armies which surround Jerusalem will turn on one another in unrestrained slaughter. Thus shall it ever be unto the enemies of our God.

Just as the book of *Revelation* has promised, multitudes from every nation and tongue will turn to Christ and find salvation. Jerusalem’s foundations will be raised above her surroundings (**vs. 10**) and Christ will sit upon David’s throne to rule the nations with a rod of Iron (***Psalms 2:9, Revelation 2:27***). Every nation will be required to make an annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem to worship the King and to celebrate this ultimate Feast of Tabernacles when God comes to dwell among his people.

To close out his book of prophecy, Zechariah tells us that on that day, when King Jesus inherits the earth and presides over the kingdom of heaven, not only will the temple be a holy place, but every common thing as well. From the most sacred of items and even down to the pots the people use for cooking, everything will be consecrated to The LORD of Hosts. It will be a time of prosperity and holiness as we will celebrate this final Feast of Tabernacles with the One Who was pierced, risen, and one day shall return to claim what is rightfully His. And we can rest assured that just as all these things have been promised, they most certainly shall come to pass.

For our God... Remembers!

Even so, come LORD Jesus. Amen and Amen.