



Sukkot 2020
by Moshe Schwab

Names

Moshe – Moses
Shaul – Paul
Ya'akov – James
Yeshua – Jesus (in Hebrew it means "Salvation")
Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15)
Yochanan – John

Terms

Cohanim – priests
Sukkot – A feast of joy and thanksgiving
Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible
Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible
Yom Kippur – Day of Atonement
Yom Teruah – Rosh Hashanah, Jewish New Year

While Praying:

- * Stay in God's ways; it isn't complicated.
- * Make appropriate barriers as we need to to stay on track with God's commands.
- * The works of God are amazing; there is no limit to what God can do.

Stay in God's ways; it isn't complicated.

If you are keeping Sukkot, it isn't as complicated as some make it out to be. We are to celebrate before God with nice branches from 3 species of trees and some nice fruit. They are to all be nice looking. We should be filled with joy during Sukkot for all God has created and given us. We are to also be grateful for God's gift of the Holy Spirit through the Messiah Yeshua during Sukkot.

There are added rituals by some that are not necessary; there are some rituals that I look forward to every year. For believers in Yeshua, it is not necessary to build a sukkah and live in it, but you can do that, especially if you live in Israel. Living in a sukkah is to remind us of the time Israel lived in the wilderness for 40 years and experienced the presence of God every day with a cloud over the Tent of Meeting during the day and the Shekinah glory of God as a light over the Tent of Meeting at night.

Yochanan refers to Yeshua being the presence of God when he says that Yeshua Tabernacled (referring to the Tent of Meeting) among us. He then refers to Him at light several times. The Shekinah glory is described as light. He is not saying Yeshua was born on Sukkot. He is merely saying that Yeshua was the presence of God just as the Shekinah glory was the presence of God. Yeshua was born on Yom Teruah, the Day of Shouting when the angels were shouting for joy and the trumpets were blowing announcing our God and King. The ancient rabbis considered the Shekinah glory the presence of God.

We should be reminded of the presence of God being with Israel and his provision in the

desert after they were set free from Egypt. Believers have the presence of God in them through the Holy Spirit. Believers in the Messiah should celebrate both God's provision and His gift of the Holy Spirit that He gives to help us. If you have not experienced the presence of God, first you must believe in the Messiah Yeshua and then you need to ask for the Holy Spirit and then welcome the presence of God and the Holy Spirit.

When I was a young believer, someone told me all I had to do was get quiet and begin talking to God and I would experience the Holy Spirit. I did that and I felt a great peace come over me. We don't experience God in all the same way, but we all can experience God. Israel experienced God for 40 years, **day and night**. God wants us to experience Him, so keep seeking Him and asking Him. God does not expect us to live a life of blind faith. Yeshua said, "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; Luke 11:9 NKJV. In the same context a few verses later we find our what we are to seek: "Your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" Luke 11:13 NKJV.

*God gives believers in the
Messiah Yeshua the Holy Spirit*

There are various ways to celebrate the things God have given us and ways to celebrate His Holy Spirit. We often decorate and have fruit in the house. We will cut beautiful branches from species of trees similar to those in the Bible, but you may have to use other species depending on where you live. We celebrate with our branches by waving them. Making a ritual lulav is not a commandment of God. Judaism has a lot of man-made rituals that are not commanded by God. Yeshua quoted Isaiah and said, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:9 NKJV.

We will set out a bowl of fruit. We often decorate our sukkah with vines and decorations. One year, our foster children cut out pictures of fruit and wrote the fruits of the Holy Spirit on them. Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law." The Holy Spirit helps us to do these things.

We have also put up our beach umbrella by our kitchen table and decorated it. You won't forget to celebrate the feast every day if you do some simple things inside your house. Perhaps eat some fruit every day and sing a song of thanks. Use your imagination and I'm sure you can think of some great things to do. Man-made rituals can add richness to our celebration, but they are not to be treated like God's commandments.

People sometimes make up their own rules and treat them like God's rules. Colossians 2:8 NKJV says, "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to **the tradition of men**." The context in this chapter is about not making a law out of traditions! Verse 16 is about not judging others how they **keep the traditions of God's feasts**. Colossians 2:22 says, "Which all concern things which perish with the using — **according to the commandments and doctrines of men**." That's the context. Shaul is not saying not to keep God's feasts. The context is about the traditions of men being treated like commandments of God. Context, context, context!

Kefa said that people misinterpret Shaul to their damnation, "Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which **untaught** and unstable people twist to their own **destruction**, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. 2 Peter 3:15-16 NKJV. What are they untaught in? There was no New Testament at the time. What destruction is he talking about, "These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." 2 Peter 2:17 NKJV. Don't follow these people to the lake of fire (Revelation 21:8). For more information on Yom Kippur, see our teaching entitled, The Messianic Feast of Sukkot at: <https://www.teshuvahsa.org/observing-the-feasts>.

Make appropriate barriers as needed to to stay on track with God's commands.

Decide ahead of time what you will do for Sukkot and be specific which rituals are commandments of God and which you are enjoying as a family. I think this is necessary because our temptation is to make man-made rituals into commandments. People make up things and say this is the way it has to be done, but that is not true.

It is also important to know what is right and what is wrong and to have a plan on how we set barriers. If someone starts telling a sexual joke, we don't have to stay there and listen to it. Or we could just tell them we are not interested please. Whatever we do in life, we need to have a plan. Some people have joy in knowing they said something you don't approve of. That is the way of the world. You don't have to react. Have a plan.

*Have a plan on for
the things you do in life*

If you have the chance to fellowship with someone of the opposite sex, decide you won't be alone with them. If you are married, have your spouse come along or instead, have your spouse speak to them; you could have someone nearby while you speak to them. That is one way to address this issue. How will we do our job? Besides the fact that we are representing ourselves; whether someone is around or not, we will work hard and do good work. We may never get a raise or the credit that is due us, but that is the honest way to live. We are the ones that agree to the wage we get. Colossians 3:23-24 NKJV, "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ." We serve the Messiah, we live for the Messiah, and we are to imitate the Messiah. And be thankful. I used to work for the President of my company and I would go into his office at times and thank him for my job.

The works of God are amazing; there is no limit to what God can do.

I remember the first time I went to Manhattan Island and looked down the street with buildings that seemed to block the sun on each side me. I had trouble picking up my radio station because the buildings were blocking my signal. God is the creator, imagine what He is able to do.

I asked my daughter what would she like to see God do when we get to the future kingdom. God can do what He wants. Perhaps He'll have a giant meteor shower over the entire sky better and bigger than the great Leonid showers where ten of thousands of meteors fell per

hour! Or, God could send a parade of planets past the earth for us to enjoy, or birds, or quilts, or animals.... You get the idea. The ideas are countless, but just being in the future kingdom will probably be amazing enough.

Yochanan said he saw the future Jerusalem coming down out of heaven and then he describes it. Now, that must have been something! Revelation 21:10-11 NKJV, "And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God...." We know he saw it because he goes into detail about what he saw.

"The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst;" Revelation 21:19-20

We have so much to be thankful for. A God that keeps the world habitable; a God who created ways for us to have food, shelter, clothing, friends, family, and some much more. A God who provided His word to give us wisdom and understanding. Just in case you forgot, "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'" Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV.

God is a God who provides the Holy Spirit to help us (John 15:26) so we can have fellowship with God. 1 John 1:3-4 CJB says, "What we have seen and heard, we are proclaiming to you; so that you too may have fellowship with us. Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Yeshua the Messiah. We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete." Isn't that amazing; we have so much to be thankful for.

There are many ways we can celebrate Sukkot; just remember to follow the ritual God commands and have fun with your personal traditions. Do not turn traditions into commandments; that is wrong. We need to set up barriers to worldly things so we can manage them. God is amazing; God is so good to us. Let us have joy during this holiday; for the blessings of life and for the Holy Spirit.