

RUSSELL SANDERS

10-18-2022

FEAST OF TABERNACLES – PART 7

TEMPLE HISTORY

Today, at sunset, concludes Simchat Torah. Although the Feast of Tabernacles is now over, there is much of interest for us still to talk about historically.

Upon entering Canaan, Israel settled down in their assigned tribal territories. Joshua placed the Tabernacle of the Congregation in Shiloh which was about eighteen to twenty miles north of Jebus (the future site of Jerusalem). Shiloh was still its location when David became King.

When Saul was made king, his home in Gibeah became the de facto capital of Israel and Shiloh was the center for worship. When David became king over all Israel, he took over Jebus and renamed it Jerusalem. He removed the Tabernacle from Shiloh and brought it to Jerusalem. He desired to build a permanent temple for God, but God forbid him to do it. His son, King Solomon, was chosen by God to build the Temple. It was very splendid and is often called "Solomon's Temple." It is also called the "First Temple" and was totally destroyed in 586 B.C. by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

After the Jews returned from Babylon, the "Second Temple" was built in 515 B.C. It was not nearly as ornate or as splendid as the First Temple, but it served the purpose.

The Second Temple was completely refurbished in 20 B.C. and became known then as "Herod's Temple" and was rather splendid. It became centrally important to Jewish life and observances.

This Second Temple, "Herod's Temple," was completely destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D., along with all of Jerusalem. This left the Jews without a place to perform their sacrifices and offerings to God. They were persecuted and were scattered into many other countries. This event is called "The Diaspora" or "scattering" which lasted into the 20th century. However, as prophesied, they were "regathered" into a nation again in May 1948.

The diaspora brought need to devise a new means of worship that could maintain their cultural, ethnic, and religious identity. During 132-135 A.D. they developed a new religious culture based on "law and prayer." They preserved what they could from the old "law" and the feasts. Temple sacrifices were replaced with a focus on prayers. The synagogues were important for gathering.

Today the Jews are eagerly planning for the construction of the Third Temple, the coming of Messiah, and the resumption of Temple sacrifices. It is fulfilling prophecy right in front of our eyes.