



**MESSIANIC FEAST OF TABERNACLES
"SUKKOT"
HAGGADAH**

A USER-FRIENDLY FAMILY GUIDE

WE INFORM – YOU CHOOSE

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MESSIANIC FEAST OF TABERNACLES "SUKKOT" HAGGADAH

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Preface

YHWH "God" has called us to do two things. First, we are to never give up studying and seeking the correct interpretation of any given Bible passage. Second, such opportunities are golden moments for us to learn to show grace and love to others whose understanding of a given passage may differ from ours.

Throughout the HRTI's teachings, we use a slightly different vocabulary to that which some might be accustomed. We have chosen to use what many refer to as a Messianic vocabulary. The reasons being: Firstly, using Hebraic-sounding words is another way to help you associate with the Hebraic Roots of your faith. Secondly, these words are not merely an outward show for us, they are truly an expression of who we are as Messianic Jews and Gentiles who have "taken hold" of our inheritance with Israel.

Instead of saying "Jesus," we call our Saviour "Y'shua," the way His parents would have addressed Him in Hebrew. In addition, rather than referring to Y'shua as "Christ," we use the word "Messiah," which is an Anglicized version of the Hebrew word, Moshiach.

"YaHoVaH" is the name of God in Hebrew, where it is written as four consonants (YHWH or YHVH, as the W and V is derived from the same Hebrew letter 'Vav'). These four letters are called the Tetragrammaton (Greek for "[a word] having four letters). Jews ceased to use the name in the Greco-Roman period, replacing it with the common noun Elohim, "God," to demonstrate the universal sovereignty of Israel's God over all others; at the same time, the divine name was increasingly regarded as too sacred to be uttered, and was replaced in spoken ritual by the word Adonai ("My Lord"). From about the 6th to the 10th century the Masoretes, Jewish scholars who were the first to add vowels to the text of the Hebrew Bible, used the vowel signs of the Hebrew words Adonai or Elohim as the vowels for YHWH, and later on the artificial name Jehovah was produced. Christian scholars and translators after the Renaissance and Reformation periods replaced the sacred name YHWH with GOD and LORD (all in capital letters in the Bible); which was a strategic move of Satan as to not using the Name. The Sacred Name occurs 6,828 times in the Hebrew text of the Bible, proving YHWH wants us to use it.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, biblical scholars again began to use the form Yahweh; and it is now the conventional usage in biblical scholarship, but leading Hebrew Scholars suggest YHWH should be pronounced as Yah-oo-VaH (Y'shua is derived from YaH-shuvah which means YaH saves. Yah (יה) is an abbreviation of God's name YHWH as seen in Psalm 68:4. The Name is also found in the word hallelu-YaH, which means "you praise the LORD").

Messianic Sukkot Haggadah

Introduction

Unlike most of the traditional Christian holidays which have their origins in paganism, *all* of the traditional Jewish holidays—or better, YHWH's Feasts—have their origins in the Bible.

They were *commanded* by YHWH in Leviticus. Our Lord and Saviour Messiah Y'shua celebrated His Father's Holidays when He was on the earth. Furthermore, *none* of YHWH's Feasts have been nearly as commercialised as the Christian holidays of Christmas and Easter. Are there enough reasons for a Christian to celebrate these pagan holidays? In one word—*no!*

So, what *benefit* is there to a Christian celebrating Tabernacles (Hebrew: Sukkot), Pentecost (Hebrew: Shavuot), Passover (Hebrew: Pesach)—or any other feast? Well, the first reason is **obedience**. If YHWH instructs us to celebrate it, then we should do so. It sounds so simplistic, but it is so true. The spiritual benefits of being lead to celebrate, and following through with that leading, are phenomenal. Each biblical holiday concentrates on one or more attributes and actions of YHWH, allowing us to contemplate them in greater detail and depth than would normally be accomplished in a single day or week. Pesach concentrates on our sinfulness and how it enslaves us. YHWH freed us through the sacrifice of His Lamb. Sukkot concentrates on a handful of attributes: YHWH as provider and refuge, our anticipation of His coming kingdom, and the joy we have in being His children.

Studying Sukkot and celebrating this festival will give the Believer a glimpse of a spiritual journey beyond your wildest imagination. If you are hungry to seek what you will be doing in heaven one day, then study Sukkot as its design pierces the future! In fact, all of the Biblical Feasts are **rehearsals** for how things will be fulfilled in Eternity! We will not be celebrating days like "Christmas" then! So the question is, why participate in celebrations that are contrary to the Biblical mandate that YHWH **hates**? We can only be treading on thin ice for that kind of disobedience, so it's something to think about.

For Background Reading only—not part of the Haggadah

1) *Background overview:*

Sukkot, also called the Feast of Tabernacles or the Feast of Booths, occurs on Etanim (Tishri) 15. Booths (Sukkahs) are temporary dwellings comprised of natural tree branches—they are built in backyards and

families share meals in them. The booths bring to mind the forty years in the wilderness with the Shekinah¹ of YHWH surrounding the Israelites and protecting them.

Sukkot is one of the three Biblically-mandated *Shalosh regalim*² on which Jews and Believers make pilgrimages to pre-determined sites to worship and fellowship at the Temple in Jerusalem.

The Holy Day lasts seven days, including *Chol Hamoed*³ and is immediately followed by another festive day known as Shemini Atzeret/The Last Great Day. The Hebrew word *sukkot* is the plural of *sukkah*, "booth or tabernacle", which is a walled structure covered with flora, such as tree branches or bamboo shoots. The sukkah is intended as a reminder of the kind of fragile dwellings in which the ancient Israelites dwelt during their 40 years of wandering in the desert after the Exodus from Egypt.

Throughout the holiday, the sukkah becomes the primary living area of one's home. All meals are eaten inside the sukkah and many sleep there as well. On each day of the holiday, members of the household recite a blessing over the lulav and etrog, or Four Species (details explained further on).

2) Origin and ancient observance:

Sukkot was agricultural in origin. This is evident from the biblical name "The Feast of Ingathering",⁴ from the ceremonies accompanying it and the season—"*The festival of the seventh month*"—and the occasion of its celebration: "*At the end of the year when you gather in your labors out of*

¹ Hebrew for "covering presence".

² The **Three Pilgrimage Festivals**, also written as *Sh'losha Regalim*, and are the three major festivals in Judaism — Pesach (*Passover*), Shavuot (*Weeks/Pentacost in Greek*), and Sukkot (*Tabernacles/Tents or Booths*) — when the Israelites living in ancient Israel and Judea would make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as commanded by the Torah (Exod 23:14-17, 34:18-23; Deuteronomy 16). In Jerusalem, they would participate in festivities and ritual worship in conjunction with the services of the Cohanim ("Priests") at the Temple in Jerusalem. After the destruction of the Temple, the actual pilgrimage is no longer obligatory for Jews, and no longer takes place on a national scale. During synagogue services, the related passages describing the holiday being observed are read aloud from a Torah scroll on the Bimah (platform) used at the center of the synagogue services. During the Jewish holidays in modern-day Israel, many Jews living in or near Jerusalem make an effort to attend prayer services at the Western Wall—"emulating" the ancient "pilgrimages" in some small fashion.

³ **Chol HaMoed**, a Hebrew phrase meaning "*weekdays [of] the festival*" (literal translation: "sand [of] the occasion"), refers to the intermediate days of Passover and Sukkot. During Chol HaMoed, the usual restrictions that apply to the Biblical Jewish holidays are relaxed, but not entirely eliminated. For example, work that would normally be prohibited on the festival would be allowed to prevent financial loss or if the results of the work are needed for the festival itself. Work for public need is also allowed.

⁴ Exod 23:16, 34:22

*the field*⁵; "after you have gathered in from your threshing-floor and from your winepress".⁶ It was a thanksgiving to YHWH for the fruit harvest. Sukkot was regarded as a general thanksgiving for the blessings of nature in the year that had passed—coming as it did at the completion of the harvest.

Sukkot became one of the most important feasts in Judaism, as indicated by its designation as "the Feast of YHWH"⁷ or simply "the Feast".⁸ Perhaps because of its *wide attendance*, Sukkot became the *appropriate time for important state ceremonies*—as was seen in Y'shua's time when all families had to go to their town of origin for the yearly census. During this important time, Moshe⁹ instructed the children of Israel to gather for a reading of the Torah¹⁰ during Sukkot every seventh year.¹¹ King Solomon dedicated the Temple in Jerusalem on Sukkot.¹² And Sukkot was the first sacred occasion observed after the resumption of sacrifices in Jerusalem following the Babylonian captivity.¹³

In Leviticus, YHWH told Moses to command the people: "*On the first day you shall take the product of hadar trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook*";¹⁴ and "*You shall live in booths seven days; all citizens in Israel shall live in booths, in order that future generations may know that I made the Israelite people live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt*".¹⁵

3) *The Four Species*:

The Four Species¹⁶ are mentioned in the Torah as being relevant to Sukkot. Karaite Jews¹⁷ build their Sukkot out of branches from the four specified species, while Talmudic Jews¹⁸ take three kinds of branches and one type of fruit which are held together and waved in a special ceremony during the Jewish holiday of Sukkot. The waving of the Four Species is an

⁵ Exod 23:16

⁶ Deut 16:13

⁷ Lev 23:39; Judges 21:19

⁸ 1 Kings 8:2, 8:65; 12:32; 2 Chron 5:3; 7:8

⁹ Hebrew for Moses.

¹⁰ Known by Christians as the Law, but should rather be translated as YHWH's Instructions/Teachings.

¹¹ Deut 31:10-11

¹² 1 Kings 8; 2 Chron 7

¹³ Ezra 3:2-4

¹⁴ Lev 23:40

¹⁵ Lev 23:42-43

¹⁶ Hebrew: *Arba'at Ha-Minim*, also called *Arba Minim*.

¹⁷ The Jewish belief to take Scripture literally, and they do not believe in the Oral Torah—only the Written Torah as received at Mount Sinai.

¹⁸ The Jewish belief of the Written and Oral Torah (interpretation of the Written Torah by Rabbis down through the ages).

instruction prescribed by the Torah and contains symbolic allusions to a Jew's service of YHWH.

In Talmudic tradition, the Four Species are:

- Lulav – a ripe, green, closed frond from a date palm tree
- Hadass – boughs with leaves from the myrtle tree
- Aravah – branches with leaves from the willow tree
- Etrog – the fruit of a citron tree

The instruction of waving the Four Species derives from the Torah: "*And you shall take for yourselves on the first day [of Sukkot], the fruit of the beautiful [citron] tree, tightly bound branches of date palms, the branch of the braided [myrtle] tree, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before YHWH your God seven days.*"¹⁹ The Four Species are then waved in all four directions—plus up and down, to attest to YHWH's mastery over all of creation—and to symbolically voice a prayer for adequate rainfall over all the Earth's vegetation in the coming year. During the time of the Temple in Jerusalem, the waving ceremony was performed in the Holy Temple on all seven days of Sukkot, and elsewhere only on the first day.

4) *Hakhel*:

In the days of the Temple in Jerusalem, all Jewish men, women, and children on pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the festival would gather in the Temple courtyard on the first day of Chol HaMoed Sukkot to hear the Jewish king read selections from the Torah. This ceremony, which was mandated in Deut 31:10-13, was held every seven years, in the year following the Shmita (Sabbatical) year. This ceremony was discontinued after the destruction of the Temple, but it has been revived by some groups and by the government of Israel on a smaller scale.

5) *Simchat Beit HaShoevah*:

During the Intermediate days of Sukkot, gatherings of music and dance, known as *Simchat Beit HaShoeivah*, take place. This commemorates the Water Libation Ceremony in which water was carried up the Jerusalem pilgrim road from the Pool of Siloam to the Temple in Jerusalem.

6) *Hoshana Rabbah*:

The seventh day of Sukkot is known as Hoshana Rabbah, meaning the "Great Supplication". This day is marked by a special service in which seven circuits are made by worshippers holding their Four Species, reciting Psalm 118:25 with additional prayers.

¹⁹ Lev 23:40

During the Morning Prayer service in the synagogue on Hoshanah Rabbah, after the waving of the Four Species, a separate bundle containing *five aravah branches* (a leafy branch of the willow tree) are taken in hand by each worshipper. A series of liturgical verses are read, ending with, "*Kol mevasser, mevasser ve-omer*" (A voice brings news, brings news and says)—expressing hope for the speedy coming of the Messiah. Then the bundle of *aravah* branches are beaten against the ground until many of the leaves have fallen out. By beating the willow branches on the ground, they symbolize both their prostration and also their need for rain to smite and penetrate the ground.

7) *Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah:*

The holiday immediately following Sukkot is known as Shemini Atzeret, literally "*Eighth [Day] of Assembly*". Shemini Atzeret is viewed as a separate holiday. In the Diaspora, a second additional holiday, *Simchat Torah*, literally "*Joy of the Torah*" is celebrated. In the Land of Israel, Simchat Torah is celebrated on Shemini Atzeret. On Shemini Atzeret the sukkah is left and meals are eaten inside their normal houses again. (The Sukkah represents our futuristic temporary stay for a shevuah (period of seven) in the Heavenly Tabernacle-New Jerusalem. After our period in heaven, we will come back to earth and continue with our "meals" on the earth in our normal dwelling places during the Messianic Era. Is it not amazing that Zech 14 is read on the last day of the feast? These passages deal with the Messiah's return and Armageddon. This is exactly what will happen when Y'shua returns with the raptured Believers to planet earth after their seven years in heaven!). In conclusion, the sukkah is not used on *Simchat Torah* as well, which is a picture of when we will "rejoice with the Living Torah, Messiah Y'shua" during the Messianic Era.

8) *The future of Sukkot:*

According to Zechariah, in the Messianic Era²⁰ Sukkot will become a universal festival and all nations will make pilgrimages annually to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast there: "*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, YHWH 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, YHWH of hosts, **even upon them shall be no rain**. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; **there shall be the plague, wherewith YHWH will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles**. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and*

²⁰ Thousand years of peace.

*the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.*²¹ Meaning, YHWH's Festivals were applicable in the past, they are still very much applicable today, and in the future they will be applicable as well.

9) *Mindset of the Jewish people:*

When the Jewish people rejoice during Sukkot, their hearts go out to the entire world. That means that ultimately, when YHWH brings peace to the earth, it will be for all mankind.

In those days when the Holy Temple stood in Jerusalem, the Sukkot offerings included *seventy oxen*—corresponding to the *seventy nations*—in prayer for peace and harmony among all the nations of the world.

Reasons why Sukkot is Celebrated by Messianic Believers

After the Day of Atonement, the next festival is the Feast of Tabernacles, which lasts for seven days. Immediately following this festival is the final, one-day festival we call the Last Great Day. These two festivals combined last for eight consecutive days²² and picture the final steps in YHWH's master plan to bring all of humanity into His eternal family.

Listed below are the reasons why Christians should keep the Feast of Tabernacles:

1). *Sukkot belongs to YHWH—not man:*

Lev 23:2 reads, "*Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD'S appointed times which you shall proclaim as holy convocations—My appointed times are these.'*" Before teaching Israel about His festivals (of which Sukkot is one), YHWH makes it clear that these appointed times belong to HIM. They are HIS appointed times. He repeats this twice in verse 2, once in verse 4, 5, 37 and again in 44. These appointed times do not belong to the Jews—they belong to YHWH.

2). *For all generations all over the world:*

"I hear what you're saying, but surely this doesn't apply to us in this modern day and age—and don't you have to live in Israel for this to apply, anyway?" Verse 31 says, "*It is a permanent regulation throughout all your generations, no matter where you live.*"²³ This means that it applies today as much as it did back then; and it applies in the States, South Africa, etc.,

²¹ Zech 14:16-19

²² Lev 23:33-39

²³ Complete Jewish Bible – Stern.

as much as it did in the Sinai desert. In other words, it is for *everybody* and for all time, until the end of time!

3). *Grafted into the House of Israel:*

Rom 11:11-22 talks about the tree of Israel and how Gentiles, a wild Olive branch, have been grafted into the cultivated Olive tree. It does not say that Gentiles were planted by themselves and they started their own thing from there. No, not at all; but that *Gentiles were grafted into the existing tree of Israel*. Even if YHWH only intended Sukkot for Israel (and I think I've shown that he didn't), Gentiles are still a part of the tree of Israel.

4) *Y'shua kept Sukkot:*

Y'shua kept the Feast of Tabernacles. This is discussed in detail in John chapter 7:10-26:

*"But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up **unto the feast**, not openly, but as it were in secret. Then the Jews **sought him at the feast**, and said, Where is he? And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people. Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews. Now about the **midst of the feast** (they only saw Y'shua on the fourth day, interestingly Y'shua was born in the forth millennium) *Y'shua went up into the temple, and taught.*"²⁴*

5) *Y'shua fulfilled the emblems of Sukkot:*

See 7) Birth of Y'shua literally in a Sukkah during Sukkot for details.

6) *Y'shua literally fulfilled Sukkot:*

John 1:14 relates Y'shua's body as temporary dwelling like a tabernacle/booth: *"And the Word was made flesh, and **"tabernacled"** among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*" Many versions say "dwelt" but that doesn't adequately convey its meaning. The Greek word was "skenoō" derived from "to tent" or "to encamp." Y'shua literally came to Sukkot in a Sukkah with His birth. For more details, read point 7).

7) *Birth of Y'shua literally in a Sukkah during Sukkot:*

The story of Y'shua's birth is preceded in Luke's Gospel by the account of Yochanan (John) the Immerser's family and his miraculous birth. He also had a role to play. Yochanan's mission was to prepare the way for Y'shua. Amazingly, the personal anguish of the barren family of Zacharias and

²⁴ John 7:10-14

Elizabeth and for the birth of a child would be used for a higher purpose in YHWH's Divine plan to prepare the way for Y'shua. It can be seen in the light of a miracle upon a miracle.

Lets pick up this amazing event in **Luke chapter 1**: "(5) *There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias (Zachar'yah), of the course of Abia (Abiyah): and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth (Elisheva)*". Three very important pieces of information are given to us in this verse.

- 1) Zacharias was a priest,
- 2) He performed Temple service according to the course of "Abia" which is in the Hebrew month Sivan (May), and
- 3) Zacharias' wife was from the daughters of Aaron, the priestly family.

The principal duties of the priest were those connected with the sacrificial service of the Temple in Jerusalem, as well as teaching the people the instructions of Torah. In the course of time, the number of priests increased to such an extent that it was necessary to divide them into twenty-four divisions²⁵ serving in the Temple in rotation, each for a week at a time. According to the Mishnah, the cycle begins on the first Shabbat (Sabbath) of the Hebrew month Abib (also called Nisan), and each division (*mishmar*) was subdivided into several families of priests who served one day a week. This gave every priest an opportunity to discharge his duties. During the *three great annual festivals* known as *Pilgrimage Festivals* (Passover, Weeks, and Tabernacles), all twenty-four divisions are said to have officiated simultaneously.²⁶ (Zacharias did his duty during the middle festival season known as Shavuot, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost in Greek); this was the course of Abia).

The Torah required that whenever a sacrifice was offered in the Temple, the owner had to be present. The problem is that every day the priests offered the Daily Sacrifices which were offered on behalf of all the Jews; but, obviously, it is impossible for all the Jews to be constantly present in the Temple). The solution to this problem was "mamados" (shifts/duties).

There were 24 shifts of mamados. Each mamad, which was comprised of devout Jews who were emissaries of Israel, would go to the Temple for one week shifts and would say special prayers, representing all of the Jews by the offering of the sacrifices. Zacharias was part of these mamados: "(8) *And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before YHWH in the order of his course, (9) According to the*

²⁵ 1 Chron 24:1-18

²⁶ Sukkot 5:7

custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of YHWH".

The Bible records the practice of casting lots as a means of arriving at a decision on a variety of problems. These may be grouped into two main categories: (1) the selection of one or more members from a group; and (2) the division of goods among the members of a group. This lot was used extensively during the Second Temple Period and particularly in the Temple itself in order to determine the allocation of duties among the priests. The First Lot was for the cleansing of the altar, the Second Lot was for slaughtering the lamb, sprinkling the blood, removing the ashes, and trimming the lamps of the menorah;²⁷ and the Third Lot was for the burning of incense at the Golden Altar right in front of the veil where the Holy of Holies were. Zacharias did the duties of the last lot.

*"(11) And there **appeared** unto him an **angel** of YHWH standing on the right side of the altar of incense. (12) And **when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him**". While serving as priest Zacharias saw an angel of YHWH standing on the right side of the Golden Incense Altar. "(13) **But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.**" The promise that Elizabeth would bear a son required a supernatural act of YHWH. The baby was to be named *Yochanan*, which means "God is gracious". Not only would YHWH be gracious about removing the stigma of childlessness from the elderly couple, but He would also set in motion His plan of redemption through the Messiah.*

*"(23) And it came to pass, that, **as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished** (the course Abia in the Temple were over), he departed to his own house. (24) And **after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months**, saying, (25) Thus hath YHWH dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men". Once again, there is critical information given to us:*

"...as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished", meaning after Zacharias has done his Temple duty of Abia (towards May/June).

"...his wife Elisabeth conceived" – that is, after Zacharias completed his Temple duty, Elizabeth became pregnant during the period of May/June.

²⁷ Hebrew for seven branched candelabra.

"...hid herself five months" – It is a Jewish custom not to tell anyone other than immediate family about your pregnancy until you enter your fifth month.

Birth of Y'shua foretold (we continue to read from **Luke chapter 1**)

"(26) And in the sixth month (of Elizabeth's pregnancy) the angel Gabriel was sent from YHWH unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, (27) To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary (Miriam)". This is one of the most valuable clues given of Y'shua's foretold timing of His birth. It is said that Gabriel visited in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy. Elizabeth was conceived **after** the Priestly Course of Abia, which is in the Hebrew month Sivan (May/June). Six months from Elizabeth's conception in Sivan takes us to the Hebrew month Kislev (December), that is when Y'shua was conceived in Miriam's womb (not born)—meaning late in December.

At the time of John's birth, now nine months later from the month Sivan brings us to the Hebrew month Adar (February/March). At John's birth, Miriam is three months pregnant with Y'shua. Let's study Luke 1:35-41 carefully:

*"(35) And the angel answered and said unto her (Miriam), The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. (36) And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and **this is the sixth month with her** (Sivan, May/June), who was called barren ... (39) And Mary (Miriam) arose in those days (when she was conceived with Y'shua and Elizabeth was 6 months pregnant – Keslev/December), and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; (40) And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth (who was six month's pregnant). (41) And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe (John) leaped in her womb."*

And three months later was the time of John's birth, and that would be approximately Pesach (Passover). This is very important as the religious Jews at that time (even today), expected that Elijah would appear during Passover (Mal 4:5). Remember, John came in the spirit of Elijah (Mat 11:7-14) and not in the flesh.

Now, Luke tells us clearly that Elizabeth was six months pregnant when the angel Gabriel visited Miriam. The beginning of Elizabeth's sixth month would have been the 25th day of the Jewish month of *Kislev*, which is the first day of Chanukah. Chanukah is known as the "Feast of Lights" or the

"Feast of the Dedication".²⁸ This date is considered, by some, to be the first day of the dedication of the Wilderness Tabernacle and of the First and Second Temples as well as the rededication of the Second Temple after the Maccabean revolt. Except for the rededication following the Maccabean revolt, it is not completely clear from Scripture what role the day of Kislev 25 played in the dedication—but Scripture tells us that the foundation of the Second Temple was laid on Kislev 24.²⁹ It is, however, clear that Miriam was being dedicated for a purpose of enormous magnitude.

Also, if Miriam conceived on Chanukah, the feast of the Dedication of Lights, then John 1:6-9 makes perfect sense: *"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world"*.

Now, if Miriam conceived on Kislev 25, then Y'shua would have been born on the first day of the *Succoth* (the Feast of Tabernacles), approximately 280 (max 285) days later. Note: 25 Kislev to 25 Tishri is 9 full Jewish months; a Jewish month is shorter than a Gregorian month. Deduct 10 days from the 25 of Tishri to the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, which is exactly on the 15th of Tishri, Y'shua's birthday! It is therefore no coincidence that YHWH ordained that 15 Tishri, the very first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, should be celebrated with unrestrained happiness!

8) *The Visitations during Sukkot:*

We continue by reading from Luke chapter 2: *"(9) And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. (10) And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people"*. The glory of YHWH is the Shekinah, and this is the first appearance since the days of Ezekiel. Ezekiel the prophet records how the Shekinah departed from Israel in four successive and reluctant stages, hoping for the people of Israel to repent. But, Israel did not repent—and so the Shekinah disappears from Jewish history. Here the Shekinah is used to announce the birth of a Jewish King to Jewish shepherds.

"(11) For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Messiah the Lord. (12) And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger". Such a momentous event required a sign. The sign was that the Babe would be

²⁸ John 10:22

²⁹ Hag 2:18

wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. One would expect a King to be lying in luxurious garments in a palace. This King laid aside His glory.³⁰ The fact that He is lying in a "manger" tells us that he is in a stable. In those days, stables were actually natural caves in the hillsides or wooden structures (pen, fold, kraal) and were used during the warmer months.

In biblical times, raw caves served as houses as well, and the owner/lodger shared the cave with his animals during night-time. In the case of a wooden structure, the person or shepherd occupying the stable would actually sleep in the door to protect his animals in the fold. That is why Y'shua said He is the "door". My opinion is that it was a wooden structure, as I will explain. Either way—it was not a kosher place.

At this time of year during the month of Tishri (September/October) for the seven days of Sukkot, as said, all Jews had to stay in *temporary shelters* outside their normal houses or boarding place. During these seven days of Sukkot, people were actually required to build small temporary booths (sukkahs) for the celebration of Sukkot. It is important to note that every Jew and his family had to stay for a period of seven days in their temporary booth made of tree boughs and gazed toward the east hoping to see the star, or phenomena that would herald the birth of their Messiah.³¹ During September/October (Tishri) when this feast is celebrated, the nights in Israel are not cold as the summer only ended—and the winter starts in November/December.

The prophet Isaiah bears witness to the occasion of the birth of Y'shua during Sukkot when he said: "*They joy before thee according to **the joy in harvest.***"³² This feast was in the fall of the year (autumn) at the time of ingathering or harvesting of all things out of the field.³³ Isaiah explains this joy in the sixth verse of this ninth chapter when he declared, "*For unto us a child is born, and unto us a son is given*" indicating that the "*joy of harvest*" was actually the birth of Y'shua, at the time of harvest, or Ingathering.

The Scriptural clue that lends credence to this thought is found in John 1:14 as mentioned earlier; which translated literally declares, "*And the Word became flesh; and **tabernacled** among us*". Here we have a key which reveals to the alert eye that the time at which the Word was made flesh and tabernacled among men was at the Feast of Tabernacles (Isaiah 9:2-3).

³⁰ Phil 2:7

³¹ Lev 23:34, 41

³² Isaiah 9:3

³³ Exod 23:16

Verse 10 of Luke chapter 2 also gives us a clue about the time of the birth by the angel who appeared to the shepherds and said "*Fear not: for, behold, I bring you **good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people***". There are actually two clues here. Sukkot is a festival of joy, and it is also known as the "Festival of the Nations". The angel was actually giving them a greeting for the Festival of Sukkot. This is the only festival where the "nations" and not only individuals are positively encouraged to participate.³⁴

As said, during Sukkot the Jews construct flimsy shelters called "Sukkahs"; using wood, branches and leaves, eating and sleeping in them. This is to remember how they were completely dependent on YHWH as they wandered around for forty years in the wilderness when they came out of Egypt. They are celebrating "God with us". The birth of Y'shua at Sukkot fulfils another prophecy: "*Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name **Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us***",³⁵ a quotation from Isaiah 7:14: "*Therefore YHWH himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name **Immanuel.***"

If this is not enough, we also have to consider the type of dwelling in which Y'shua was born. Had it not been for the inconvenience caused by the census, He would have been born in a cave house like all other children. But He wasn't, He was born in a "stable". Manger is "phátne" in Greek, and is generally described as "*a manger or crib at which cattle are fed*". Gen 33:17 tells us that Jacob made sukkahs for his cattle. The crib to feed animals in was normally made out of wood for the convenience of cleaning. It is only logical to reason that Y'shua was born in a flimsy dwelling, a sukkah, in a place where they kept sheep and cattle.

Another fact is that Yosef and Miriam would not break the law and had to comply with *Positive Law 168 - Lev 23:42 - On dwelling in a Sukkah (booth) for seven days*. So Y'shua was born in a Sukkah, to indicate that YHWH had come to earth to dwell with humanity.

From this we can logically conclude that the date of the birth of our Lord Y'shua the Messiah was undoubtedly during the Feast of Tabernacles in the Jewish month Tishri (September/October), on the first day of the Feast, the *great day and solemn assembly*.³⁶

³⁴ Zech 14:16-19

³⁵ Matt 1:23

³⁶ Lev 23:39; John 7:37

9) *Other arguments against the birth having taken place in December:*

It is extremely improbable or even impossible that Miriam, under such circumstances, could have undertaken a journey of about 113 kilometers (as the crow flies). She would have had to travel through the hazardous hill district, averaging some 3,000 feet above sea-level in the middle of winter when it was snowing in Israel.

Shepherds and their flocks would not be found "abiding" (Greek 'agrauleo') in the open fields at night in December (Tebeth), for the paramount reason that there would be no pastures at that time. It was the custom then (as now) to withdraw the flocks, starting during the month October/November), from the open districts and house them for the winter.

10) *Y'shua alluded to "certain things" during the days of Sukkot:*

During the Feast of Tabernacles on the last day of the seven-day feast, two major ceremonies were performed. The first one is the drawing of water *nissuch ha-mayim* or *hoshanna rabba*. It is a major ceremony but was not part of the biblical celebration of the feast. The feast reached its height with this ceremony and is rooted deep in the agriculture (harvest) character of the feast.

Rain was a prominent feature in the celebration of the feast, and the water-drawing ceremony was a joyous occasion. Why was the name of it called "the drawing out of water"? Because it points to Y'shua, according to what is said in Isaiah 12:2-3: "**Behold, God is my salvation** (Yah shua = Y'shua); *I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD YHWH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation* (Y'shua). **Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation** (Y'shua)".

Years have gone by and Y'shua is in Jerusalem on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles when this water drawing ceremony is performed. It was during this ceremony when He uttered this awesome statement: "**In the last day, that great day of the feast, Y'shua 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.)"³⁷

The Hebrew ritual: Priests go down to the Pool of Siloam and fill a special golden flask (pitcher) with water. They return through the Water Gate of Jerusalem and shofars are sounded. The golden flask is then placed with two silver basins, which are different from one another, on the southern

³⁷ John 7:37- 39

side of the great altar—one filled with water and the other with wine. While the words of Psalm 113 and 118 are recited, they shake palm branches in their hands and march seven times around the burnt offering altar, while the water/wine drips to the base of the altar (emblems of what came out of Y'shua while He was on His altar, the crucifixion stake). It was during this water drawing ceremony on Sukkot when Y'shua said the words in John 7:37-39.

A second major ceremony is also performed later the day when the sun sets—and that is the illumination of the Temple with four enormous golden lampstands higher than the Temple walls.

That night Jerusalem glittered like a diamond, but the brightness of the Holy City during the ceremony of illumination paled in the presence of Y'shua. In the brilliance of the gloriously-lit Temple, Y'shua cried that night, *"I am the light of the world; he who follows me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life".*³⁸

Back to the harvest: as the Jews celebrate the end of the agricultural period and all the harvest is now in the storerooms, they therefore also call this feast the Feast of Ingathering (again a picture of the final Believers that will come into the heavenly storeroom for the ingathering during the Tribulation Period). Now, there are two critical things the Jews needed for their crops to grow—*water* and *light*. Praise God, our Messiah gives every Believer both to ensure we grow spiritually: 'Water of life'—to purify us and the 'Light of the world'—to illuminate and guide us. Sadly, Y'shua came to quench His own people's spiritual thirst that they might see the light, but they did not drink from Him.

From the facts given, every event and circumstance seems properly reconciled and proves that Y'shua's birthday was on a warm autumn night when the shepherds were outside. Why not honour the birth of Y'shua with the Feast of Sukkot vs. a pagan tradition that is not honouring at all and is not even Biblical?

³⁸ John 8:12

Sukkot Haggadah

Preparations: The days between Yom Kippur and Sukkot are traditionally characterized by frenzied activity, as Messianic Believers prepare for the coming festival. This period is occupied with building a sukkah, and binding lulav. Immediately on the night following Yom Kippur, Believers eagerly begin working on—or at least planning—the construction of the sukkah (use the Internet to get some ideas). Building a sukkah is a mitzvah (instruction) in itself; therefore, if possible Believers try not to delegate the task to others, but reserve the honour for themselves. Many Believers follow the custom by inviting people over for a "Sukkah Decorating Party", which can be a lot of fun. Also take the time to select the most beautiful Four Species. The binding of the *lulav* (palm) should ideally be done inside the sukkah.

In honour of the impending holiday, husbands buy their wives clothing and/or jewelry. And since one of the themes of Sukkot is Jewish unity, they make it a point of inviting guests for the festive meals. The time to think of the people who might appreciate an invite is before Sukkot. Also, give extra charity, since true joy is sharing with others.

Spiritual Food: It is strongly advised that you study this Booklet to come to grips with the Typologies as well as to understand and appreciate that Y'shua was born during this Festival.

Physical Food: On the eve of the festival a festive meal is prepared, in addition to cooking the delicious food that we will later enjoy together in the sukkah. As Sukkot is a harvest festival, Sukkot meals typically include dishes with plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. Stuffed vegetables are often served for this holiday. Stuffed foods are extremely common and may include stuffed peppers, eggplants, or cabbage; stuffed fruits and pastries, knishes, kreplach, main-dish pies or even ravioli. Some say the stuffed foods represent a bountiful harvest. Chicken soup is also a traditional Jewish holiday food. Serve a colourful fruit salad for dessert, given the colourful surroundings of the sukkah and the harvest theme. As the fifteenth day of Tishri begins, the holiday dinner is prepared. The table is set; although, being outside in the Sukkah, it will probably have a less formal atmosphere.

Dress Code: The "dress code" is non-existent—the women wear everything from T-shirts and skirts to full suits, while the men wear everything from T-shirts to full suits. Thus the "come-as-you-are" attitude is adopted.

Sukkot Proceedings

Head: Welcome all present. Participants make themselves comfortable.



Head: Since this holy day is to be a reminder of the forty-year camping trip in the wilderness, the dinner should feel more like an enjoyable outdoor picnic than a formal meal. In the same breath, this Sukkah is also a vivid picture of our future temporary stay in the New Jerusalem City for a period of seven years. This day my friends, 15 Tishri, is the actual birthday of our Messiah Y'shua our King! YHWH was birthed today in the flesh; He literally came to tabernacle amongst us! This is a most important day, and should be celebrated with unrestrained effort.



Head: The first day of the festival is also welcomed with the "*Who has given us life*" blessing in order to thank YHWH for bringing us to this joyful celebration. Be reminded that Y'shua is our giver of life, and we will have eternal life when we are with Him in the New Jerusalem City in heaven—let's pray it together:

*Barukh atah Adonai Elohenu melekh ha-olam,
asher kidshanu b'mitzvohtav v'tzi-vanu leshev b'sukkah.*

*Blessed art Thou, YHWH our God, King of the universe,
who has set us apart by thy commandments
and commanded us to dwell in the Sukkah,
a picture of the New Jerusalem City.*

(The above blessings are usually said only on the first night of the holy day)



Head: At this point, the lulav (palm) and the etrog (citron) are picked up, by any Participant, the former in the right hand, the latter in the left. Holding the two together, the following blessing is again recited by all present:

*Barukh atah Adonai Elohenu melekh ha-olam,
asher kidshanu b'mitzvohtav v'tzi-vanu al n'tilat lulav.*

*Blessed art Thou, YHWH our God, King of the universe,
who has set us apart by thy commandments
and commanded us to take up the lulav.*

Any Participant read: Palm branches are waved on Sukkot. Palm branches symbolize victory. The Feast of Tabernacles pictures King Y'shua reigning in the Kingdom with the nations from the entire world worshipping Him. During that feast, a cluster of branches made up of the Four Species, called the lulav in Hebrew, is waved to glorify Y'shua and recognize Him as ruler over the entire world (Lev 23:40). Palm branches are to be waved at Tabernacles to symbolize the rulership of Y'shua and to celebrate His birthday. Traditionally, the Orthodox Rabbis taught: *"Whatever time of year the Messiah was to appear the Jews were to greet and hail Him by taking up the Lulav clusters and singing Hosannas to Him as the Holy One of Israel."*³⁹ Thus, by waving palm branches, we recognize Y'shua as the Messiah and King the same as His followers did when He entered Jerusalem at Pesach just before His crucifixion!



Head: A traditional dinner will be served shortly, which includes some of the produce from the harvest of this time of year. The harvest is a picture of the souls that entered heaven for the final Ingathering at the end of time. Every night for seven consecutive nights we eat in this temporary Sukkah which pictures our temporary stay in the New Jerusalem City with Y'shua while there will be tribulation on earth.



Head: The Sukkah's roof in the wilderness was left half open, just enough to protect the Israelites from the blazing sun so that they could witness YHWH's creation in the stars at night-time. We will witness the immaculate stars of YHWH's creation which will be seven times brighter as what we see tonight when we will be in the City of New Jerusalem.

Isaiah 30:26-28 (NIV) explains what we will witness in heaven:

26 The moon will shine like the sun, and the sunlight will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven full days, when YHWH binds up the bruises of his people and heals the wounds he inflicted.

But Isaiah also explains what judgment will come to those left on earth during the seven years of Tribulation—this is the approaching Battle of Armageddon:

³⁹ Peskita de Rab Kahana, 27:3

27 See, the Name of YHWH comes from afar, with burning anger and dense clouds of smoke; his lips are full of wrath, and his tongue is a consuming fire.

28 His breath is like a rushing torrent, rising up to the neck. He shakes the nations in the sieve of destruction; he places in the jaws of the peoples a bit that leads them astray.

That is why Jews all over the world read Zechariah chapter 14 on the last day of Sukkot—this chapter deals solely with Y'shua's return to earth when we accompany Him for the Battle of Armageddon. Please make sure you all read this chapter on the last day of Sukkot.



Head: During this time of Tabernacles, the best cutlery and displays are set out to make this temporary booth as beautiful as humanly possible. This is a vibrant picture of the approaching Marriage Supper of the Lamb which we will enjoy in the near future!



Head: Dinner is now served. When you enjoy this festive meal (and the rest during the next seven days), think of your stay for a period of "seven" in heaven and how Y'shua will personally nourish you. It will be a time when you rub shoulders with Adam, Abraham, David, Daniel, etc. Remember, birthday parties are never rushed, so kick back and enjoy this great celebration of Y'shua!



After the main meal, serve some desert and tea or coffee.



The seventh day of the festival has much spiritual significance for Believers. During this day, read John chapter 7 prayerfully as well as the section "10) Y'shua alluded to "certain things" during the days of Sukkot:"



As we reach the eighth day, we come to a special holiday, Shmeni Atzeret (literally, the Eighth Day of Assembly). As mentioned in Lev 23:36, this day is to be set apart as a Shabbat and a holy assembly.

Why would YHWH command a special memorial on the eighth day of Sukkot? Besides being the close of the festival, this day contains a connection to the life of Y'shua. Y'shua's birth took place on the first day of Sukkot, so any good Jewish parent could tell you that something special takes place on the eighth day! On that day, Jewish baby boys embody the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant through circumcision (Genesis 17); so, too, with Y'shua. Exactly on the eighth day when it was time for His brit-milah (circumcision), He was given the name Y'shua—which is what the angel had called Him before His conception (Luke 2:21).

Therefore, Believers in the Messiah have good cause to remember Shmeni Atzeret. Truly Y'shua *"became a servant of the Jewish people in order to show God's truthfulness by making good his promises to the Patriarchs"* (Rom 15:8).

If these festivities are not enough, the Jewish community has added an additional ninth day to Sukkot called Simchat Torah (Rejoicing in the Law). As its name implies, this day celebrates the revelation of YHWH as symbolized in the Torah Scroll. It is a time of tremendous joy, with dancing and lively music. A central part of the service is the reading from the last chapters of Deuteronomy and the start of the yearly cycle all over again with the first chapters of Genesis. Although this holiday was created in the Middle Ages by rabbinic Judaism, Believers in Y'shua can surely affirm the idea behind it. YHWH's Word is good. It is to be revered, and the Bible clearly tells us that Y'shua is the Word.⁴⁰

The Torah is even to be joyously celebrated! How much more so for followers of Y'shua HaMashiach, the Word who became flesh at this time of year!

With the close of Simchat Torah, we reach the end of the High Holy Day season. What wonderful truth is evident! What a complete picture of the latter-day plan of YHWH for this world. Sometime soon, the shofar will sound during Rosh Hashanah (Feast of Trumpets) to announce the gathering of Believers. This is to be followed by the solemn Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) when we will appear before Y'shua in heaven for our joyful celebration and stay in the Kingdom of God at Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) for a period of seven!

May we be ready to dwell in that holy habitation of our Heavenly Father.

⁴⁰ John 1:1, Rev 19:13

Something to blow your mind...

The Bible makes it clear that every child is a gift from YHWH. A surprising discovery recently revealed that the Feasts of YHWH parallel the gestation period of a baby. It seems, once again, the Almighty hid within His Word proof of divine inspiration and a token of His love for children.

First Feast – Peasch:

In Exodus chapter 12, we find the Passover Feast instituted. It was to begin on the 14th day of the first month and repeated each year thereafter. During Passover, Believers place an egg, symbolizing new life, on the Passover table.

Medical Fact: On the 14th day of the first month the egg appears in the mother.

Second Feast – Hag HaMatzah:

The Feast of the Unleavened Bread must occur the very next night, on the 15th day of the month, or the feast process will fail.

Medical Fact: Fertilisation of the egg must occur within 24 hours or the process will probably fail.

Third Feast – Bukkirim:

The Feast of Firstfruits occurs next. It is 2-6 days after the Feast of the Unleavened Bread and it is called the spring planting of seed.

Medical Fact: The fertilised egg now travels down the tube at its own pace, taking anywhere from 2–6 days before it implants. This is the planting of the egg.

Fourth Feast – Shavout:

Pentecost comes 50 days later, and in evangelical circles, celebrates the forming of the Body (Church) by the Holy Spirit.

Medical Fact: On the 50th day, the embryo begins to form into a human Fetus.

Fifth Feast – Rosh Hashanah:

The Feast of Trumpets occurs at the beginning of the 7th month, YHWH's number for perfection. The Body of Messiah listens and prepares itself to exit this life through the Rapture when we will receive glorified bodies.

Medical Fact: During the 7th month the baby's nerve and muscle systems are fully developed, *hearing* is developed; and this new body turns around in preparation of the exit route, to receive new life – which can be born from 7 months onward.

Sixth Feast – Yom Kippur:

The Day of Atonement is celebrated on the 10th day of the 7th month. Blood is then taken into the Holy of the Holies into the Tabernacle.

Medical Fact: On the 10th day of the 7th month, the marrow takes over the production of red blood cells - the inner sanctum of the baby's tabernacle

Seventh Feast – Sukkot:

The Feast of Tabernacles follows on the 15th day of the 7th month. Believers celebrate YHWH breathing the breath of life into the first Adam; and the second Adam, Y'shua, was born to give us everlasting life.

Medical fact: By the 15th day of the 7th month the child is capable of breathing air. He or she is a developed "tabernacle" and can be born!

However, to achieve maximum strength, the child should continue to grow inside its mother for another 80 days. It can thereafter be born and dedicated to the Lord.

Eighth Feast – Chanukah

80 days later is the Jewish Feast of Dedication - Chanukah!!!

Yes, YHWH has a plan, and this plan of redemption for His people is encoded in His Festivals!!!

*Something mind-boggling is happening right now before our eyes!
What can only be seen as a sovereign work of the Ruach HaKodesh is breaking forth as Christians around the world are working to restore the Hebrew foundations of Christianity. After being stained for more than eighteen centuries by Judaeophobia, anti-Judaism, and anti-Semitism, Christianity is being impacted by an unprecedented revolution of restoration. Scholars, clergy, and laity from virtually every nationality, ethnicity, and denomination are reconnecting their faith in Messiah Y'shua with its historical Hebraic roots.*

HalleluYAH

We inform – You choose⁴¹

Never be guilty of: "**By your traditions you make the Word of God of non effect**"⁴²

As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. Proverbs 25:25

Thank you that we may minister to you from the Southern point of Africa

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That 'narrow way' is the path of Torah,
which is the mission of the Believer ...
to continuously direct you to the Cross.

*"If you are going to achieve excellence in big things,
you develop the habit in little matters of Torah.*

***Excellence is not an exception,
it is a prevailing attitude."***

PLEASE BE SO KIND TO DISTRIBUTE A COUPLE OF THESE BOOKS
AS PART OF YOUR TITHING

⁴¹ The truth of the Torah makes you see the mistranslations in the New Covenant. It's amazing how you can look at the epistles of Rabbi Paul one way and it looks like he's leading the body of Messiah away from Torah; when in reality, he's leading them **to** Torah. A paradox of vantage point. Let us remember, the intent of the law maker constitutes the law. We need to walk a mile or two in our Hebrew Messiah's shoes

⁴² **Matt 15:3** *But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?* **Matt 15:6** *And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.* **Mark 7:9** *And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition*