

RUSSELL SANDERS

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THE FALL BIBLICAL FEASTS – PART 21

FEAST OF TABERNACLES/TEMPLE HISTORY

Today is the fourth day of the Feast of Tabernacles eight-day observance, and the third day of living in their Sukkot (hut). Let's look at some history and see what changed over time.

During the forty wilderness years as they abode in their individual family sukkot, there was the Tabernacle of the Congregation where God's presence dwelt in the Holy of Holies. Here also rested the Ark of the Covenant.

Upon entering and settling in Canaan, the Tabernacle and Ark found its home in Jerusalem. King David's desire to be the one to replace it with a permanent Temple was denied by God due to his bloodiness. God said his son, Solomon would build it.

Solomon built a magnificent Temple with cedar beams and much gold decorating it. This is known as the "First Temple" or "Solomon's Temple."

When Babylon defeated Israel in 586 B.C. that temple was destroyed along with much of Jerusalem and many of the people were taken captive. When Persia defeated Babylon, King Cyrus allowed many captives to return home in 536 B.C. He commissioned Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem's walls and the Temple. The "Second Temple" was completed in 515 B.C. It was not nearly as elaborate or as beautiful as Solomon's Temple, but it actually became more centrally important in Jewish life and observance. They had built it with their own hands.

That Second Temple was refurbished, upgraded, and enlarged by the Roman-appointed King Herod. The upgrade was completed in 20 B.C. and became known as "Herod's Temple."

In 66 A.D. the Jews in Jerusalem rebelled against the Roman rulership. Consequently, General Titus destroyed Herod's Temple and in 70 A.D. burned the entire city of Jerusalem, after which he became the emperor, Caesar Titus.

That left the Jews without a place to perform their sacrifices and offerings to God. They were scattered by persecution to many other countries. This is called the "diaspora" or scattering which lasted until the 20th century when Israel, as prophesied, once again became a nation (1948).

This scattering brought the leadership to a point where they needed to devise a means of worship that could help 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 feasts. A focus on prayer replaced the sacrifices. Feast observances and a prayer focus remain today.

As Christians, we are not bound by the "laws" or the feast observances. We realize that Jesus (Yeshua) is the fulfillment of all of that. However, the scripture tells us that WE Are the Temple (tabernacle) of the Spirit of God. Our physical bodies have become His dwelling place. By the Holy Spirit putting into us the eternal life of Jesus Christ (Yeshua Hamashiach). We must take care of this "tabernacle" we have and keep it clean unto God. His light and life are within us. In this we rejoice!