

Experience In The Booth - The Feast Of Tabernacles

“The Lord said to Moses, ‘Say to the Israelites: On the fifteenth day of the seventh month the Lord’s Feast of Tabernacles begins, and it lasts for seven days. The first day is a sacred assembly, do no regular work. For seven days present offerings made to the Lord by fire, and on the eighth day hold a sacred assembly and present an offering made to the Lord by fire. It is the closing assembly, do no regular work.’” (Leviticus 23:33-36) “So beginning with the fifteenth day of the seventh month, after you have gathered the crops of the Land, celebrates the festival to the Lord for seven days; the first is a day of rest, and the eighth day also is a day of rest. On the first day you are to take choice fruit from the trees, and palm fronds, leafy branches and poplar, and rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days. Celebrate this as a festival for the Lord for seven days each year. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come; celebrate it in the seventh month. Live in booths for seven days: All native born Israelites are to live in booths so that your descendants will know that I made the Israelites live in booths so that your descendants will know that I made the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.” (Leviticus 23:39-43)

As the bus left the city travelling a long journey toward another city, it passes through a dry land like a desert. In the bus, two passengers were sitting together having discussion. *“I am tired.” “I feel the same. “We need to relax.” “I need to sleep.” “We need to get rest.”* Then the bus stopped and the Tourist Guide announced: “Now you can spend some pleasant time in the booths!”

Booths or tabernacles are temporary sheds or dwellings. These are small cubicles or shelters made of palm tree leaves. After the exodus (exit) of the chosen people of God from Egypt, they lived in temporary shelters while they were in the desert. Likewise, after God Jehovah had given the Ten Commandments and other laws to Moses, He commanded them to build a tabernacle for Him to dwell among His people. **“Then have them make a sanctuary for me and I will show you.” (Exodus 25:8-9)** That movable structure being the place of their worship to God was carried from place to place, wherever they pitch their tents or booths. The tabernacle signifies God’s presence in their journey to the promise land.

The chosen people of God at the exodus from Egypt were followed by the Pharaoh’s army. But they were able to cross the Red Sea safely while their enemies were hurled into the sea. After this event **“The Lord said to Moses, All native-born Israelites are to live in booths so that your descendants will know that I made the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.”** After a hard journey the people of God rested in booths or tabernacles.

In the Old Testament God and his people live in separate tabernacles. But in the New Testament after Jesus’ death on the cross taking our sins away, God chose to dwell in tabernacles He made by Himself. The Spirit of God chose to dwell in the bodies of those who believe in Jesus’ death on the cross taking our sins away, God chose to dwell in tabernacles He made by Himself. The Spirit of God chose to dwell in the bodies of those who believe in Jesus’ death on the cross and in His resurrection, and those bodies become the new tabernacles of the New Testament. Consequently, God and his people lived in the same tabernacle. **“Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you.” (1 Corinthians 3:16)**

In this issue passages, two times God says: **Do no regular work.** And for two times God says: **Is a day of rest.** Joining these words together it says, **Do no regular work is a day of rest. Live in the booth for seven days,** (seven signifies completeness). This mean you have to sit in the booth for an enough time before you can resume your journey once again. **Celebrate this as a festival for the Lord for seven days each year.** In fact, it is a feast

for our bodies, the new tabernacles where the Spirit of God dwells, to refresh and revives us with His presence. The seven days represent the required convalescence period that we need to sit with the Lord until our hearts are mended and completely healed.

The feast of Tabernacles was celebrated at a certain appointed time of the year. But we know and we agree that what is present in the Old Testament, **‘Are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality however, is found in Christ.’ (Colossians 2:17)** So we have to understand the spiritual meaning of that feast in order to apply it into our lives and not to be trapped with mere celebrations each year.

In what conditions do we need to go and sit in the booths? When we are tired from the trip of life, when we are toiling, when we are just delivered, when we are anxious, when we are sinning or enslave to sin, when we are working by our flesh and we are forgetting to enquire and ask guidance from God; when we are running and running away without reaching the end, this is the time for us to sit in the booths. Sitting in the booth, spiritually it means we alienate ourselves from the ordinary life that we used to do, and from the atmosphere that we are in; to clothe ourselves with contented and humble spirit that makes us occupy the booth; to snatch ourselves out of every worries and the past life and to be in the plain booth. Many times we forget to sit and face or speak with the Lord in a private special place! God ordered His people to celebrate this feast in order to remind them to sit and enjoy the life with Him, **‘This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come.’**

Today, here we are standing at one of the appointed feasts that God had ordered Moses to announce to the people to celebrate. It is the Feast of Tabernacles or the Feast of Booths. In celebration to this feast, I invite you to enter or spend time in the booths or tabernacles:

1. In the booth God will remind us with all the blessings He gave to us: (...after you have gathered the crops of the Land...you are to take choice fruit from the trees, and palm fronds, leafy branches and poplar...) this will encourage us to bring and utter to Him the choice of our thanksgiving.

2. In the booth God will remind us about the importance of Holy life in His presence: The statement, **sacred assembly,** has been repeated two times in this passage. By this we are reminded to what we did wrong and we will offer our repentance, and ask from Him forgiveness. It is worthy to know that one of the requirements for this feast is to **“Include one male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and great offering.” (Number 29:16)** At the booth, the spirit of God will speak to us and will clean us, since it is a sacred assembly.

3. In the booth God will renovate the spirit inside us and will make us celebrate and rejoice before Him: “On the last and greatest day of the, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘If anyone thirsty let Him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the scriptures has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” (John 7:37-38) While we are sitting quietly in the booth, God will renew us from inside out through our belief in Jesus. At that moment, the tears of joy will start to fall down on our cheeks. He will take us out from our loneliness, and He will restore our souls. The smiles will come back to our faces and the welcoming spirit will be rekindled inside us once again. His Spirit will draw us toward Him and we will renew our covenant with Him. Then we will start to sing, dance, celebrate, and **rejoice before the Lord.** And we shall leave the booths with joy and praise.

My Dear and Beloved: With a humble spirit I beseech you to set a certain time to be with the Lord in a suitable booth, where he will recharge you with a lovely breeze before you go back to your routine life. My prayers will be always with you. May the Lord Almighty bless you and make your joy complete in this day, in Jesus name, *Amen.*

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that assures me of all your good promises to me. Lord I rest in your presence, refresh me and revive me and fill me with your Holy Spirit. Lead me Lord in the way that you wants me to go, this all I ask and pray in Jesus name Amen.*