

I. THE GOD WHO CAME TO STAY

- A. In the 1800s, missionary John G. Paton left the security of Scotland and sailed to Papua New Guinea inhabited by people who had never heard the gospel. Missionaries before him had been killed there. People questioned why he would risk everything to go. But Paton understood something about the heart of God: **God does not love humanity from a distance, He desires to love them up close.** Paton discovered a secret about the heart of God. Inside His heart is a burning desire to dwell with man in close intimacy.
- B. Today we will take a look at the last of the seven annual feasts, called the Feast of Tabernacles. **I believe hidden in the true meaning of this feast is the Burning Desire of God.**

II. WHAT IS THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES?

- A. The Feast of Tabernacles also known as the Feast of Booths, and Sukkot, was instituted by God to be celebrated on the 15th day of the seventh month (Tishrei), five days after the Day of Atonement **lasting seven days, with an extra eighth day of sacred assembly.**
- B. Historically it is a time of joyous celebration and remembering God's deliverance from Egypt, and His supernatural provision of water, food, and protection while the nation of Israel was in the wilderness for 40 years.
- C. It is also a reminder of how God dwelt among them in close proximity in a tent, called the Tabernacle of Moses.
- D. It was also known as the Feast of Ingathering, celebrating the completion of Israel's agricultural harvest and God's faithfulness.

III. HOW IT IS CELEBRATED TODAY

- A. Jewish families construct a temporary booth called a *sukkah*, often in their yard, on balconies, or in communal yards. The roof is made of organic material (branches, reeds, palm fronds, etc.) through which one can see the sky.

- B. Observant Jews eat most (or all) of their meals in the sukkah, and when weather permits, may even sleep there. There is a special blessing recited when eating in the sukkah

IV. JESUS HAS AND WILL PARTIALLY FULLFILL IT

A. AT HIS BIRTH

- 1. There is a strong possibility that Jesus was born during the Feast of Tabernacles

A) ¹⁴**And the Word became flesh and dwelt(tabernacled) among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. -Jn 1:14**

B. HIS EARTHLY MINISTRY

- 1. ³⁷**On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." ³⁹ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. -Jn 7:37**

C. HIS SECOND COMING AND REIGN

- 1. ¹⁶**And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. -Zech 14:16**

V. JOHN 17:24-26

- A. I want to take a brief look at Jesus' priestly prayer because I believe within this sacred and holy prayer we can discover the burning heart of God and the true meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles.
- B. John 17 records Jesus' final prayer to the Father the night before His arrest and crucifixion. Jesus prays for Himself, His disciples, and all future believers in this prayer. He asks the Father to glorify Him, protect and sanctify His followers, bring them into unity, and ultimately fulfill His

deepest desire: that His people would be with Him, behold His glory, and share in the love He has with the Father.

1. **²⁴"Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. ²⁶ And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."**

- C. In this prayer, we see the shared desire of the Father and the Son at the heart of the redemptive story in which was secured by Jesus on the cross: a people God can love, reveal His glory to, and dwell with forever.

VI. GOD'S ANTHEM THROUGH SCRIPTURE

A. Jesus' prayer in John 17:24 echoes an anthem throughout the bible:

1. **"I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God"-Ex 6:7**
2. **"I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people."-Lev 26:11-12**
3. **" Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people."-Jer 7:23**
4. **"that they may walk in My statutes... and they shall be My people, and I will be their God."-Eze -11:20**
5. **"I will bring them back, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They shall be My people and I will be their God, in truth and righteousness."-Zech 8:8**
6. **"For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people."-2 Cor 6:16**

7. ***"I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."-Heb 8:10***

VII. GOD'S DESIRE SEEN THROUGH THE ENTIRE REDEMTIVE STORY

- A. From Genesis to Revelation, one of the great themes of scripture is God moving toward humanity, revealing His deep desire for a people who will dwell in His presence, enjoy Him, and be with Him forever.
- B. The biblical storyline is heading to its final destination of God's original design and plan for man, **and the Feast of Tabernacles is a reminder of this destination.**

C. EXAMPLES:

1. Garden of Eden
 - a) In the beginning God created earth and man so that He could be their God and they can be His people.
2. Tabernacle of Moses
 - a) God delivered Israel out of Egypt to be near them in the wilderness
3. Temples
 - a) God's through the Priesthood came near His people
4. Incarnation
 - a) God became a man to be with His creation
5. Church
 - a) God dwelling within His people by His Spirit to be near them
6. Christ's return
 - a) God the Son dwelling and ruling with His people on the earth for 1000 years
7. The Father's coming
 - a) The Father coming to a restored earth to fulfill His burning desire for eternity

(1) ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell

with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.-Rev 21:3

VIII. THE STORY ENDS WITH WATER

- A. At the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus stood and cried out, ***"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink."*** At the end of Revelation, that same invitation is heard again, this time from the Father Himself: ***"I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts."*** What Jesus proclaimed at the feast ultimately reaches its fulfillment: the redeemed are gathered, the water of life flows freely, and God makes His dwelling with His people forever.

1. ***⁶ And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts."*** ⁷ ***He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*** -Rev 21:6-7

IX. HOW CAN CHRISTIANS HONOR AND ENTER INTO ITS MEANING TODAY?

- A. First we must heed Paul's warning and understand that observing any of the feasts is not required for salvation, or justification, and we should avoid any people who try to mandate it for salvation
1. ***¹⁶ So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,*** ¹⁷ ***which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.***-Colo 2:16-17

B. FOUR WAYS TO ENTER INTO THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

1. REMEMBER

- a) Remember God's faithfulness in our lives to provide, protect and bless.

2. REJOICE

- a) A time to be joyful because God has made a way to experience His Presence.

3. HOPE

- a) A day is coming where the Father will physically be with us forever.

4. DRINK

- a) Come to Jesus and drink freely from the Holy Spirit and God's Presence