

Feast of Tabernacles

This article is from the "Among Friends" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's website, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of Oct. 2, 2021.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—Many of my Christian friends just concluded their observance of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Although the Old Testament description of the celebration (Leviticus 23:33-43) involved physical offerings and physical booths, my New Testament Christian friends love keeping the Feast of Tabernacles with the New Testament perspective—revolving around the Son of God.

Tabernacle and priesthood

Bible students are aware that the subjects of the tabernacle and the priesthood are connected.

Instructions in the Old Testament about the tabernacle were given in Exodus 25-27, and instructions about the priesthood were given in Exodus 28-30.

It is noteworthy that the book of Hebrews also discusses the tabernacle and the priesthood—although the author of the book reverses the order in which they are discussed.

Information in the New Testament about the priesthood was given in Hebrews 2-8, and information about the tabernacle was given in Hebrews 8-9.

The rest of the book of Hebrews discusses the "therefore"—meaning the behavior that the children of God should display because of the spiritual tabernacle and the true High Priest.

- Hebrews 10:19-25—"Therefore . . ."
- Hebrews 12:1-2—"Therefore . . ."
- Hebrews 13:12-16—"Therefore . . ."

Old Testament meeting place

In the Old Testament, God met with the children of Israel at the tabernacle of meeting.

Exodus 25:8—"And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them."

Exodus 25:22—"And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel."

Exodus 29:42-43, 45—“This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet you to speak with you. And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by My glory . . . I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God.”

Tabernacle and High Priest

The Son of God is the tabernacle and the High Priest.

John 2:19-21—“Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ Then the Jews said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ But He was speaking of the temple of His body.”

Hebrews 8:1-2—“Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.”

Hebrews 9:11—“But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.”

Built miniature tabernacles

At the Old Testament Feast of Tabernacles, the children of Israel built booths.

Leviticus 23:42-43—“You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, 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.”

Nehemiah 8:14—“And they found written in the Law, which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month.”

Now we are the tabernacle

At the New Testament Feast of Tabernacles, the children of God realize that they are the tabernacle.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17—“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20—“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

2 Corinthians 5:1—“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

2 Corinthians 6:16—"And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.' "

Ephesians 2:19-22—"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."

1 Peter 2:4-5—"Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

2 Peter 1:13-14—"Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me."

God tabernacles with us

Since members of our congregation realize that we are the tabernacle, we do not build any small physical tabernacle.

- We are tabernacles.
- We tabernacle with other children of God.
- More importantly, our heavenly Father and the Son of God tabernacle with us.

Old Testament desire

In the Old Testament, God made it clear that He wanted to dwell among His people.

Leviticus 26:11-12—"I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people."

New Testament desire

In the New Testament, the Son of God revealed His commitment to be among the children of God.

Philippians 2:5-8—"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."

Ultimate fulfillment

Many children of God enjoy using the Feast days as a yearly reminder of the plan of God.

Many children of God are looking forward to the ultimate fulfillment of the plan of God.

Revelation 21:1-4—“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.’ ”