

The Feast of Tabernacles

The Feasts of Israel

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I want us to begin reading in John chapter seven and we are going to break into the chapter in verse 14.

Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him. Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me? The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?¹

I might just pause here. John has already noted in his gospel that at an earlier point the Jews had already sought occasion and purpose to slay Christ. But now continuing on verse 21.

Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day? Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know

¹ John 7:14-20.

not. But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me. Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done? The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him. Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come. Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, 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. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? So there was a division among the people because of him. And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed. Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. And every man went unto his own house.²

Amen. We trust the Lord's blessing to be upon the public reading of his Word.

Let's do bow our heads together.

Our heavenly Father, we rejoice today to know even the truth of the testimony of these temple police. Never a man spake like this man. Lord, I pray that today we will be found to be a people that tremble at thy Word. Lord, if his enemies trembled at these words,

² John 7:21-53.

Lord, how much more should we his friends reverence and honor every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. I pray that there would be even today that we come to read and to meditate upon what to so many is an obscure portion of Scripture in the book of Leviticus, that we might find food today for our souls, Lord, that we might rejoice in Jesus Christ, the light of the world, Lord, that we might today be found hungering and thirsting after righteousness and that we might be filled. And so, Lord, we ask thee. Do meet with us. Help us this day to search the Scriptures. We pray these things all in Jesus' name. Amen.

If you would, turn back with me to the book of Leviticus chapter 23. We will begin reading in the 33rd verse, this concluding portion of the Scriptures dealing with the feasts of the Jews.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD. On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein. These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day: Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD. Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath. And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days. And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month. Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.³

Amen. Again, we trust the Lord's blessing be on the reading of his Word.

As we come today in concluding our studies and our thoughts upon the feasts of Israel, we come to consider the feast of tabernacles and we have read this portion in Leviticus where we have all of the feasts out lined in the 23rd chapter and we have read also in the gospel of John a portion to which we will, Lord willing, direct our attention in a few

³ Leviticus 33:33-44.

moments. But of all these feasts, I want us to meditate here again and consider the great purposes to which God brought these feasts before the people.

We have seen already that the feasts of Israel have stood as great types for us of the different pinnacles, the different aspects of the work of Christ and the different accomplishments of that work. We found that in the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread there the great picture of Christ our Passover slain for us. We found in that feast of First Fruits, in the midst of that week, the first fruits of the barley harvest laid before the Lord, a great picture of the resurrection as he was even brought forth from the dead on the very day of that feast. And we found, as well in the day of Pentecost a great type fulfilled and there of the harvest and the first fruits of the harvest there, the gospel going to the Gentiles. And as the New Testament says that we might be among the first fruits of his creatures. All of these things and we have looked at some of the even more minute details going on. All of these things could not have been by chance. They could have not been accidental, as it were. These were specifically designed of the Lord to show and to bring the people to consider, yes, the coming of Christ and the different facets of his work and that which he would accomplish.

And we have suggested, then, that in the remaining feasts that of Trumpets and of the Day of Atonement and here, finally, the feast of Tabernacles that these are feasts that yet await a fulfillment, that yet await a time in which in the history and the drama of redemption, the great fulfillment of that which these typify will be accomplished in Jesus Christ.

We did not take occasion last week in looking at the Day of Atonement. There were so many things that we left out as well. We might wonder: Is not the Day of Atonement a day in which we look in particular to Calvary? And yes, indeed, it is, for it speaks to us greatly of the work of Christ and even in minute detail some of the aspects of this priestly office for us.

But you see, friends, that Day of Atonement is fulfilled and has been fulfilled by Christ and in the case of individuals when we embrace him for salvation. But I believe there is yet coming a national day of atonement, a national day in which Israel will look on him whom they have pierced, in which they will come to discern that it was a suffering Christ that they needed. The Lord will pour upon those people in that day the Spirit of grace and of supplications. And it will be in that final sorrow for sin, that final repentance when Israel in a great measure, even as Romans said:

“And so all Israel shall be saved.”⁴

That they will look on him whom they have pierced and they will find that penitence. I submit to you what we studied even years ago in the 53rd of Isaiah that in many ways that is Israel’s penitential psalm in which that word that we look at, almost reading it as history of the coming and the suffering of Christ, that Israel in that day will look on him.

⁴ Romans 11:26.

“...yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”⁵

We esteemed him lightly. We esteemed him as suffering for his own sins and his own blasphemies and we put him to death. And they will come in that day, as we studied, to discern it was not for his sins, but it was for their sins that he died. And they will in that day cry:

“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”⁶

Oh, it was not that they would receive at that first advent of Christ the healing of the nations. It was not in that first advent of Christ that they as a nation and as a body would be exalted in the midst of the earth. No, there was need of salvation. There was need of atonement. And Israel in that day will look upon him.

Now we come to consider the feast of Tabernacles. And I believe the feast of Tabernacles—and, amazingly, this is a belief held even in the ancient times by the Jews and even in modern days by unbelieving Jews—that the feast of Tabernacles was looking forward. It was looking forward to a great day in which Israel would be a blessing to all the world. And so it is a feast, I submit to you, that is standing before us yet with a great fulfillment to come.

I won't dwell in great length today on that day of fulfillment, but I believe that the feast of Tabernacles ultimately has reference to the blessings of the millennial earth, that day in which Israel will be a light to the Gentiles in which God's blessings to all the earth will flow through Israel, as Paul says in Romans 11.

“And so all Israel shall be saved.”⁷

If the casting away of Israel, if God's chastening upon that nation, if he is nationally writing them off, breaking off the natural branches and grafting in the unnatural wild branches from the Gentile nations that include you and me, if the cutting off of those natural branches, the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, if this season of chastening and of provoking Israel to jealousy be our blessing and our benefit, what will the receiving of Israel be? What will be in which that day finally comes in common and when they do look upon him whom they have pierced and a nation is born in a day? What will that be but our fullness? What will that be but our blessing fulfilled?

Here, I submit to you, is the great day that we await.

But I want us to come in particular today to meditate upon the feast of Tabernacles for the people in the Old Testament. It said here that they were to set apart the 15th day of the seventh month and for seven days to keep the feast of Tabernacles. And remember.

⁵ Isaiah 53:4.

⁶ Isaiah 53:5.

⁷ Romans 11:26.

The feast of the Jews had come almost in clumps, as it were. In the first month of the year we have the Passover, the feast of Unleavened Bread and then the feast of First Fruits all right in the midst of those initial eight days of their calendar year, of their feasts of the year in that first month, all contained within that brief period of time.

There was one of the pilgrim feasts when the people had to come. All the males born would appear before the Lord in Jerusalem.

And then there was an interval, just a brief interval, but an interval of 50 days, seven sabbaths and then the day of Pentecost. And there, again, another feast of harvest. The feast of First Fruits was a sheaf of the barley harvest waved before the Lord. Christ's resurrection, the first fruits of them that sleep. Then were two loaves of the wheat harvest there given in the day of Pentecost as the Gentiles now in the Church age, all of these brought in from other nations. Yes, again, of the first fruits of his creatures. And there was another one of the pilgrim feasts where the males would appear before the Lord.

But then there was the long interval, the long period of silence. And then comes the seventh month and the remaining three feasts, that of Trumpets, announcing that the end is near; that of Atonement, that of solemnity and recognizing that it is atonement for sin that is needed and humiliation and the only fast, the only day of the year that they were to afflict their souls. And then, culminating with the feast of Tabernacles. Here this seventh month, this sabbatical month and the sevens—we will not pursue it—but the sevens in the feast of Tabernacles are just multiplied. You look at all the additional offerings that were brought there in each case multiples of sevens. It is stunning to read through and to look at this. But all of this summarizing and putting before the people that here is fulfillment. Here is perfection. Here is the completion of God's Work.

For these people it was the completion of the year. It was in the seventh month in the Day of Atonement that even the year of Jubilee was brought in. All things focused here. Things that we would think of in the civil realm that should have perhaps happened in the first month, but they happened in this month, because here is the culmination, here is the end, here is the blessing of the people.

And the feast of Tabernacles, then, was, we almost will stay in our modern vernacular, last but not least. It fell on the 15th to the 21st of what would roughly correspond to our October. It was the last of the pilgrim feasts. It was the last time of the year that men would of necessity have to come and appear before the Lord in Jerusalem. It was a feast of ingatherings. It was a feast of harvest. All of the harvests now are in. The vintage is in. And the people come and they appear before the Lord.

I want to pause and make a note for ourselves here. I remember when I was younger the year had a lot more structure. There was the beginning of school. There was Christmas break. There was the end of school. There was summer. And, boy, everything looked to summer. It couldn't get here fast enough. And we had those cycles and those were welcome things. Well, very often, in our modern culture and our society we don't have

those things. We have, you know, you get up. You go to work. You come home and you go to bed. And then you look maybe to vacation and some time. We press on. We keep plodding. There is nothing wrong with that. It is not a sinful thing to work and it is a sinful thing not to work and to be lazy. But think about people that live according to the seasons of the year. Think about an agricultural economy. Think about an agricultural people.

There were seasons of the year in which they knew tremendous labor and work, long, long days, early, early to rise. I remember my grandfather used to be out of bed, out in the fields for an hour or two and then back in for breakfast and then back out again, all that while I am just still trying to get up when I am down visiting.

But to make the harvest come and then let the months of winter come in and there was, yes, work to do. Maybe work along. Get the equipment back in order, certain things to prepare the land for planting in the spring, but by and large, days of rest and ease. And doubtless there were many natural reasons that there was joy for these people coming to the feast of tabernacles. The harvest is in. The days of long labor and of agonizing toil and length days are past. They harvest is in. The vintage is gathered and God's people can rejoice and look forward to these months following, then, to rest upon and to feast upon that that has already been accomplished and that has already been gathered in.

And doubtless, I say, there are natural reasons the people will be happy that this holiday, this season would come upon them.

Well, friends, we do not, as I said, have those natural seasons, so many of us or so few. Our day and our land that live according to the seasons and according to the land. But God saw fit for his people, not merely in these cycles, because these feasts were not merely natural cycles, like some of the other nations. These were the feasts of the Lord. He had designed them. He had given them to his people.

Friends, we are people that need seasons of rest. One of the things I think that plagues us in America is the issue of workaholics. Now, again, it is not to sanction laziness, but it is to say that God has not given us now a calendar of this order. God has not commanded us and even we are warned in the New Testament not to put forth that commandment to observe days and months and years as these were given to the nation of Israel. And it said there we are not to prescribe them. We are not to forbid them. If people before the Lord honor the day or they do not set aside the day, it is before the Lord that they do it. Save we do have the sabbath. We do have one day every week that we give unto the Lord. And I know we have taught much upon this.

Friends, let me put it before you again. Whatever God may lay upon your heart for bodily rest and ease and vacation and meditation and reflection throughout the year—and I think those things are very good and necessary. We need rest, both mentally and physically from the drain and the mundane things of the day to day business of the world. But whatever it be for vacations there is a sabbath that we keep unto the Lord. Here we come to the last of the feasts. And I submit to you even as we begin looking at this last

one that we must have seasons of reflection, daily to set aside time, to meditate and to read upon the Word of God, to be reminded in the midst of our busy days that this world isn't all.

And just as Israel has called aside to reflect throughout the year upon the things of God, you put a workaholic back in the days of Israel. You mean, I have to stop and go to Jerusalem? You think of even Pentecost right in the middle of the year, just to go for that one feast and then back. Yes. Go unto the Lord.

And I say, "Let us then pause."

For, you see, these had to come in the pilgrim feast to appear before the presence of the Lord. We need to experience the presence of the Lord. We do not experience that flippantly, either corporately or privately. We experience it by setting aside the season to seek it and then find it.

So I say even looking at this feast, how all the feasts come into their culmination, let us be reminded that we need seasons of rest, that we need sabbaths, not merely for leisure from earthly activities, but so that we might have time, that we might have leisure to give to the things of the Lord.

But in the feast of Tabernacles itself what do we find in it? Here is the last feast of the year, a harvest festival, the feast of ingathering. And I think there are a couple of things that stand here before us very clearly. The first one is that it is a feast that had a commemorative significance. We read in verse 42 and 43.

Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.⁸

There was some division among the Pharisees and the Sadducees, as among so many other things, as to just how to construct these booths. If you look in verse 40 it is said of the people in the days of this feast that they were to gather branches of the various trees, the palm trees, the other types of trees, willows in the brook, boughs of the thick trees. They were to gather these branches and they were in various days, the first day in particular, they would come in procession with these trees and the branches of these trees.

You think of the pilgrims and all of the multitudes gathered together. It would be as if the forests were moving as they came and they appeared before the Lord. Some believe that they used these branches to construct the tabernacles, the booths, the tents we would probably say to dwell in. Others said it was not a necessity. These were just branches that they used in celebration in the marching. All that argument, really, is beside the point. The point is that here for a week the pilgrims and even those that dwelt in Jerusalem were not to dwell in their houses. They were not to sleep upon their beds. They were not

⁸ Leviticus 23:42-43.

to stay within the comforts of home. They were to put the booths up upon their rooftops, out in their back yards. They were to live in tents for this week. And here, remember, this is the pinnacle of the year. This is the culmination of all of their feasts. This, above all the feasts, was a festival of great joy and of great rejoicing.

Maybe we should write that in if we are ever allowed again to have a church camping trip, no complaining about the bumps in the... underneath the floor of the tent.

But here these people in this festive time and they don't stay in their homes. They are not in tents. They are in booths that they make. And these booths, these tents were for them to commemorate and remember. God brought them out of Egypt. God protected them in their journeys through the wilderness. He was a shade to them. You ponder even that fact of the cloud of his glory and of his presence shading them through the day. God's people, strangers, pilgrims and yet God provided for them. He sent manna of them day by day. He brought water forth to them in the wilderness out of rocks. And God led them through.

My friends, here get the application for us. It is very clear and easy. We live today in great comfort. We live in homes that are far more comfortable than even the homes that they lived in. Most of us would think it a very horrible thing to live and sleep in the kind of things that they had in that day, that they were to leave that luxury and go to the booth, in the tent.

But you see, friends, the great picture here is not of the things that we sleep on, not of the homes we have. It is not know and to remember that we are pilgrims, that we are passing through a strange land.

Even as we studied all those months looking at the Sermon on the Mount, that we are people that have the kingdom of God within us. We are people that are citizens and subjects of a far greater kingdom, of a far greater land and we are to now have kingdom living in a fallen world. We are strangers and pilgrims.

And the point for us is this. And I speak to us all, but I think perhaps even in particular some of you young people. Do not live for now. Do not meditate upon the things of now. Remember that now you are a stranger. You are a pilgrim. The days of this life are a vapor. We have a tent here. And that is all. We have a home that he is making for us in glory.

And so if we then be risen with Christ, if our citizenship is in heaven, if we are seated in heavenly places in Christ now as believers in Jesus Christ, then do we live and seek to gather together treasures and riches upon the earth? Do we pass our hope and all our care and all of our hopes for blessing and prosperity upon the things of now? Do you look to now for happiness? If you do, you will be disappointed. And you consider this fact, that we live today in a time and in a nation that has known more prosperity than any people throughout all of history upon the face of the earth as far as the average enjoyments of life. The rest of the world today would love to have the problems of the poorest

American. But I ask you to look even at the richest American. Are they deriving pleasure and happiness and meaning and contentment from the things that they possess?

Friends, contentment will never be found in things. Contentment can only be found in Christ. And if we have Christ then we are content with such things as we have.

You think about David. You think even about the parable that Nathan brought to him. David showed a lack of contentment. David, the man who possessed herds, numerous herds and then there was the other man that had one ewe lamb and yet what happened? David slaughtered that lamb.

You say, "Well, if I have this or if I get the other thing, I will be content."

Was David content? He had it all. So, you see, contentment will not be found, even the measure of your life will not be found in the abundance of the things that you possess. No, we dwell in booths even as we sang today, from the best bliss that earth imparts, {?} turns unfilled unto Christ. Let me drink of Christ. That will satisfy. And whether it be a system of religion, whether it be a system of earthly prosperity of tangible blessing, earthly riches you drink and drink and be unfilled, unsatisfied. No, these people were happy because they were dwelling in booths, reflecting upon the fact that they were the people of God, they were pilgrims here below. And I say to you and me here today, let us dwell in booths. Let us know that we are in tabernacles here and that we look for a coming day.

I say there was certainly a clear commemorative significance, a feast. But, as I said, I believe that there is also a recognition here that there is something in a future day that is yet to be fulfilled. If you would turn with me over to the prophecy of Zechariah chapter 12. We will look at a portion then again over in the words of chapter 14 as well.

This is one of many prophecies that have reference to the feast of Tabernacles. You find the prophecy of Hosea. You find a quotation in various places that this feast and that that it looked forward to in the future was something more than just Israel's possession of the land. It was a time of blessing, times of refreshing that would come. And Zechariah speaks much of that future restoration of the people. And he says in chapter 12 beginning in verse nine:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.⁹

⁹ Zechariah 12:9-11

Here I believe Zechariah takes us to the very point that we meditated upon a while ago from Isaiah 53, a day in which Israel in all of her blindness and all of her folly even of anti Christianity, the blindness will be taken away and they will finally look upon him whom they have pierced. When will that day come? It will come when the Lord pours upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplications.

And as it said in the 110th Psalm:

“Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.”¹⁰

And I believe, friends, that we are looking yet for a day, as Paul says in Romans in which all Israel shall be saved, when that which has been the blessing to us of their being chastened and cast away in part, blindness in part is happening to Israel. Until the fullness of the Gentiles come in and then that will be taken away and then in that day there will be great rejoicing.

Turn over now to chapter 14 of Zechariah beginning then in verse 16. We will back up and begin reading in verse 13.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.

And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.¹¹

Here the prophet Zechariah brings us to the millennial end. He brings us to that day in which nations will be gathered against Jerusalem. Here Zechariah prophesying not of a people in that meager restoration in that day, the day prior to the coming of Christ in his first advent when the people even had to weep for the smallness of that temple, as it were in comparison to the temple of Solomon. No, looking for that day in which the nations, yes, would gather against Jerusalem in the great and final conflict of this earth when Christ will come and he will pour out upon his people in that day the Spirit of grace and

¹⁰ Psalm 110:3.

¹¹ Zechariah 14:13-17.

supplications and they will come unto the Lord and then the ultimate fulfillment of the feast of Tabernacles will be there, the ingathering will be complete, the harvest.

You meditate, friends, upon this and we do not have time to pursue it, but if you go to Matthew 24 you go through in the book of Revelation and you see many of the descriptions of that great and final day of the coming of the Lord and it is a day of what? It is a day of ingathering. It is a day of harvest. It is a day of rejoicing. And you read. It says in Revelation seven:

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.¹²

When were the people of Israel to gather branches of the trees? It was at the feast of Tabernacles. When we will read in the latter days of people gathered in white robes, arrayed in pure garments and palms in their hands. The day of our Lord's coming and the day of his revelation to the earth.

And you see, friends, Israel's blessing in that day will be blessing to all the world. As I said:

“And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.”¹³

And it says in the very closing of Revelation chapter 21 the tabernacle of God will be with men. And I believe all these pointing to us to the blessings of the millennial earth, for you see in the feast of Tabernacles, this feast of seven days, but yet on the eighth day there was yet another sabbath, another solemn assembly as the people in conclusion of the feast were prepared there all the year, all the feasts completed and they would pause and meditate upon them before going back to their homes and before the beginning of the cycle again. And I believe, friends, that the millennial earth will be just that, a season, an earthly sabbath in which all those redeemed and yes even some unredeemed people will see the very presence of God with men, Christ seated upon the throne in Jerusalem and that being almost the anteroom to heaven. And here we as these people in that last day of the feast looking of the eighth day, the beginning of the new year and those seasons, that last day of this earth waiting the eternal day, the presence of God.

I believe, friends, the feast of Tabernacles speaks much to us of things that we yet await. But I want to close today with thoughts from the seventh of John again. You see, none of these blessings, none of these things that we desire and believe we will see fulfilled in a future day will come apart in the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is an interesting thing that our Lord here in John chapter seven and really continuing on through chapter nine, our Lord has come to the feast. This is the feast of Tabernacles at this time in one of his visits to

¹² Revelation 7:9-10.

¹³ Isaiah 60:3.

Jerusalem. You find early in the chapter that his brethren wondered if he would go. There are already murmurings among the people. And Christ does not go and present himself, but he goes almost in secret to the feast. But then finally he does come and he does speak unto the people.

There were some things in the feast of Tabernacles that were post Mosaic in origin. A couple of these things were the ritual of priests, one going down to the pool of Siloam and with a golden vessel gathering water to bring back to the temple and to pour out upon the altar, mingled with the wine of the thank offerings and they would throw out before the people. And it was during this feast that the pouring forth of this water that our Lord said that him that thirsteth let him come unto me. Christ here, all these people and all of their confusion and all of their wondering about who and what he is. You think of the confusion of these people in that day. I do not have time to pursue this thought in the midst of my studies, but it came to me as I was thinking along upon the palm branches. When did the people bring palm branches unto Christ? The triumphal entry, Passover week. There at the very beginning of the feasts of Israel.

Christ comes to Jerusalem and here is a nation that is excited to receive its Messiah. Here is a nation that wants all of its earthly blessings now. And there on their feast of Passover, when they should be looking at the Lamb slain instead they look at the feast of Tabernacles and they cut off palm branches and they wave them before the Lord and even sing some of the very words of the pilgrim songs. Psalm 118 as the people were gathering, these various songs of degrees, songs of ascent as the pilgrims would come up to Jerusalem. The very ones that they were to sing at the feast of Tabernacles, the very things that they were to bring at the feast of Tabernacles, at that final day of the final blessing to the nations through these people. They wanted that rather than Passover.

And I say here are a people that are blind and here are people so fixed upon their ritual. It was one of the kings, priest kings in the Maccabean period that came and this ceremony of pouring out the water and instead of pouring it through these portals upon the altar that it would flow out mingled with the wine, he poured it on the ground because he didn't agree with the Pharisees. And the people began to throw their own vessels at him and nearly killed him. If it weren't for his own guards that preserved him. And 6000 Jews were slain in the temple in that day.

Here are a people so ...

One of the other things that the people did in the feast of tabernacles was out in the court of the women in Herod's temple, they had erected four great candelabras that were so large that young men, they had to be young men, sons of the priests that would perform this duty, but they had to use ladders to get up upon them and they would pour great quantities of oil in the various bowls and the candelabras. And it was said the light from these things and what they used for wicks were the remains of priestly linen and the garments of the priests that were cast aside, the light from these candles were so great that all the courtyards, all of Jerusalem and the villages round about could see and the light here in the temple. And it is in the week of this feast that Christ said unto them, "I

am the of the world.

Here these people, they almost have them in the same spirit of Babylon. They want their earthly kingdom without a suffering Savior. And then all the nations to be coming together under their earthly ambitions, their earthly designs.

Well, friends, these are the ambitions of antichrist. These are the ambitions, yes, even of Rome in the present day. Friends, we must see Christ in the feast. Here is the Lamb of God. Here is Christ himself. The people had all of their lives and would not have the antitype himself, Jesus Christ.

We might think today, well, we are free from these thing. We do not have such tangible religion of all these pictures and all of these emblems. Friends, these things come along quite easily to people that see not the gospel of Jesus Christ. And you don't even have to look to Rome today to see them. You see the trappings of such priest craft even in various corners of evangelicalism today. Friends, it is not that we need. It is Christ we need. And if we can come to understand and believe in the Christ of the Passover, if we can rejoice in that unleavened bread looking at his spotless Lamb of God that was a Lamb to be slain and to see the first fruit, that first sheaf as he rose from the dead, the third day, the morrow after the sabbath, that we see in Pentecost the great outpouring of his Spirit and the ingathering now from all nations to this gospel of Jesus Christ, not some political kingdom, not something that we are striving for yet today as Gentiles, but the preaching of the gospel, Christ crucified, the power of God unto salvation. Then we will come to see, as this gospel goes forth to all the nations of the earth, as God finally will fill up the role of his elect, that the trumpet blast will sound, that, yes, even Israel will now leave her blindness and believe in this Christ whom they have pierced and then the great days of his kingdom and, yes, even the great days of heaven itself will be brought to us. The feasts of Israel are feasts of the Lord. They are feasts that speak to us of the gospel, of the person and work of Jesus Christ. And I pray that today in our concluding meditations upon all of these feasts of the Jews that we will leave this place rejoicing in the feast, rejoicing in the Christ of God, that we will drink of him and that we will see in him a light of the world.

Let's bow our heads together.

Our heavenly Father, we thank thee today that Christ has come. We would not, Lord have had a Savior to have come in any other way than he came as the Lamb of God. For we confess, Lord, although it is not that we would have wanted to confessed, but only by the moving and the gracious stirring an change of heart that is brought by thy Spirit alone, Lord, that we were sinners in need of a slain Savior. But, oh, we rejoice that he is risen. And, Lord, we rejoice that he is coming again. And, Lord, we pray that thou wilt help us even in waiting for him to hasten the day of his appearing, the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom, by living and proclaiming the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

If there be any of you here today seated and yet are outside of this Christ, I ask you what kingdom, what earthly blessing, what season of prosperity can keep you from looking to

that one great day, the day of our Lord's coming? I pray that today you may turn unfilled in the things of earth and that you might go unto Christ, the fountain of living waters.

Lord, bless thy Word to our hearts. Help us even in this thy day meditate upon it and to rejoice in thee. Let us be a singing people, singing the hallelujahs even as they did so long ago as they journey to Jerusalem to keep the feast of Tabernacles. And, Lord, we pray these things all in Jesus' name. Amen.