



TJCII for YOU

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TJCII's Connection to Sukkot





TJCII – A Stepping Stone to Sukkot

By Rabbi Marty Waldman

This issue of **TJCII for You** will feature an article written by Rabbi Dr. Seth Klayman whose doctoral dissertation focused on Sukkot during the second Temple period with an emphasis on Zechariah 14. This brilliant article will not only bring light to your understanding of TJCII but will encourage you to continue walking the walk of faith in Yeshua our Messiah.

The stepping-stones of salvific history are both personal and universal. According to the Biblically *appointed times*, we can understand that personal redemption (salvation) begins with **Passover** – the deliverance from Egypt when every individual of the family of Israel made the choice to apply lamb's blood to their dwellings in order to realize their deliverance. If individuals outside of Israel's descendants (*aliens, mixed multitude, foreigner*) desired the deliverance from GOD's judgment over Egypt they could join Israel by faith...many did (see Exod.12).

The story of Passover contains a striking resemblance to the description of individual salvation in the *Brit Hadasha* (New Testament) found especially in Ephesians 2:11-16. Those individuals estranged from the Messiah who apply the blood of Yeshua (the Lamb of GOD) will enter the "commonwealth" of Israel and become "one new man" with Israel's faithful remnant in Yeshua!

The second of the *shalosh regalim* (Israel's three pilgrimage festivals, Exod.23:14) is the festival of *Shavuot* – Christians call this holiday "Pentecost." Holding to the theme above, the Jewish community associates this festival with the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. Christians associate Pentecost with the giving of the Holy Spirit. Both the Torah and the Spirit are prominent essentials mentioned in the Bible.

The third and final of Israel's festivals is the Feast of *Sukkot* (*Tabernacles*), which marks the time when Israel wandered through the wilderness while living in tents. During that time the presence of GOD was in the midst of Israel.

According to the Prophet Zechariah all the Nations of the earth will come up to Jerusalem during the Feast of Sukkot. The final stage of salvific history is the realization of GOD's presence among us in our Messiah Yeshua.

The healing and restoration of Jews and Gentiles in the Body of Messiah may be a key to our hope in Yeshua's return as the King of kings.



Rabbi Seth N. Klayman, Ph.D.

Seth Klayman is the rabbi of Congregation Sha'arei Shalom (Hebrew for “Gates of Peace”), and a member of the TJCII North America Committee. He is an adjunct professor of Jewish Studies at The King’s University. Seth holds graduate degrees in Jewish Studies from Oxford University (Dip.J.S.) and Duke University (M.A., Ph.D.), as well as rabbinical ordination through the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations. Seth lives in Cary, North Carolina, with his wife Rachael and their three children.

Sukkot and TJCII

By Rabbi Seth N. Klayman, Ph.D.

Sukkot is known in English as “the Feast of Booths” or “Tabernacles.” It is the capstone of the appointed times that occur in the Fall (Lev 23:23-43). On *Sukkot*, Israel is called to celebrate before the Lord with four species of plants (Lev 23:40), and to dwell in booths (tabernacles, shelters, huts)—in Hebrew “*sukkot*”—for seven days (Lev 23:42).

The purpose of dwelling in booths is for the people of Israel to remember that they dwelt in booths in the desert after God brought them out of Egypt (Lev 23:43). In the Torah, *Sukkot* is also called “the Feast of Ingathering” (Ex 23:16; 34:22) because in the ancient near east it marked the gathering of wine and grain into vats and storehouses in preparation for the winter months (Deut 16:13).

Already in biblical times, *Sukkot* was connected with the themes of the Temple (I Kings 8), God’s light (Zech 14:6-7), God’s abundance (symbolized by rain and streams of living waters; Zech 14:8, 17-18), and the future glory of the kingdom of God (Zech 14:9-20). We find some of these themes in Yeshua’s teaching during *Sukkot* (John 7:37-39). and in the

book of Revelation (7:9-10). It is no wonder that rabbinic literature calls Sukkot “*He-hag*”—literally, *The Festival*—and refers to it as “*z’man simhateinu*”—“the season of our joy.”

In short, Sukkot is as happy as it gets.

Every appointed time and festival has its distinct features, but there is one strikingly unique reference to Sukkot in the Tanakh:

Then everyone who survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths (Zech 14:16).

Wait a minute! The nations will celebrate *Sukkot*? The prophet envisions the nations that enter into the kingdom of the Messiah making an annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem in order to worship Adonai. Their worship will include observing *Sukkot*.

Let’s just say we don’t find anything quite like this connected to any of the other major feasts. Perhaps because *Sukkot* represents the pinnacle of rejoicing in God’s sheltering presence, it is the one holiday that one day all humanity will gather to celebrate.

I don’t know what exactly those international *Sukkot* celebrations in the kingdom of Messiah Yeshua will look like. I have a lot of questions about that. But, here is what I do know by faith. Yeshua will be reigning on his throne in Jerusalem. Israel will be in the land, and Yeshua’s own Jewish people will be thriving there in a restored relationship with him. At long last, Israel will be reflecting the light and truth of the living God outward to the nations that have come under his righteous reign. Those nations will be drawn to Yeshua, to the remnant of Israel, and to Jerusalem—especially for *Sukkot*.

There is an essential prerequisite to the fulfillment of this compelling vision: reconciliation between the remnant of Israel, and the people from the nations that call Yeshua their king. If there is no reconciliation, there is no fulfillment of Zechariah’s vision.

In my view, the work of TJCII is preparing the body of Messiah for this future prophetic scene. Through TJCII, barriers between Jew and Gentile in the body of Messiah are crumbling. Denominations and significant movements in the church are repudiating historical errors that helped erect the barriers. They are affirming the identity, role, and calling of Messianic Jews.

Through the labor of prayer and repentance, TJCII continues to increase in breadth and depth. The unity we see resulting from TJCII’s work gives us a foretaste of the ultimate ingathering under God’s sheltering presence.

TJCII gives me cause for great hope and confidence that together, Jews and Gentiles in the

TJCIJ gives me cause for great hope and confidence that together Jews and Gentiles in the body of Messiah are in fact headed toward the throne of Messiah Yeshua in Jerusalem!

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