



### **Names**

Moshe – Moses  
 Shaul – Paul  
 Ya'akov – James  
 Yeshua – Jesus (in Hebrew it means "Salvation")  
 Yĕhōvāh – 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

### **Introduction**

Sukkot is one of the three major feasts of God that we are commanded to observe. Celebrations around God's feasts can be a wonderful time to get together. I feel so connected to the feasts of God as I celebrate them. I remember this one particular Sukkot activity years ago; the Torah scroll was brought outside and read; we had snacks and fellowship; a group of people played music; some people danced, and others talked and enjoyed the time of celebration. I remember the warm Fall evening air and how exciting and wonderful it felt to be there and enjoy the celebration.

Sukkot is a picture of the wedding feast when we will be with Yeshua (Jesus) and God for 1,000 years. 2 Timothy 2:11-14 NKJV says,

"This is a faithful saying: for if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, he also will deny us. If we are faithless,

He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself. Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit."

We are to die to our old ways of life, endure, and be faithful. He is faithful. It says we will reign with Yeshua; this was a faithful saying of theirs. It has to be talking about Yeshua's future reign. Some confuse this with Yeshua's return which will occur on Yom Teruah – the day of shouting or blasting. The angels were shouting for joy when Yeshua was born and the trumpets were blasting all over Israel announcing the feast of Yom Teruah. The Fall feasts point to Yeshua's return someday on Yom Teruah;<sup>1</sup> God's future judgment on Yom Kippur;

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<sup>1</sup> Read my paper on Rosh Hashanah (Yom Teruah) and the Birth of Yeshua. <https://www.teshuvahsa.org/observing-the-feasts>

and Sukkot to our future celebration in the future kingdom with Yeshua. Because some say Yeshua was born on Sukkot, it throws off the understanding of these future events.

It is clear; Sukkot points to our future celebration with Yeshua and not to the coming and return of Yeshua. People start off in the wrong direction with these spiritual pictures of God's feasts and we then lose the obvious meaning of what they refer to. Notice that Shaul said that this was a saying of theirs. They looked forward to their reign with the Messiah and we are to look forward to being with Him also.

Sukkot is one of the Fall biblical holidays that make for a busy time of year. Yom Teruah (the Jewish New Year, the 1<sup>st</sup> of Tishri) starts out the holidays; then Yom Kippur, the God appointed day of confession of sin and repentance; and finally the Feast of Sukkot. All this transpires in just 15 days. The Jewish writings record that just before Yom Kippur, Moshe came down from Mount Sinai for the second time with the second set of tablets,<sup>2</sup> the ten commandments. The first time he came down, the people were sinning by worshiping a golden calf; this time they were not sinning; Israel remained faithful. This always should remind us that God wants us to repent and turn away from our sinful behaviors; He will forgive us. Rabbi Yochanan said, "If we acknowledge our sins, then, since he is trustworthy and just, he will forgive them and purify us from all wrongdoing;" 1 John 1:9 CJB.

Rabbi is just a word in our culture describing a Jewish leader. It used to mean great one and Yeshua said that is wrong; it doesn't mean that any more. It can be about attitude. Someone once told me they were ordained. I came to understand that they meant I better listen to them, and I'd better get down on my knees before them. Attitude can determine how we follow that quote by Yeshua. Some of the most wonderful and humble people I have met have been rabbis because Judaism teaches the godly principle of not being proud, but being humble.

If they are proud and arrogant and acting like God, then title or no title, they are proud. Proverbs 16:5 NKJV says, "Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD." Again, we need to understand the context. **They were acting proud so Yeshua went after them.** They were detestable to God. Some names are wrong because of what they represent. Father is wrong because that is an attribute of God. Priest is wrong because a true priest of God is a decedent of Aaron. There are absolutely no true acting priests at present.

After Yom Kippur, the celebration of Sukkot follows just a few days later on the 15th of Tishri and it is a time to celebrate a renewed relationship with God, it is a time of joy for God's provision, and also a harvest festival. Some who observe Sukkot make temporary structures called a sukkah and they may live in it. It is to remind us that Israel lived in the desert and how God is their provider, and that His presence was with them in the desert in the form of a cloud by day and the shekinah glory at the "Tent of Meeting" by night. God is also our provide and Sukkot is the time to celebrate that. Our Thanksgiving days in some countries probably come from the feast of Sukkot.

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<sup>2</sup> I found a source for the timing of Moses' second trip down the mountain with the commandments at, <http://www.truebiblecode.com/understanding356.html>.

Yeshua was the presence of God and Yochanan refers to Him several times as a light; just like the shekinah glory as the presence of God lit up the sky at the "Tent of Meeting." That is the true meaning of the scripture in John 1:14. Yeshua was the presence of God. It doesn't mean He came on Sukkot.

It should also remind believers in the Messiah that God is our provider, of the joy that Yeshua the Messiah brings to our lives, and how we can have the presence of God in our lives through the Holy Spirit. We are to be led by the Holy Spirit just as Israel was led by God in the desert.<sup>3</sup> Also, because Sukkot is a time of renewed relationship with God following Yom Kippur, Sukkot points to the future age when we will have a new and special relationship with God and be with God for all eternity.

There are some ceremonies that are associated with Sukkot. God commands us to rest on the 1st and 8th days (the 8th day is a separate extra day of rest), and to take nice looking branches and fruit and rejoice before the Lord. Some do this with specific branches and fruit consisting of a lulav. The eighth day is a day of rest and some use that to celebrate the end of the cyclic Torah reading. Israel was commanded to assemble for the feast of Sukkot and Messianic believers should also assemble for this feast.

### **God's Feasts**

Most importantly, Sukkot is one of God's feasts. What other reason do we need to observe it? As I share on the verses from Leviticus about Sukkot, I will share more details on how we can observe this feast. Why observe God's feasts? One of the reasons for believers in the Messiah Yeshua to observe the feasts of God is when Rabbi Shaul (Paul) tells us to keep the Passover, "For our Pesach lamb, the Messiah, has been sacrificed. So let us celebrate the Seder not with leftover hametz, the hametz of wickedness and evil, but with the matzah of purity and truth;" 1Corinthians 5:7-8 CJB. The translator of this verse clearly sees the feast of Passover (Pesach) in these verses and correctly translates the passages in that context.

The entire New Testament needs to be understood within the Jewish biblical context of the place and time it was written for a correct understanding of the Bible. In verse 7, the word "Pesach" is the Greek word "Pascha" referring to the Passover.<sup>4</sup> Also, I understand that the Greek word translated "celebrate" should be properly understood as the Hebrew word that refers to guarding, namely guarding or observing the feast (see note on shamar which means to guard).<sup>5</sup> The Hebrew word "shamar" is used for guarding the Passover in Exodus. "And

<sup>3</sup> When the cloud moved from over the Mishkan (the Tent of Meeting), Israel would follow the cloud in the desert.

<sup>4</sup> "g3957. *πάσχα* pascha; of Aramaic origin (compare h6453); the Passover." Enhanced Strong's Dictionary.

<sup>5</sup> A number of Bible teachers say that the words "celebrate the feast" should be understood to mean "guard the feast" from the Hebrew word shamar. There is strong evidence to support this as the corresponding word in the Hebrew has to do with the command to observe the Jewish feasts – namely, the Hebrew word shamar. Shamar is translated as "keep" 283 times in the KJV and as observe 46 times in the KJV; it often refers to keeping God's commandments. Since there is relative action associated with the word Shaul uses in 1 Corinthians 5:8, shamar is the best Hebrew word for Shaul's encouragement to keep the feast. He says to keep the feast *with purity*. From the lexicon we read about the Hebrew word shamar: "shâmar, shaw-mar'; a primitive root; properly, to hedge about (as with thorns), i.e. guard; generally, to protect, attend to, etc.:—beward, be circumspect, take heed (to self), keep(-er, self), mark, look narrowly, observe, preserve, regard, reserve, save

you shall observe (shamar) this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever;" Exodus 12:24 CJB. It is quite possible that Shaul had this scripture from Exodus in mind when he wrote 1 Corinthians 5:8 when he says that we are to "celebrate." That means that we as Messianic believers should guard the feast of Passover and keep it. The KJV version of the Bible actually says to "keep the feast" (keep is another meaning of the Hebrew word shamar) and so points to substantiating the observance of Passover.<sup>6</sup> If we are commanded to observe the Passover, all the believers in the Messiah should be keeping all of God's feasts as well.

*What Could Possibly be Wrong with  
Something that Brings us Closer to God*

It's not good practice to base doctrine on one scripture so guess how many times the word for Sabbath rest (the feasts of God have days of rest) is mentioned in the New Testament portion, 62 times.<sup>7</sup> Are you surprised? Also, most believers agree that the 10 commandments are to be kept and one of the 10 Commandments refers to the weekly Jewish feast of Shabbat. So, we are not basing our belief to keep God's feasts on only one scripture and there is also historical evidence as well.

Other reasons to celebrate God's feasts are: to remember the works of God, to remind us how God has blessed man, how the God of the universe cares about us, to remind us of who God is, to bring us closer to God, to fellowship with other believers, to mark the seasons and times of the year, they connect us with the believers of the past, they can be "pictures" of what God has done, is doing, and will do, and they often accompany good food. We need food and why not have some good food? Some say they don't want to observe old outdated feasts, but what could possibly be wrong with the things I just mentioned? Is there something wrong with bringing us closer to God?

Let's look at the verses in Leviticus regarding how we are to observe Sukkot. In doing so, we will understand how we can observe Sukkot in this Messianic age and also uncover some more rationale for observing Sukkot.

### **Scriptures about Sukkot**

Leviticus 23:39-43 CJB:

39 Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the Lord for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest.

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(self), sure, (that lay) wait (for), watch(-man)." This information came from:

<https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?strongs=H8104&t=KJV>

<sup>6</sup> The translators of the King James Version probably saw the connection of Exodus 12:24 with 1 Corinthians 5:8 and the Hebrew word shamar which means to guard because they translated the word for feast as "keep the feast."

<sup>7</sup> The number of times the Greek word referring to Shabbat is used in the New Testament portion, 62. From:

<https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?strongs=G4521&t=KJV>. The Hebrew word for Shabbat is used 108 times in the Old Testament portion. From:

<https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/lexicon.cfm?strongs=H7676&t=KJV>

40 And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days.

41 You shall keep it as a feast to the Lord for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month.

42 You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths,

43 that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

### **Summary and Comments on Leviticus 23:39-43**

#### **Erev Sukkot is the beginning of the fifteenth day of the 7th month in the evening, v. 39**

Erev Sukkot refers to the first evening of Sukkot. Evening and morning were the first day; so, the biblical or Jewish day of the feast starts in the evening. Sukkot was one of the three required pilgrimage feasts<sup>8</sup> for those living in Israel.

It is a required feast for every believer in Yeshua because, as I mentioned earlier, the early believers in Yeshua kept the feasts so this was accepted doctrine and practice. We see historical evidence to the fact early believers observed God's feasts. The Bible says we should keep God's feasts. Also, there are many Messianic correlations regarding Sukkot and the other biblical feasts. They are, after all, God's feasts.

We should celebrate the three main feasts with other believers in the Messiah just as Israel was to celebrate these feasts together.<sup>9</sup> It makes sense; believers in the true God celebrated the feasts together and so should Messianic believers in the true God.<sup>10</sup> Messianic correlations and teachings should be included for those who believe in Yeshua because we are in a Messianic age. Not only does our family celebrate Sukkot with other believers in Yeshua, but we try every day of the feast to recognize Sukkot and talk about Sukkot.

#### **Sukkot is a time to remember God's provision, v. 39.**

Sukkot follows the harvest and so it should remind us of God's provision. Perhaps this idea of provision sounds familiar to people in the Americas because we have a Thanksgiving Day in

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<sup>8</sup> "The Three Pilgrimage Festivals, in Hebrew Shalosh Regalim (שלוש רגלים), are three major festivals in Judaism—Pesach (Passover), Shavuot (Weeks or Pentecost), and Sukkot (Tabernacles, Tents or Booths)—when the ancient Israelites living in the Kingdom of Judah would make a pilgrimage to Temple in Jerusalem, as commanded by the Torah. In Jerusalem, they would participate in festivities and ritual worship in conjunction with the services of the kohanim ("priests") at the Temple." Quoted from, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three\\_Pilgrimage\\_Festivals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Pilgrimage_Festivals).

<sup>9</sup> The Messiah Yeshua said that someday it wouldn't be necessary for all people to come up to Jerusalem for the feasts, but it was to be done in other areas of the world. **This has come to pass.** "The time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Yerushalayim ... the true worshippers will worship the Father spiritually and truly, for these are the kind of people the Father wants worshipping him. God is spirit; and worshippers must worship him spiritually and truly." John 4:21, 23-24 CJB.

<sup>10</sup> Ya'akov (James) as leader of the early believers of Yeshua the Messiah when talking about the Gentiles said essentially that they need to get grounded in the Torah; that implies that Gentiles also need to keep the feasts of God. Talking about new believing Gentiles: "For from the earliest times, Moshe has had in every city those who proclaim him, with his words being read in the synagogues every Shabbat;" Acts 15:21 CJB.

the Fall. According to some historians, we have this day because the earliest settlers of the American colonies (the Pilgrims) observed God's feasts.

*We should remember how God provided  
for us both physically and spiritually*

We should not only be remembering how God has provided for us physically, but how He has provided for us spiritually through the Messiah. In this Messianic age, Sukkot would be an appropriate time to celebrate what the Holy Spirit has done for us. Rabbi Shaul (Paul) said that believers in Yeshua (Jesus) have the Holy Spirit living in them; "Don't you know that your body is a temple for the Ruach HaKodesh who lives inside you;" 1 Corinthians 6:19 CJB. The Holy Spirit is our spiritual helper to help us follow God and keep His commandments (John 14:26). We have the Holy Spirit in this temporary body just like a sukkah is a temporary structure that is sometimes lived in during Sukkot. And like I said, it is the working and presence of God in our lives just like Israel had the presence of God with them in the desert.

### **We are to rest from our regular jobs and unnecessary work on the 1st and 8th day, v. 39.**

The eighth day is simply a day of rest after the closing of Sukkot. That's what it was in second Temple times before 70 AD.<sup>11</sup> Of course, they had customs and extra practices in the second Temple period, but extra observances do not need to be practiced. The eighth day has taken on extra practices and meaning including celebrating the end of the cycle of Torah reading (Simchat Torah). They are not bad practices, but they are also not commanded in the Torah.<sup>12</sup>

### **The Bible mentions to take some beautiful fruit and branches from different tree species and rejoice before God for 7 days, v. 40.**

It does not specify how this is to be done, so long as it is done. Ceremonies surrounding the shaking of a lulav are made up by man and are not binding. The lulav consists of an etrog, and palm, myrtle, and willow branches. These four species are shaken together with the etrog up; to the right, to the back, to the left, and to the front up and down. This shaking is done three times in each position. When we do this we also shake. It is called an offering and it is like we are making an offering of ourselves. Shaul said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God; Romans 12:1 NKJV. So, this festival can also remind us that we are to give ourselves to the Lord; we are to live for the Lord. Also, when we shake the four species in different directions it reminds us how God is everywhere and is our provider.

<sup>11</sup> Referring to the eighth day of Sukkot: "Owing, however, to the fact that both Shemini Atzeret and the seventh day of Pesah are described as atzeret, the name was taken to mean "the closing festival." Quoted from:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shemini\\_Atzeret](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shemini_Atzeret), under Biblical Origins. The eighth day is simply a closing day of rest.

Traditional observances have been added such as, Hoshana Rabbah, Shemini Atzeret, Simchat Torah. These extra observances are added and don't need to be practiced. Any biblical type of observance can often emulate the purposes of God and are not entirely bad. People often get carried away though and make these extra observances into laws.

<sup>12</sup> Extra practices can sometimes add unnecessary burdens on believers and God commanded us not to add unnecessary laws. "In order to obey the mitzvot of ADONAI your God which I am giving you, do not add to what I am saying, and do not subtract from it;" Deuteronomy 4:2 CJB.

Using nice looking branches from all or some of the three species mentioned in the Bible would be preferable only if available; it doesn't mention that we have to use all three. A specific fruit is not mentioned as long as the fruit we use looks nice. Prescribed methods give us a way to celebrate, but are extra laws and not binding. The important thing is to rejoice before God. We can also decorate for the holiday using branches and various fruits.<sup>13</sup> Since the specifics of how we rejoice are not mentioned, decorating would also be an acceptable way to rejoice before the Lord. I prefer to rejoice before God by waving beautiful branches before the Lord, and we do some decorating in our sukkah and in our home so that we rejoice before the Lord during the whole time of Sukkot.

We should also be thinking how the Holy Spirit helps us to be a tzadiq (righteous), to do what is right. This connects with the command to take beautiful fruit and branches. Believers should exude the beauty of God through how they live. The work of the Holy Spirit is beautiful to God because it helps us to do what is right and be just. The Bible says that those that do what is right will see God's face. "For ADONAI is righteous; he loves righteousness; the upright will see his face;" Psalm 11:7 CJB. The context of Zephaniah 3:17-18 CJB is about a future time and Messianic kingdom. It talks about those who have desired to follow God by observing God's feasts:

"ADONAI your God is right there with you, as a mighty savior. He will rejoice over you and be glad, he will be silent in his love, he will shout over you with joy. "I will gather those of yours who grieve over the appointed feasts and bear the burden of reproach [because they cannot keep them]." <sup>14</sup>

God's appointed feasts are to be kept. If we have not been observing them, it may take some time to get used to the idea, but God gave us His feasts so that our calendar revolves around Him (our lives should revolve around God anyway, right). Our lives often revolve around secular holidays like Thanksgiving or New Years Day. By using the biblical calendar and observing God's feasts, we live more around God and His past, present, and future acts of favor (His "chen" in Hebrew which means grace). Shabbat is a feast that we get to observe every week and it is the high point and end of our week.

Also, another point about the Holy Spirit is that the Holy Spirit can help us to have good fruit in our lives; Shaul talks about the Holy Spirit helping us to have positive results (fruit); "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, self control;" Galatians 5:22-23 CJB. As a Messianic harvest festival, Sukkot is also a celebration of the fruit or results of the Holy Spirit working in the lives of those who desire to be a tzadiq (a righteous person), a person who wants to live right.

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<sup>13</sup> Putting out a bowl of fruit and decorating with branches are a couple good ways to rejoice before the Lord. We also hang up fake fruit in our home and Sukkah for decorations. We have also cut out pictures of fruit and wrote the fruits of the Holy Spirit in them for decoration. There are lots of appropriate ways to decorate for Sukkot and the biblical holidays.

<sup>14</sup> Other translations translate Zephaniah 3:18 out of context and remove the reference to God's feasts. Any believer in the time Zephaniah was written would understand that **the assembling of believers took place on God's feasts**.

### **Sukkot is to last 7 days and it is to be observed forever, v. 41.**

Sukkot itself is to last 7 days and the practices associated with it last 7 days. There is a final day of rest after Sukkot on the 8th day. The Bible says this feast is to be observed forever, so it hasn't been done away with as some say.

### **Israel was to live in a sukkah (tent, hut or secluded place)<sup>15</sup> for 7 days as a memorial for their time in the desert, vv. 42-43**

It is surely okay to stay in a temporary structure for Sukkot, but is not necessary for Messianic believers because our bodies are now "temples" of the Holy Spirit as previously mentioned.<sup>16</sup> The "Tent of Meeting" or Mishkan in the wilderness is where the presence of God manifested itself in a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night for 40 years every day. Believers in the Messiah have the presence of the Holy Spirit every day in our lives as long as we don't grieve the Holy Spirit. "Don't cause grief to God's Ruach HaKodesh;" Ephesians 4:30 CJB. Causing grief to the Holy Spirit is not allowing the Holy Spirit to do its work in us by disobeying God and so the presence of God is not manifest (is not showing) in us.

A temporary residence or sukkah can be anything we don't live in on a permanent basis like a cabin, barn, or tent etcetera. In the time of Yeshua, they used their sukkah for animals and for raising their Passover lamb. Yeshua was probably born in a sukkah on Rosh Hashanah; see Luke 2:7. It's really simple; the family did not need their sukkah yet because it was Rosh Hashanah. The blowing of the trumpets on Rosh Hashanah heralded the coming of the king, the Messiah King Yeshua. Some believe that Yeshua was born on Sukkot, but I believe that He was born on Rosh Hashanah and I detail why in my article on Rosh Hashanah.<sup>17</sup>

Yeshua was the physical presence of God in Israel just as the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night were the presence of God for Israel in the desert. The Bible said Yeshua "tabernacled" or tented among us referring to the Tent of Meeting in the desert where Israel saw the presence of God.

For Messianic believers it is a time to remember God's provision and presence with Israel in the desert wilderness. It is a time to remember the provision and presence of God in the lives of believers in Yeshua through the Holy Spirit. Through the presence of God in us and the Holy Spirit that all believers are to receive, we return at least in part to the fellowship with God that He has always wanted for man.<sup>18</sup> "What we have seen and heard, we are

<sup>15</sup> "h5521. סֻכָּה sukâ; fem of 5520; a hut or lair:— booth, cottage, covert, pavilion, tabernacle, tent." Enhanced Strong's Dictionary.

<sup>16</sup> "Don't you know that your body is a temple for the Ruach HaKodesh who lives inside you;" 1 Corinthians 6:19 CJB.

<sup>17</sup> Most agree that Yeshua was born in the Fall and not in the Winter because it would be too cold for the shepherds to be in the field in the Winter. Also, because the accommodations were sparse at the time Yeshua was born, we know that it was a major Jewish holiday. Rosh Hashanah makes the best sense since it is the day the trumpets sound. When the trumpets sounded the shepherds could take off work because it announced the beginning of a holiday and they could go look for the messiah that the angels had announced to them. Another name for Rosh Hashanah is Yom Teruah which means day of shouting and the angels were shouting about the coming of the messiah. None of the other feasts have quite this correlation to the coming of the messiah. Passover correlates with Yeshua giving Himself as the Passover lamb for our sins and doesn't really correlate with His birth. Almost all scholars believe Yeshua was born during either Rosh Hashanah or Sukkot. I wrote an article on why Yeshua was born on Rosh Hashanah (<https://www.teshuvahsa.org/observing-the-feasts>).

<sup>18</sup> Shaul says now he knows in part, but in the future kingdom he will know fully. "Now I know partly; then I will know fully;" 1 Corinthians 13:12 CJB.

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;" 1 John 1:3 CJB.

Also, a couple of the themes of Sukkot have to do with water and light. In the Temple period, the Jews had a water ceremony and also had a lighting show during Sukkot. Those who have the Holy Spirit have living water (in them in the form of the Holy Spirit) and are able to tell others about this living water from God. Yeshua tells us to come to him and drink. He said, "Whoever puts his trust in me, as the Scripture says, rivers of living water will flow from his inmost being! (Now he said this about the Spirit);" John 7:38-39 CJB. Also, those who receive the, "light of the word" who is Yeshua, also become lights to others. (Matthew 5:14; John 9:5).<sup>19</sup>

During Sukkot, families can form Messianic traditions like eating outside or going camping. Just like it was important for Israel to remember God's provision for them in the wilderness and the presence of God at the Mishkan (Tent of Meeting), it is important for us in this Messianic age to understand that God takes care of us and that we also have the presence of God in us and the work of the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives (Colossian 1:27; Acts 1:8).<sup>20</sup>

### **What Have We Learned**

There are many reasons believers in the Messiah Yeshua are to celebrate Sukkot and the feasts of God. Rabbi Shaul probably commands believers to guard the feast of Passover and that also implies an adherence to the other biblical feasts. Early believers in the Messiah kept the feasts. Many believers in Yeshua have kept the feasts over the years and that includes the feast of Shabbat which is given in the 10 Commandments. We get our doctrine from the early believers in Yeshua who celebrated the feasts of God, so there is no reason to believe that we are not to keep the feasts of God. God commands us to keep His feasts. Like I said, 'What could be wrong with getting closer to God by keeping God's feasts?' Believers in the true God have celebrated the feasts of God for thousands of years.

Also, there are many appropriate and relevant Messianic correlations that can be made for the observance of God's feasts and the feast of Sukkot. For Sukkot, there is a correlation between the Tent of Meeting (Mishkan) where the presence of God was in the desert and the Holy Spirit in our temporary bodies, our physical bodily tents. The Holy Spirit is to lead us much like the cloud led Israel in the wilderness. There is a correlation between the work and help of the Holy Spirit that helps believers in Yeshua to live right which is God's will for believers both past and present. There are "fruit" or positive actions that result from the work of the Holy Spirit and this fits well with the idea of a harvest festival celebrating God's provision.

Sukkot is a feast to give thanks to God for His provision, a time of joy, and a time of spiritual renewal. Perhaps it is also a time to respond in kind to God for all He has done and give

<sup>19</sup> "You are light for the world;" Matthew 5:14 CJB. Yeshua said, "I am the light of the world;" John 9:5 CJB

<sup>20</sup> "God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory;" Colossians 1:27 NKJV. Christ is the word Messiah or Anointed One. Also, in Acts it says, "But you will receive power when the Ruach HaKodesh comes upon you;" Acts 1:8 CJB.

ourselves sacrificially to God.<sup>21</sup> We are commanded both in the Tanakh and the New Testament portion to give thanks. It says in Psalm 118:1 CJB, "Give thanks to ADONAI; for he is good, for his grace continues forever;" (Also see, Psalm 100:5, 107:1, 136:1; 1 Chronicles 16:34), Rabbi Shaul said, "In everything give thanks, for this is what God wants from you who are united with the Messiah Yeshua." 1 Thessalonians 5:18 CJB. By observing God's feasts our lives revolve around God's calendar instead of a secular calendar; it gives us the opportunity to keep our hearts and minds closer to God throughout the year. God's favor/grace (chane in the Hebrew) has been given to mankind throughout the ages and continues to this day and to this time, and forever. Let us give thanks to the Lord.

Finally, it is also a time to remember that Sukkot correlates to the future eternal feast in the presence of our God and King.<sup>22</sup> Some day in the future kingdom we will celebrate this feast with the Lord. After all, God says it is to be celebrated forever.<sup>23</sup> We will celebrate all He has provided for us. We will also celebrate all He has done for us through Yeshua. In the future we will be with God and He will be our complete provider. As I previously mentioned, Sukkot is also a time of renewal because it immediately follows Yom Kippur. Therefore, Sukkot correlates with our relationship with God in the future kingdom. In the past we had the presence of God at the Tent of Meeting (Mishkan) in the desert and at the Temple in Jerusalem. In the present we have the presence of God through the Holy Spirit that is in us. And, in the future we will be with the Holy Spirit and in the presence of God. Perhaps the final day of rest after Sukkot, the 8th day, points to the continuation of God's eternal presence with us, a Sabbath for all eternity!

### **Song, Psalm 136<sup>24</sup>**

Hodu l'Yēhōvāh ki tov. Ki l'olam chasdo. (\*see note on God's name)

Hodu l'Yēhōvāh ki tov. Ki l'olam chasdo.

Hodu, hodu, hodu, hodu, hodu l'Yēhōvāh ki tov.

Hodu, hodu, hodu, hodu, hodu l' Yēhōvāh ki tov.

<sup>21</sup> "I exhort you, therefore, brothers, in view of God's mercies, to offer yourselves as a sacrifice, living and set apart for God. This will please him; it is the logical "Temple worship" for you. In other words, do not let yourselves be conformed to the standards of the 'olam hazeh. Instead, keep letting yourselves be transformed by the renewing of your minds; so that you will know what God wants and will agree that what he wants is good, satisfying and able to succeed.;" Romans 12:1-2 CJB.

<sup>22</sup> Early believers in the Messiah Yeshua celebrated God's feasts until the Roman Empire tried to take over Christianity and began persecuting believers for celebrating God's feasts, so some information on how early believers celebrated God's feasts has been lost. Believers have become more informed of late; they have correlated all of God's feasts with what God has done in the past, with what God is doing in the present, and with what God will do in the future. For example, Passover refers to Israel's deliverance from Egypt so they could serve God and also to the believers in the Messiah who are delivered from sin so they can serve God. Shavuot or Pentecost correlates with the giving of God's grace by the giving of the commandments at Mt. Sinai and the giving of the Holy Spirit. So, we also have correlations for Sukkot for the past, present, and future. Some of the things that correlate to the future feasts are, Rosh Hashanah or Yom Teruah and the return of Yeshua; Yom Kippur correlates to the Judgment day; Sukkot correlates to the celebrating with God in the future kingdom. It obviously makes sense to return to the roots of the gospel (God's message), celebrate God's feasts, and make the proper correlations to the feasts. We have made some progress in breaking from false unbiblical traditions, but we still need to go further and get back to our biblical roots and observe God's feasts. We obviously don't have to celebrate all the made-up stuff that is not in the Torah, but we should do the best we can to obey the Bible.

<sup>23</sup> "It shall be a statute forever;" Leviticus 23:41 CJB.

<sup>24</sup> These are the words of the song for Psalm 136 that I learned years ago. Here is a link for the melody:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6WtFr8JQMA>

Give thanks to Yěhōváh He is good. His mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to Yěhōváh He is good. His mercy endures forever.

Give thanks, give thanks, give thanks, give thanks, give thanks to Yěhōváh He is good.

Give thanks, give thanks, give thanks, give thanks, give thanks to Yěhōváh He is good.

### **\*Explanation of the True Name of God**

We should use the real name of God at times because that is the proper thing to do.

Yěhōváh is the actual name for God as seen in the pointing of over 2,363 manuscripts to date; seen only once as Yehoveh; never as Yahweh. According to Nehemia Gordon, 26 rabbis throughout antiquity also attest to this pronunciation. Also, one of the "church fathers" in early Christianity also says that is how it was pronounced (Nicetas, Bishop of Heraclea: 2nd century, from The Catena on the Pentateuch, published in Latin by Francis Zephyrus, p. 156.). When we address someone of importance we use their name and title out of respect.

Exodus 3:15 CJB says that Yěhōváh is the name of God forever and for all of time, "God said further to Moshe, 'Say this to the people of Isra'el: Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh [ADONAI], the God of your fathers, the God of Avraham, the God of Yitz'chak and the God of Ya'akov, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever; this is how I am to be remembered generation after generation." Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh is written as ADONAI and has been substituted for the actual pronunciation of God's name which is Yěhōváh. God's name as Yěhōváh is used 6,841 times!<sup>25</sup> Also, we should especially take note; Yeshua said He would not return until they say, "Blessed is He Who comes in the name of Yěhōváh;" quoting Psalm 118:26.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jehovah>