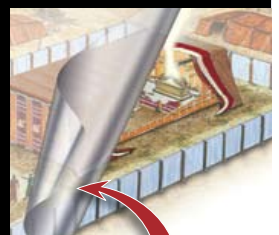


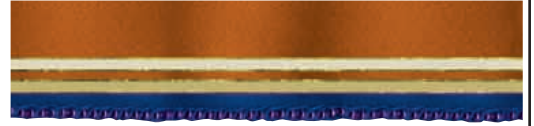
# ROSE GUIDE TO THE TABERNACLE



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## A WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY

An important part of being God's people consisted in knowing how to give God proper worship. God is more than a king who requires loyalty and dedication. He is the God of creation, the only one worthy of worship and adoration.

When God freed Israel from Egypt, he made his purposes clear:

To show that he alone is the true and mighty God, Creator of heaven and earth.

To make Israel's children his own people, his treasured possession.

To have a people that worshiped him as the true and only God.

To keep his promise to Abraham to make his descendants great and many, and to give them a land "flowing with milk and honey."

The children of Israel were a worshipping people. In the wilderness, Israel came to understand God's centrality. God was at the center of the camp, and his presence affected all of life. The children of Israel organized their lives around God's presence: their movements, their feasts, and their daily routine. A large section of the Pentateuch—the first five books of the Bible—deals with matters of worship: rituals, sacrifices, prayers, and purity. Israel's worship is most clear in the Psalms.

The people's worship was a recognition of their total dependence on God. Their life in the wilderness was a life of faith—faith that God would provide food and water, security from the dangers of the wilderness.



### EXODUS 15:20,21

*Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing.*

*Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea."*



# THE CALENDAR

God established the feasts and holy days of the Bible to remind the people of the great things he had done for them: miracles, victories, and provision. These special days were organized in Leviticus 23. God appointed seven holidays for the people as times to meet with him. Just as God had organized the space of the camp in the wilderness, he organized the time into *sacred*—time dedicated to God alone—and *common*—when the people could do their work, traveling, entertainment, and so on. Although most of the feasts originated in the wilderness around the Tabernacle, some other holidays developed later.

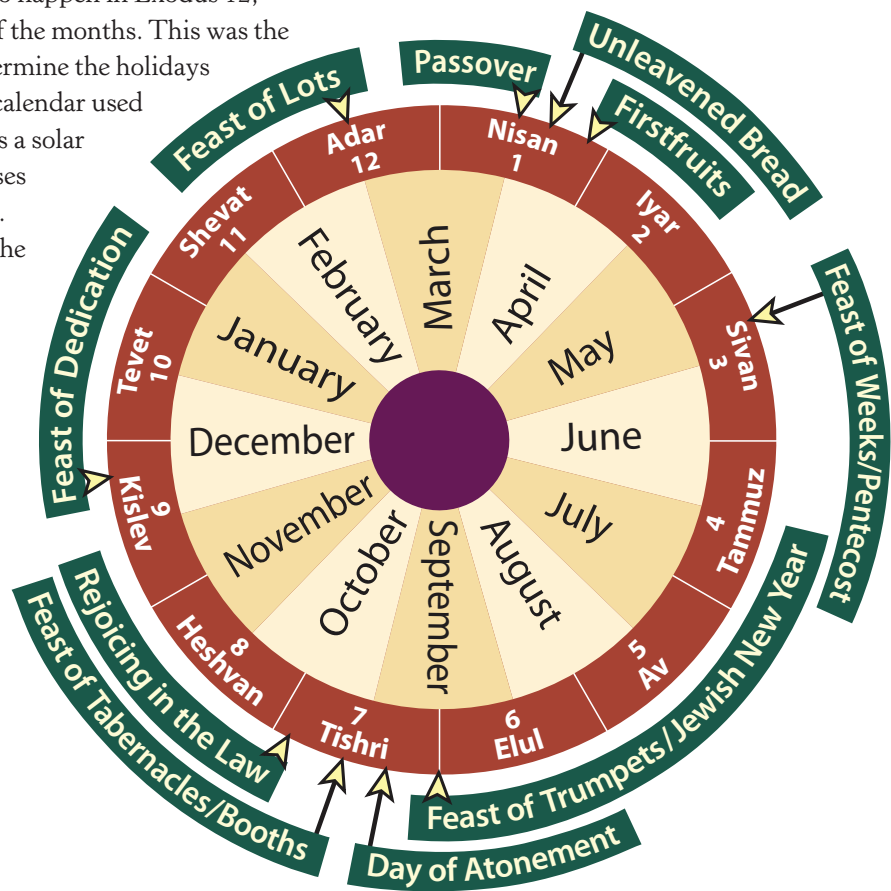
The purposes of the feasts were:

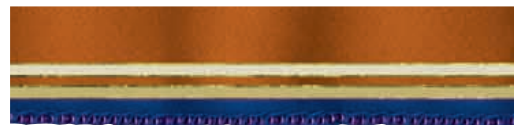
- To be a reminder
- To rest (sabbath)
- To give thanks through offerings
- To repent and offer sacrifices
- To read the Scriptures

As the first Passover was about to happen in Exodus 12, God also established the order of the months. This was the first Jewish calendar used to determine the holidays (religious year). The Gregorian calendar used by most Western nations today is a solar calendar. The Jewish calendar uses both lunar and solar movements. The months are determined by the moon; the year by the sun.

Following the Babylonian exile in the sixth century BC, the Jewish calendar reflected the Babylonian names of the months. These names still exist today in the current Jewish religious calendar.

Today this religious calendar is only used by observant Jews. Most people in Israel use the Gregorian calendar.





## THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

The Feast of Tabernacles is a reminder of the 40-year wilderness journey. It is a call to remember God's faithfulness and protection during the journey. During the wilderness journey, the Israelites dwelt in temporary shelters, or booths (*sukkot*). During this holiday, the Israelites were to build and dwell in booths for seven days to remember how they had lived under God's care in the wilderness. It was a week-long celebration of the fall harvest.



J. Marce

Along with Passover and Pentecost, the Feast of Tabernacles was one of the three pilgrimage feasts.

Israel became an agricultural society. The cycles of the land were important for biblical Israel. From an agricultural perspective, Passover corresponded to the planting season, Pentecost corresponded to the grain harvest, and Tabernacles corresponded to the fruit harvest.

There are three things required for the Feast of Tabernacles, also known as Festival of *Sukkot*:

- To gather the "four species" (Leviticus 23:40). The four special plants used to cover the booths are myrtle, citron, palm, and willow.
- To live in a *sukkah* or booth (Leviticus 23:42).
- To rejoice before the LORD (Deuteronomy 16:13-14; Leviticus 23:40).

### THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES AND JESUS

Two ceremonies were part of the last day:

- A priest carried water from the pool of Siloam to the Temple, symbolizing that when the Messiah comes the whole earth will know God "as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:9)
- People carrying torches marched around the temple, then set these lights around the walls of the temple, symbolizing how the Messiah would be a light to the Gentiles.

When Jesus attended this feast, on the last day, he said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me... streams of living water will flow from within him" (John 7:37-38). The next morning, while the torches were still burning, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). This feast represents the final harvest when all nations will share in the joy and blessings of God's kingdom. During that time, all believers will celebrate this feast (Zechariah 14:16).

# THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Continued

## FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

- ✧ *Sukkot* is a joyous feast when people rejoice in God's forgiveness and material blessings.
- ✧ Jews continue to celebrate *Sukkot* by building temporary booths for eight days.
- ✧ The *sukkah*, or booth, is a temporary structure built of wood, or wood and canvas.
- ✧ The *sukkah* is decorated with fall flowers, leaves, fruits, and vegetables.
- ✧ The *sukkah* is usually erected on a lawn or balcony.
- ✧ Often at least one meal a day is eaten in the *sukkah*.
- ✧ The *lulav* is a bouquet made of the palm branches, myrtle and willow branches that are bound together and waved/shaken in praise to the LORD.
- ✧ The *lulav* is waved in all four directions (north, south, east, and west) and up and down to symbolize that God's presence is everywhere.

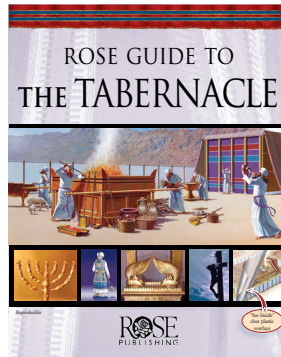
### LEVITICUS 23:40-43

*On the first day you are to take choice fruit from the trees, and palm fronds, leafy branches and poplars, and rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. Celebrate this as a festival to the LORD for seven days each year. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come; celebrate it in the seventh month. Live in booths for seven days: All native-born Israelites are to live in booths so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.*



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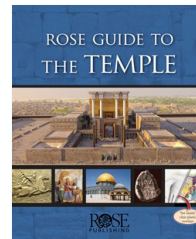


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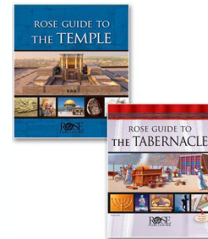


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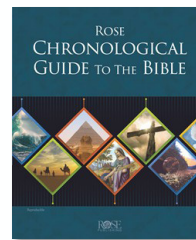


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