

TO: Trinity Foundation Members  
FROM: Ole Anthony  
SUBJECT: **Feast of Tabernacles**

Enclosed with this memo is the schedule of activities for our celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles and some thoughts about its typical meaning.

During the period between Yom Kippur and Tabernacles, the Jew busied themselves preparing the necessities to make booths, readying themselves to live in them and in general preparing for a time of joy.

During the first seven days of the feast, all of Israel lived in booths outside to show that they were pilgrims, that the earth wasn't their home. On the evening of the seventh day the booths were burned. They marched around the base of the temple altar with the paradise apple (pomegranate) and smashed the fruit (the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil) at the base of the altar so they could enter the eighth day.

The first day and the eighth day were Sabbaths (holy convocations) and no work could be done.

The various offerings of bulls, rams and a goat were offered by fire (Number 29:12-40.)

Upon all of these offerings was a pouring out of water mixed with wine upon the altar; this was done at no other time; for the sake of that, there was great joy and singing and dancing such as was not seen any other time but this.

"Who can his smile refrain."

A particular psalm was read during the Drink Offerings when both the water and the wine were poured into the base of the altar. On the eighth day only wine was poured into the altar. Following is a list of the psalms that were read:

Day 1)	Psalm 105
Day 2)	Psalm 29
Day 3)	Psalm 50
Day 4)	Psalm 94:1-11
Day 5)	Psalm 94:12-13
Day 6)	Psalm 81
Day 7)	Psalm 82 & Psalm 12

At the close of the first day and on each subsequent day, an elaborate ceremony took place in the Temple. A great stage had been prepared in the court of women. Benches were set up along the four sides. The women stood above and the men below. Huge golden cups, each holding in excess of 120 logs (38 quarts) of oil, were on the four walls. Ladders were set by each cup, and the four youngest priests went up, having large bottles of oil which they emptied into the cups. They had made wicks from the rags of the garments and girdles of the priests to light these lamps.

"There was not a street throughout all Jerusalem that did not shine with that light." (Succah)

The idea is that the light is so bright that all is exposed---nothing is left hidden; we are naked and unashamed in the spirit. That's what is needed to enter the eighth day.

The religious and devout danced, having lit the torches in their hands, and sang songs and doxologies. The Levites had harps, psalteries, cymbals and "instruments of music without number." They stood upon the first row of the fifteen steps that led up from the court of gentiles to the court of women. They sang on psalm for each step as they proceeded up to the court (Psalms of Ascent 120-134.) The passage up the steps symbolizes our passage from flesh to spirit; from isolated individuals to members of the bride (court of women.)

Two priests also stood in the upper gate that goes down from the court of Israel to the court of women, with two trumpets in their hands. When the priest gave the signal, they blew the trumpets and descended. When they came to the tenth step they counted again. Moving into the court, they sounded and continued across until they reached the east gate. They then faced east and said, "Our fathers, in this place, turned their backs upon the Temple and turned their faces toward the east and worshiped the sun (and other gods), but we (turning west toward the Holy of Holies) turn our faces toward God."

Christ's last Tabernacles is chronicled in Luke 9:51-17:10 and John 7:2-10:21. Two of the major parables of Christ were spoken on this eighth day or wedding feast (Matthew 22:1-14; Luke 15:15-35.) This feast is the ultimate reason time and space exist. Thirty percent of the gospels is about Christ's activities and sayings on the Feast of Tabernacles.

"Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught." (John 7:14.) Later that day is when Christ cried out in the temple saying, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (John 7:37,38.) This could be targumed as follows:

"Have you such wonderful rejoicing at drawing and pouring a little water from the pool at Siloam? He that believes on me, whole rivers of living water shall flow out of his own belly producing joy unspeakable."

On the afternoon of the seventh day of the feast, the people read Ecclesiastes. This gives us another hint of what is necessary to enter the eighth day, i.e., the knowledge that all is vanity.

Everyone is invited to the parties during the seven nights---the lame, the poor, even the Levites. On the eighth day, however, the door is closed, and it is only the Bride that is invited to the dinner party.

This is like a parable from the Talmud:

"This is like a King, who made a feast for seven days and invited all the men in the province, for these seven days of the feast. But when those seven days were past, he saith to his friend, 'We have done what is needful to be done toward these men; let thee and me return to enjoy together whatever comes to hand, be it one pound of flesh or fish or herbs.' So the holy blessed God saith to Israel, 'The eighth day shall be our feast day.'"

In addition to the other readings noted in this memo, each person should study what the ancients believed happened on the Feast of Tabernacles:

### **ACCORDING TO TRADITION**

- 1) The pillar of cloud by day and fire by night first appeared to Israel on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Tishri--the first day of the feast (Numbers 9:15-23.)
- 2) Moses announced the tabernacle of God was among (in) them (Exodus 13:17-22.)
- 3) The dedication of Solomon's Temple and the descent of the Shechinah Glory (I Kings 8; II Chronicles 7.)
- 4) Revelation scene (Rev. 7:9-17.)
- 5) The law was placed in the ark of the Tabernacle on the feast (Deut. 31:1-30; see especially verses 24-27.)
- 6) Christ changed the water into wine at Cana (John 2:1-12) during the first year of his ministry.
- 7) He was transfigured (Luke 9:28-36; Matthew 17:1-13.)
- 8) He spoke about "rivers of living water" (John 7:37-39.)

### **READINGS**

Leviticus 23:33-44	II Chronicles 5,6,7	Hosea 9	Luke 9:51-17:10
Numbers 29:12-40	Psalms 113-118	Zech. 14:16-21	Luke 14:15-35
Deuteronomy 31	Psalms 120-134	Matt. 22:1-14	John 2:1-12
I Kings 8	Ecclesiastes	Matt. 25:1-13	John 7:2-10:21
			Rev. 19

### **THEME**

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready." (Revelation 19:7)