



Sukkot 2022
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

Be in God's shalom and be at peace. Isaiah 26:3-4 NKJV says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever." This is a great verse that teaches us to trust in God. The word peace in this verse is the Hebrew word *shalom*. Strong's says that shalom means, "(figuratively) well, happy, friendly; also (abstractly) welfare, i.e. health, prosperity, peace."

Don't we all want to be happy? I often pray for having peace in my family. Having good family relationships and a good relationship with God is important for a happy life. Psalm 1 gives us good instructions for life.

Psalm 1 NKJV

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper. The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Happy is the person who does not listen to those who do what is wrong or live evil lives. Those that sin are proud and do things their own way and mock others. Instead, the blessed person is satisfied by God's laws and takes the time to learn them and do them.

The person who learns God's commandments and does them have good lives and are successful. The lives of those who do not listen to God are blown into all sorts of wrong behaviors and do not know how to live right. God knows those who do what is right and is with them. Those who do not listen to God receive the consequences of their wrong behaviors.

Stay in God's ways; it is not complicated.

If you are keeping Sukkot, it is not 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 if you want, 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 they 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.

Some believe Yeshua was born on Sukkot because the Bible says about Yeshua, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;" John 1:14 NKJV. The word "dwelt" is the word for tabernacle. So, they say this refers to the Feast of Tabernacles and not the Tabernacle in the wilderness where there were physical evidences of the presence of God in the form of a cloud by day and fire by night over the Tabernacle. This fire or light at night is referred to as the Shekinah glory.

First, the Bible clearly says that Messiah would be God. "I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness;" Jeremiah 23:5 NKJV. ... "Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Yěhōváh Tzidkeinu). Jeremiah 23:6. The word for LORD in Jeremiah 23:6 is Yěhōváh and is the exclusive name for God – Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey. The Messiah was a descendent of David and was the presence of God on Earth.

The Shekinah glory was at the Tabernacle in the desert and the Temple in Jerusalem and was considered to be the presence of God on Earth according to some of the ancient rabbis. Since the Messiah Yeshua was also the presence of God on Earth, Yeshua tabernacled among them like the light of the presence of God at the Tabernacle in the desert. That is what Yochanan is talking about. The Shekinah glory is described as a light in the Bible. Yochanan describes Yeshua as a light:

In John it says about Yeshua (in the NKJV), that He is:

Verse 4 – the "light of men"

Verse 5 – the "light shines"

Verse 7 – John bore witness to the "light"

Verse 9 – the "true light"

Verse 9 – the "light to" all

Therefore, we are a people of light who follow the Light Who Shines, and a people who live in the light and look forward to the future kingdom of light.

Yom Teruah is a picture of the trumpets blasting to announce our Messianic King Yeshua and His first coming, and is also the time of His subsequent return when the last trump is

sounded. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 NKJV says, "We shall all be changed — in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet."

The next feasts also paint a picture by association. Yom Kippur which follows 10 days later is a picture of the confession of sins and the future judgement. The Feast of Sukkot that follows Yom Kippur is a celebration and a picture of our future feast with God and Yeshua in the future kingdom.

Yochanan 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. Sukkot is a picture of the future feast with God in the future kingdom of God where we will be in God's presence forever.

During Sukkot, 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 and look forward to being in God's presence. 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.

The Holy Spirit is still available to believers in this present era. Acts 2:38-39 NKJV says, "Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.'" It is available to all who are afar off and to our children! We then are to welcome the presence of God and the Holy Spirit and the gifts and manifestations of 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 do not experience God in all the same ways, 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 out what we are to seek, "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 has given us and ways to celebrate His Holy Spirit. We often decorate and have fruit in our 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. Isaiah 29:13 NKJV says, "Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men." So those who follow traditions as though they are commandments of God are just following man-made ideas. Are not idols made by the hands of man?

Also, for our celebration, 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 also put up our beach umbrella by our kitchen table and decorated it. You will not 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 am 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 is the context. Shaul is not talking about whether or not we should keep God's feasts.

The feast of God are God's feasts and not just Jewish feasts. Leviticus 23:2 NKJV says, "The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, **these are My feasts.** All the early believers in Yeshua kept God's feasts. Shaul would never have taught people 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. Do not 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](https://www.teshuvahsa.org/observing-the-feasts) at: <https://www.teshuvahsa.org/observing-the-feasts>.

Make appropriate barriers as needed 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 must 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 do not 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 of which you do not approve. That is the way of the world. You do not 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 other sex, decide you will not 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 she would 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 tens 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. We have a God who provided His word to give us wisdom and understanding. Just in case you forgot Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV says, "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.'"

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 and for the blessings of life and for the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 118:1

הודו ליהוה כִּי-טוֹב: כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ ¹

Hodu la-Yēhōvāh ki tov, ki l'olam khasdo!
(You can go online and listen to this popular song.)

Give thanks to Yēhōvāh for He is good. His mercy is forever.

¹ <https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt26b8.htm>