

Endeavoring to Support:

- "The Messianic Times" - Publisher
- Israel Legal Defense
- Jewish/Gentile Fellowship
- International Conferences
- Forum for Debate
- Emigration to Israel
- Dispute Mediation
- International Affiliations
- Monthly Essays
- Theological Papers

Early Foundations:

Our Alliance was originally established in England in 1925. During the Nazi era, some of our European affiliates were decimated. The remaining groups worked together to fund the escape of many fellow Jews.

This life saving work was officially recognized by Great Britain. Our earliest leaders were honored i.e. Sir Lawrence Levinson was knighted by royal decree and Harcourt Samuel was given the "Order of the British Empire" (OBE).

In 1976, the IMJA, in conjunction with two other founding charities established the Ebenezer Home in Haifa, Israel. This institution continues today and the IMJA annually helps fund its operation. It is home to 30 individuals, without regard to original nationality, race or religion. Food, clothing, medical care and transportation are provided. About a hundred people can be seen at some of its social events and there is always a waiting list to become a resident.

Torah, but they also are commanded to appear in person before Adonai in Jerusalem, to pay Yeshua homage and reverence during this Feast. This may not be the only Biblical festival these people will celebrate, but it was the only one Zechariah mentioned. I believe Sukkot was chosen because it speaks of the 'joys of the ingathering' as it will celebrate the gathering of the nations to the Lord and especially His "tabernacling" among them. (Revelation 7:15-17; 21:3.) Now that is something to look forward to!

Those of the warring nations who are left from this plague (Zechariah 14:12, 15), all of the representatives at least (families of the earth) will be required to come up to celebrate Sukkot, and if they don't, their land will not have rain (Zechariah 14:17). The bounty of rain is the favor Adonai extends to those who acknowledge Him. (Ezekiel 24:26). It is the gift of life. This shows the connection between the Festival of Sukkot and prayers for precipitation at this time. Rain is a symbol of spiritual blessing, so both literal and spiritual blessing are probably in view here. A drought was also a curse for covenantal disobedience in the Torah (Deuteronomy 28:22-24). By the way, if those warring nations still don't come up after that, they will be visited with another plague (possibly Ezekiel 38:22).

God works things out full circle, as you may notice, from this prophetic passage in Zechariah that the Gentiles shall come up to Jerusalem at this time, rather than the Jewish people going as ambassadors out to them, as it was in the 1st century C.E.

The ultimate goal of God's plan is the establishment of His Kingdom on the earth. Sukkot was always known as the holy day that commemorates God dwelling with His people when the Messiah, Yeshua, dwells as the ruler of the 1,000-year Messianic Kingdom. He will return to establish the long-awaited Kingdom, and everyone who has been redeemed by His sacrifice will gladly celebrate Sukkot in all of its fullness.

Marana,ta/Maranatha (Our Lord, come) - speedily, soon, and in our day!

Joel Liberman
Executive Director

P.S. I have enclosed a new 'response card' this month which includes a place for you to add your e-mail address that we might better serve you and keep you abreast of developments more effectively. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

International Messianic Jewish Alliance

האגודה הבין לאומית של היהודים המשיחיים

5480 Baltimore Dr., Ste. 203 • La Mesa, CA 91942-2015 • TEL: (619) 464-9723 • FAX: (619) 464-9725 • E-mail: ravjoel@pacbell.net • Website: www.imja.com

ESSAY # 166

SUKKOT – THE PROPHETIC FEAST OF TABERNACLES

A *Chag Sameach* (Joyous Festival) to our Friends and Co-Laborers!

We find ourselves in the middle of the seventh month of the Biblical calendar, which is dedicated to the Lord (Leviticus 23:23-36). Three times a year, Israelite males were commanded to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and to the Temple – at Passover, Shavu'ot (Feast of Weeks/Pentecost), and Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles (Deuteronomy 16:16).

Sukkot ("Booths") is known as "*Z'man Simchatenu*," (the Season of our Rejoicing)! Major events have taken place during this joyous festival throughout Scripture, and they serve to accentuate the importance of this Festival to the Lord. We know that the Festival of Sukkot was celebrated when the exiles returned to Israel from Babylonian captivity under Zerubbabel, and 90 years later, under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah, as our Jewish people were now repentant and willing to obey the Lord.

Sukkot was to be a time of bringing in the latter (fall) wheat harvest and the gathering of the summer's produce before the oncoming winter and the new agricultural year (Exodus 23:16b). It is often called "The Jewish Thanksgiving." It includes taking well-deserved rest from one's labor and exulting how Adonai has provided for His people. God instituted Sukkot as a reminder that dependence upon Him was not something that ended when the Promised Land was reached. Thus, even after a good harvest, we need to remember year after year the temporal nature of this life and the fact that we must ultimately rely on the Lord to provide for us.

The command to dwell in sukkot summarizes "habitation." If we were to spend a lot of time in the sukkah, and not just the perfunctory quick sit and b'racha (blessing), we would become mindful of what living in the

What We Do

Israel Support:

- Home for the elderly
- Humanitarian aid of goods from local warehouses
- Unwed mothers and widows
- Civil Rights Defense for Messianic Jews in Israel
- Jerusalem Headquarters utilized by Ethiopian Jewish Believers

Among the nations:

- Fostering the growth of New Testament Messianic Congregations (now numbering 750, including 120 in Israel).
- Small Ministries—Poor Countries: In many countries fund raising is not a practical possibility, especially for Jewish work. These works are volunteer efforts where even small amounts go a long way. It is our fervent wish to do what we can to facilitate Jews and Gentiles worshipping our Lord together.

Witness:

- Jewish outreach and evangelism
- New Testament Jewish roots
- Jews & Gentiles in joint worship

National Alliances

- Argentina
- Australia
- Brazil
- Canada
- Colombia
- France
- Germany
- Great Britain
- Israel
- Mexico
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Russia
- South Africa
- Switzerland
- Ukraine
- United States
- Uruguay

real world is all about. We would be reminded of our ancestors, who lived without air conditioning, microwave ovens and supermarkets. The roof of the sukkah was open to the sky, providing only partial shade for those who sought to rest inside. As the crops were harvested, our Jewish people lived in sukkot to be close to the land, to the fields and to nature. Over time, as our homes grew more sophisticated, our lives became so structured that it seemed we didn't need to spend but a few moments outdoors, going from our cars to our offices, and from our offices to our cars.

Historically, Sukkot commemorates the days of the Israelites in the Sinai wilderness after coming out of Egypt. Throughout those extended years of wandering, Adonai provided constant reminders of His care: the pillar of cloud by day (a covering shelter – Jewish tradition says this appeared on the first day of Sukkot) and the pillar of fire by night (warmth, light and protection).

Besides protection, there were miracles that were provided at this time! Adonai supernaturally provided the Jewish people with water in the wilderness and manna from heaven. And so, Sukkot commemorates the journey of our ancestors through the desert after the Exodus. In order to relate to that event in our history, we re-live it by building sukkot. We also dwell temporarily in sukkot during this Festival to connect with their experience. This way, we will never forget that our Jewish people were slaves who were set free by the power and grace of God, and roamed in the desert before arriving in the Promised Land. Each year, my family and extended congregational family help erect, decorate, eat, and enjoy fellowship in a sukkah, as we discuss these things.

Joel Liberman (left) with Richard Kennedy, celebrating and teaching about the Festival of Sukkot - October, 2008



I encourage you, as well, to begin to appropriate Sukkot in your own life, and to experience the journey of hope that this Festival brings. As you enter your sukkah, you acknowledge that the journey on which you are about to

embark requires you to humble yourself, become vulnerable and be open to change. That's a good thing.

Of all God's mo'adim (appointed times) mentioned in Leviticus 23, Sukkot is the only one that the "nations" will one day be enjoined to celebrate. We're getting a preview even now in our generation. This month, thousands from nations around the world are celebrating at the 30th Annual Feast of Tabernacle's events sponsored by the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ). It is Israel's largest annual tourist event and serves as its vanguard event for the Biblical Christian Zionist Movement.

As we contemplate Sukkot as the End-Time Festival of the Nations, we find a fascinating and mysterious pattern that emerges from the seemingly endless list of sacrifices found in Numbers 29:12-38, performed historically during this Feast. During the week of Sukkot, 70 bullocks were offered on the altar. Is that significant? I think so! There is a connection of the 70 bulls to the 70 nations that Adonai has ordained, taken from Genesis 46:27b which states, "all the people in Jacob's family who entered Egypt numbered seventy." Rabbinic commentaries hint that this is the explanation, as well. I believe this was foreshadowing that Adonai desired to provide covering for sin, not only for Israel, but for the whole world.

Furthermore, the association of the "nations of the world" to the Festival of Sukkot is found in the writings of the prophet Zechariah in chapter 14, which is the passage from the Prophets read in synagogues during the Festival of Sukkot.

In verses 2 and 3 of Zechariah 14, Adonai returns triumphantly to the earth to bring deliverance. All nations will be gathered together against Jerusalem to do battle and Adonai will fight against those nations.

In verses 4 and 5, an earthquake occurs, and will cause the nations that come against Jerusalem to withdraw to the Valley of Megiddo to await the Battle of Armageddon -- which they are going to lose, and which the Messiah will win. All of the tzadikkim (righteous ones) and all Israel will be there.

Verses 12 and 15 describe the plague that is against them (possibly nuclear war).

Finally, in verses 16 through 19, the Festival of Sukkot will be an annual millennial requirement for all of the nations of the world. They must not only meticulously keep Sukkot for seven days in accordance with the

Foreign Translations

The Fig Tree Blossoms is a primary book about our Movement translated into Hebrew, Russian, and Spanish. It is a 30 year old classic and explains why accepting a Jewish Messiah, foretold by Jewish Prophets in a Jewish Land is a very Jewish thing to do. Distributions of the Holy Scriptures are available in 17 languages:

- Yiddish
- English
- Armenian
- Bulgarian
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Italian
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Russian
- Spanish
- Swedish
- Hebrew
- Ukranian

