

Feast of Tabernacles

Sukkot

God is our Shelter

A time for
rejoicing!

Why are we commanded to
rejoice during Sukkot?

Transition &
Trusting God

Why does God command us to
build a Sukkah during this time?
What lessons can we draw from
the Israelites in the wilderness?

God has a
Sukkah?

Did you know that in scripture it
says that God Himself has a
Sukkah? What does that mean
for us spiritually?

The Bible also says we will all
celebrate Sukkot together in the
last days. What does that mean
for us as we walk out our faith
today?

*Discover the answers to these
questions and more!*

Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)

Intro

God has a time and season for everything and **Sukkot** is the biblical appointed time for rejoicing!



Transition & Trusting God

One of the greatest gifts God has given us is His appointed times (Mo'adim.)

These are the biblical Feasts that we are commanded to celebrate. They help strengthen our faith and point us back to Yeshua in every season of life.

This appointed time has a Hebrew name and it's called 'Sukkot.'

סוכות

A Sukkah is a temporary shelter or booth.

During Sukkot we remember the biblical story of the Exodus, how God led His people out of slavery in Egypt and made them dwell in tents in the wilderness.

The Fall Feasts!

Before Sukkot there are two other Fall Feasts.

Yom Tru'ah



Yom Tru'ah (Feast of Trumpets) is the first of the Fall Feasts. During this time you can hear shofars (ram's horns) resounding throughout the Land of Israel to this day. This is a time for spiritual breakthrough as well as a time we remember the coming of our King Messiah, Yeshua. It is a type of wake up call for us to rise out of our spiritual slumber and draw near to God.

Yom Kippur



Yom Kippur is the day of Atonement. It's the holiest day of the year. We observe this day by fasting as we are commanded to "afflict our souls.." (Leviticus 23:27) It's a time of repentance as we recognize the serious cost of sin and the need for us to search our hearts and turn from all our ways that are not pleasing to the Lord. In Israel the streets are empty on Yom Kippur without a single car on the road.

Jewish Holiday or Biblical Feast?

Who should celebrate Sukkot?



The bible clearly states that Gentile believers in Yeshua have been grafted into the commonwealth of Israel. (Romans 11)

This means that by putting our faith in Yeshua, we are joining a family... the people of Israel.

These biblical appointed times are not exclusively for the Jewish people. They are meant to be celebrated together by the entire body of Messiah in unity.

“Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘These are my appointed festivals, the appointed festivals of the LORD, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies. (Leviticus 23:2)

God Himself declares that these are HIS Feasts and they are for His people. That includes anyone who serves the God of Israel.

This is not a burdensome religious duty, this is a blessing, a joy and a special time to meet with God.



Sukkot in the Last Days

The bible also tells us of what will happen in the last days. All nations will come against Israel and ultimately God will deliver His people and fight against the enemies of Israel.

The survivors of all the nations that came against Israel are commanded to come up to Jerusalem and celebrate the Feast of Sukkot! Those who refuse to do so will be fiercely judged.

“And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.” Zechariah 14:16

Yeshua celebrating Sukkot

On this final day of the Feast, Hoshana Rabah, a special ceremony is performed called Simchat Beit Hashoeva (Re- joicing of the House of Drawing of Water), originating from a Second Temple period custom in which the Cohen (priest) would draw water from the Pool of Siloam and pour it out upon the altar.

In this ancient water ceremony, the Jewish people would follow the Cohen in a joyous processional of singing, dancing and rejoicing, reciting hallel (praise) Psalms (Tehillim) and chanting the Scripture

“With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation (Yeshuah).”
(Isaiah 12:3)

Yeshua, the word used in this verse is also the Hebrew name for Jesus the Messiah. It means ‘God is salvation’ or God saves.



Living Waters



On the last day of the Feast (Shmini Atzeret), Yeshua stood up and invited everyone who was thirsty to come to Him and drink of the Living Waters. Can we picture this? At the same moment that the Cohanim (Jewish priests) were pouring out the waters upon the altar of the Holy Temple, Yeshua stood up and pro-claimed Himself to be the source of Living Water!

The Book of John, in chapter 7, tells us that one year the disciples went up to Jerusalem for the last day of the Feast (Shmini Atzeret) but Yeshua stayed behind and then came up secretly. Then on the last “great day of the feast”, he stood in the Temple courts and cried out: **“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”** (John 7:37-38)

How does the Bible say we are to celebrate Sukkot?

1

Build a Sukkah

One of the main elements of Sukkot is building a Sukkah! A Sukkah is a small, temporary shelter and we are commanded to dwell in it for 7 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. Dwell in temporary shelters for seven days:

(Leviticus 23:41)

In Israel I always love feeling the excitement in the air as summer fades into fall and the pomegranates are ripe on the trees.

Everyone is hustling to get their Sukkah materials together and you'll often see palm branches strapped onto the roof of people's cars.

Nearly everyone in Israel will have a Sukkah, even your local falafel place!



Transition & Trusting God

Why does God command us to dwell in Sukkahs?

Scripture gives us the answer to this question.

“so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in temporary shelters when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.”
(Leviticus 23:43)

Once the Israelites were set free from slavery in Egypt they were not immediately transported into the Promised Land. They had to brave the wilderness first.

I have lived in the Israeli desert, and let me tell you, it's not the first place I'd choose to go camping!





The Wilderness

The Hebrew word for ‘desert’ - Midbar and the Hebrew word for ‘speak’ - Medaber have the exact same letters!

It was actually God’s will for the Israelites to dwell in tents and journey through the wilderness before reaching the Promised Land.

During this time of Sukkot we reflect on their journey and the lessons it teaches us.

The Israelites often struggled with fear, believing the lie that God was going to forsake them. They were quick to turn to idolatry, complaining and coveting what they didn’t have.

How often do we do the same thing when we find ourselves in a situation that’s less than ideal?

While the wilderness is not a place we would choose to be, it serves a purpose.

The Holy Spirit even led Yeshua into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil! (Matthew 4:1)

Sometimes this challenges our hopeful theology that ‘as long as you follow God, everything will go your way! You’ll be blessed, happy, healthy and abundant!’

I do believe that God wants to bless us and He’s always faithful to take care of us but that doesn’t mean that He won’t lead us into places that challenge our character and test our faith.

Reflection Time

What have been seasons of my life I have felt in a 'Wilderness Season'?

What examples or scriptures can encourage me during these seasons and provide examples of how to overcome the challenges I face while in a spiritual wilderness?

How does the Bible say we are to celebrate Sukkot?

2

Remember the Shelter of God

Did you know that God Himself has a 'Sukkah?'

"For in the day of trouble He will conceal me in His shelter; (Sukkah)

He will hide me in the secret place of His tent;

He will lift me up on a rock." - Psalms 27:5

In Hebrew the word used in this scripture for 'shelter' is 'sukkah.'

Over and over again in scripture we read about God as our shelter, our refuge and our fortress.

Living in Israel we are familiar with the urgency of running to the bomb shelter every time a siren sounds. Mere seconds could mean the difference between life or death.

By remaining under the blood of Yeshua we are hiding ourselves in God's Sukkah in a spiritual sense.



The Shelter of God

We had just moved into our new home nestled in the foothills of Alberta. One evening I noticed dark thunder clouds gathering in the skies above.

Within a few minutes a full blown rainstorm poured down, strong gusts of wind shook our windows as we watched small objects on the street get tossed around.

We quickly locked the windows and I ran upstairs to check on our seven month old daughter, Esther.

I cracked the door open to her room and smiled, she was cozy as can be, asleep peacefully, blissfully unaware of the intense storm outside.





Sleeping in the Storm

It's such a serene, cozy feeling to be inside with a cup of tea watching the rain shower the earth outside.

There is something about knowing you're completely secure, warm and dry inside your 'shelter' while watching everything outside get drenched from the rain.

The Israelites knew firsthand the protection of remaining under God's shelter while in Egypt. The brutal plagues that wreaked havoc on the Egyptians did not touch the Israelites living in Goshen.

When we step outside of the covering of God's Shelter we subject ourselves to possible destruction. Remaining in the Shelter of God means placing ourselves under the blood of Yeshua through covenant relationship with our Creator and obedience to His Word.

There are consequences to sin and if we decide to step out of the shelter of God's protection we will reap the consequences of our actions. We can think of God's commandments like parameters, not meant to simply restrict us but to keep us safe.

Mary or Martha?

As I listened to the pitter patter of the rain against the window a thought came to me “what if we lived with this kind of calm and contentment when facing storms in our life, knowing that we are secure and safe in the shelter of God?”

There are some storms in life that require our attention and our action. Anxiety is often a signal for us that we need to take action.

Perhaps our spending is out of control causing financial stress or we have been neglecting our children and they are showing behavioral problems. Anxiety could be signally you that you and your spouse feel distant and the marriage needs more invested into it or that you’re desperately lonely and need to go join a community group and make some friends.

There are also storms in our life that we cannot control, maybe we find ourselves worried all the time... about every little thing. Yeshua sensed this inner anxiety in Martha who tried to drown out her anxiety with business and gently told her “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things..” (Luke 10:41)

He encouraged her to focus on the one thing that really mattered... sitting at His feet. Dwelling in His Shelter. Being in His Sukkah in a spiritual sense.

I’d love to say that I walk in perfect peace and serenity all the time, however that’s just not the case. Scripture tells us “You keep him in perfect peace whose minds are stayed on you.”

I don’t know about you but my mind has a tenancy to wander and dwell on all the things I’m worried about more often than not.

I was having a particularly bad day one morning. You know when you just roll off the wrong side of the bed?

Well, the day started off with a crucial problem that set me in a bad mood... I couldn't find anything to wear! Frustrated, I finally found something to throw on and it only went down hill from there.



My husband and I were trying to go on a simple coffee date and alas I found myself standing in an empty parking spot staring down an angry Israeli who was trying to commandeer it!

See, parking in Israel is no joke. If you find a parking spot in Jerusalem by some miracle it's like gold.

Many people will stand in the spot to ensure no one else sneaks in while the driver of the car pulls up as quickly as possible.

Before I knew it I found myself in a yelling match arguing over who had the rights to the coveted parking spot.

At some point I realized the absurdity of what I was doing and backed down. My heart was pounding, flooded with adrenaline and cortisol from the yelling match.

We finally got to our cafe, although I can't say I enjoyed it as much as I would have without the unpleasant earlier altercation.

That evening we attended a seminar where the speaker said a few words before closing in prayer. "How did you decide what to wear today?" He asked. I guiltily glanced at Yanai, God was reading my mail and I didn't like it. The speaker then quoted this verse:

"Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience." (Colossians 3:12)

Ouch.

I definitely didn't emulate a believer clothed in compassion or patience that day. I felt the Holy Spirit convict me about my attitude but I also realized we needed to make some big changes in our life to lower our stress and the impossible demands we had been trying to keep up with.

Our body, mind and soul had been sending us warning signals for some time but we hadn't taken them seriously enough.

As believers we are called to a high standard, to be God's representatives to those who are lost and broken.

We need to carefully steward our well-being mentally and physically so we can live out our faith in a way that will glorify God. When we are full of anxiety, stress and plagued with incessant worry, it doesn't glorify God.

Sometimes removing worry, anger and anxiety from our life looks like embracing a positive attitude and letting go of things we can't control, but more often than not it often looks like making difficult and intentional decisions.

The disciples could not understand the extraordinary peace that Yeshua had as they found him asleep during a ferocious storm on the Sea of Galilee. "Don't you care that we're perishing?!" They cried perplexed and fearful.

I have felt that way many times. The disciples had forgotten Yeshua is the one who could calm the storm in an instant.

Many of us are discouraged by the darkness that is prevalent on the earth today. It is indisputable, we are living in dark times.

War, terrorism, dangerous ideologies being pushed in schools and on college campuses that are creating real damage, the shedding of innocent blood through abortion and many other tragic occurrences we hear about regularly on the news.

There is certainly a reason Yeshua said *"do not let your hearts be troubled."* - John 14:1



He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." -Psalm 91:1-2

Even as we are saddened by the forces of darkness operating in today's world, even as we face disappointments in our life, we need to remember the One who is in control.

During Sukkot we build a beautiful little temporary shelter and sit in it for seven days. We rejoice, in spite of whatever difficulty we are going through and we pause our busy lives as a Sabbath for both the first and last day of the Feast.

It is a tangible and physical reminder to us that God is our Shelter. Whenever the troubles of this life feel overwhelming we can run to His presence, pour out our hearts in prayer and find comfort in Him.

It is also a foreshadowing of how one day Yeshua will return and Tabernacle with us, we will also fellowship in unity with one another without strife, division or fracture.

"No longer will one teach his neighbor or his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they will all know me, from the least to the greatest of them." (Jeremiah 31:34)

Reflection Time

Is it hard for me to embrace being in the presence of God and letting go of fear and worry? If so, are there any practical changes I need to make to lessen anxiety in my life?

What would it look like to dwell in the Shelter of the Lord this week during Sukkot?

How does the Bible say we are to celebrate Sukkot?

3 Embrace Joy

During this appointed time we are actually commanded to rejoice!

There can be a trap for us as believers to get too serious, focus on all the problems in the world, become legalistic and let sorrow seep into our hearts.

It's good to care deeply about pleasing God and walking in His ways but sometimes we can get out of a balance and forget that God wants us to rejoice and enjoy the blessings He's given us!

Sukkot is a harvest festival, it's traditional to decorate the sukkah with posters of the Seven Species (שבעת המינים — Shiv'at HaMinim) which are the seven agricultural products that the Land of Israel is especially praised for in the Bible. Sometimes we hang fake (or real) fruit in the Sukkah.

**"A land of wheat and barley,
of vines and fig trees and
pomegranates,
a land of olive oil and honey."
— Deuteronomy 8:8**



Sukkot - Feast of Tabernacles

Seven Species of Israel

- Wheat – חִטָּה (Chitah)
- Barley – שְׁעוֹרָה (Se'orah)
- Grapes – גֶּפֶן (Gefen)
- Figs – תְּאֵנָה (Te'edah)
- Pomegranates – רִמּוֹן (Rimon)
- Olives – זַיִת (Zayit)
- (Date) Honey – דְּבַשׁ (Dvash)

Spending the Tithe

It's during this time of Sukkot that we are commanded to take a portion of our tithe and spend it on food, drink and *"whatever your heart desires."* (Deuteronomy 14:22–27)

A portion of the tithe was to be given to the Levite and distributed to the poor and needy however God cares so much about this season being a joyous time He also instructs us to spend it on celebrating with delicious food and drink.

**"O taste and see that the LORD is good;
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him." - Psalm 34:8
(Hebrew: טַעֲמוּ וִרְאוּ כִּי־טוֹב יְהוָה – Ta'amu u-re'u ki tov Adonai)**

We can get so caught up in the disappointments of life it can overshadow how we perceive God's goodness. This is a time to spend some money on a feast to celebrate and give thanks for all the ways God has blessed us.

There is a time and place for fasting and reflection but it's not God's will for us to walk through life being miserable and masking a downcast spirit as "being more spiritual." God created us to laugh, to love, to eat good food in the company of our friends and family and to give Him praise for all He's done in our life.

*"You make known to me the path of life;
in Your presence there is fullness of joy;
at Your right hand are pleasures
forevermore." – Psalm 16:11*



Our Sukkah in Israel



The Original Thanksgiving

Sukkot - Feast of Tabernacles

Long before the first settlers gathered in gratitude for a harvest, the people of Israel celebrated Sukkot — the Feast of Tabernacles — as God’s own appointed Thanksgiving.

It is the time when the harvest is brought in, the fruit of months of labor gathered with joy.

Families dwell in temporary shelters — sukkot — to remember that everything they have comes from God’s hand.

“Rejoice in the LORD your God, for He blesses the work of your hands and the fruit of the land.” — Deuteronomy 16:15



Lulav and Etrog

Sukkot - Feast of Tabernacles

The lulav is a palm branch that is bundled together with myrtle and willow branches.

The etrog is a citron, a yellow, fragrant citrus fruit.

Together, they are called the Four Species and are used during Sukkot, to worship God with joy and gratitude.



“And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.” - Leviticus 23:40

To the Ones who are Brokenhearted

Scripture has no shortage of verses telling us of the importance of joy. God set aside these specific appointed times partly for us to remember to rejoice! We can get so serious and caught up in the issues we face and the workload we carry that we forget at times to rejoice and practice gratitude.

At the same time there are seasons of life we walk through that leave us so utterly broken and hurting that we cannot find the strength to rejoice.

For those of us who may be reading this today brokenhearted, God understands.

Even though God gives us opportunity to remember to rejoice and give thanks during Sukkot, there are times we are grieving and we can sit in God's presence with our pain.

I remember one year we were at an event for Yom Tru'ah (Feast of Trumpets) we had filled a large bucket of ripe pomegranets from our tree, put on our white festive clothes and gathered with other believers in Jerusalem to celebrate together.

My husband and I were going through a difficult season of many challenges, I had suffered several miscarriages and health issues.

I watched as my friend and her two children danced joyously with others, they urged me to join and I shook my head no. I blinked fighting back tears and carrying a hurting heart.

When will God give us children of our own? When will all these problems and heartache end? I didn't have the answers to these questions.

It became a year painted with grief, not only for us personally but also for the nation of Israel.

A year later immediately after Sukkot ended and we were in the last day of the festival, Shmini Atzeret. That Shabbat morning, we woke up to sirens and missiles outside our window.

Israel was hit with intense suffering, horrific violence, kidnappings, acts of brutality and cruelty and the hands of Hamas that shook us and left us devastated. That day was October 7th 2023 when Hamas infiltrated into Israel from Gaza and carried out what many were calling 'a second Holocaust.'

I could not stop crying for days as more news of tragedy continued to unfold those first few days after the attack. I can't imagine the pain of the families that have lost loved ones and suffered themselves directly from this war.

Our hostages were being held captive in Gaza at the hands of evil men, our beloved sons, husbands and brothers were called into duty and fought to protect our country, many families became strained under the rising economic pressure and increasing tensions. Frequent terrorist attacks within Israel and missile alerts in the middle of the night made parents afraid for their children's safety.

I write these words on the second year anniversary of the beginning of the war. October 7th 2025. There are still Israeli hostages being held in Gaza. Things do not feel just or right and all we can do is pray for God's mercy and know there will come a day justice will be served, wicked defeated and His peace will abound.

Sukkot - Feast of Tabernacles

Prayer

Sorrow may last for a night

but joy comes in the morning

God does not expect us to fake a smile and pretend to be a “happy believer” regardless of the things we are going through. There is a time to mourn and a time to dance.

We need to savour the sweet seasons of life and lean on the Lord during the valley seasons when we are desperate for hope.

I remember several weeks after October 7th I had a deep longing to experience heaven. To be in a place with our Heavenly Father, without pain or sorrow. We were met with the darkness and brokenness of this world and our souls were never meant to carry that weight.

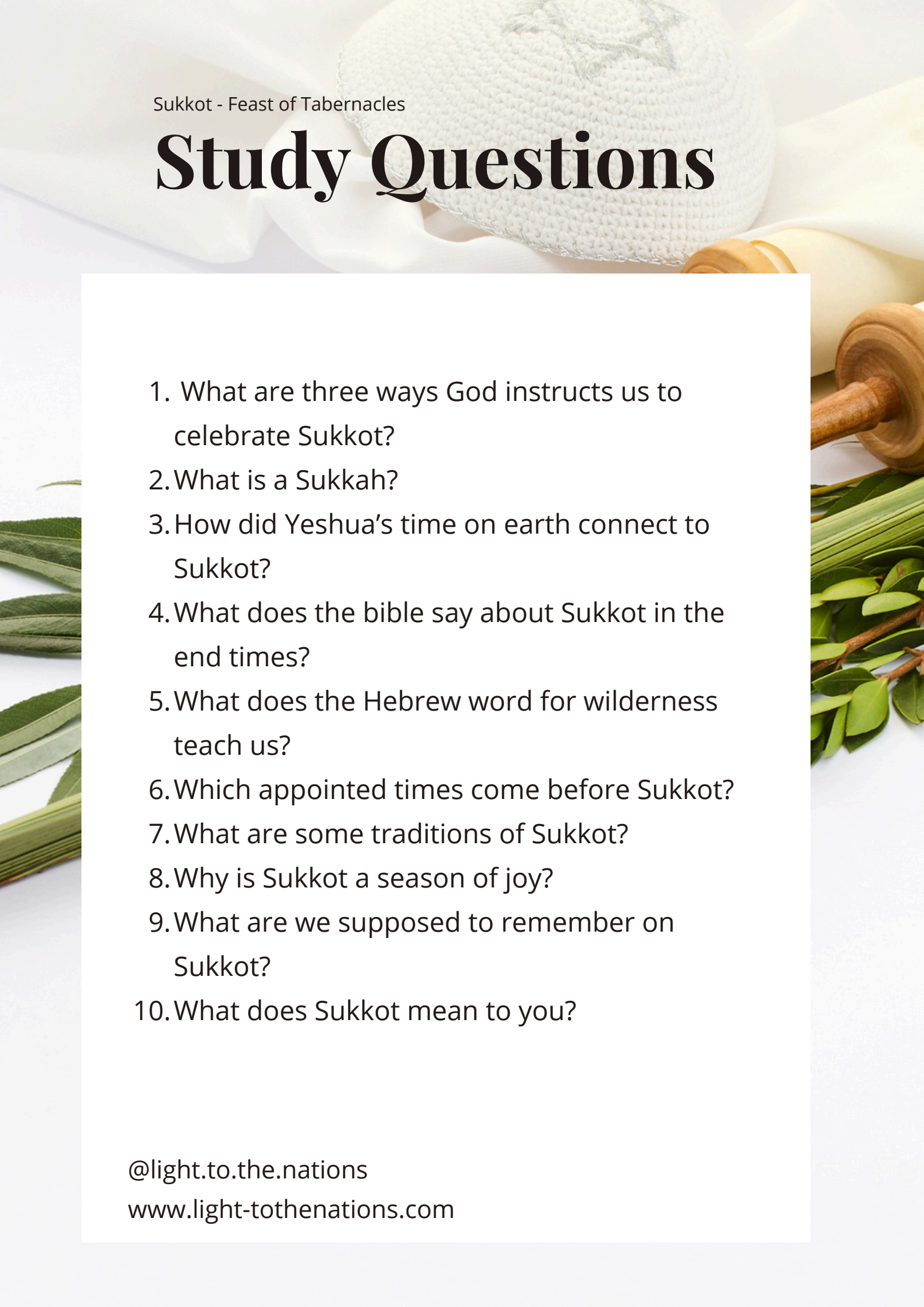
God promises one day to wipe every tear from our eye, to create a new heavens and a new earth without pain and suffering. However while we are here on this earth we have to navigate it's brokenness and continuously put our hope in God's goodness despite the darkness that we see in the world.

One day all will be made right, one day all will be made new, until that day we must decide to dwell in God's Sukkah, in His presence and receive His words when He says “For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, ‘Fear not, I am the one who helps you.’” - Isaiah 41:13

Reflection Time

Are there things you are grieving this Sukkot that are weighing down your heart with sorrow? How can you pray and place these burdens at God's feet or sit with Him in His presence and receive His comfort?

What are some obstacles you face to walking in joy? Is it bitterness? Unforgiveness? Relational Issues? Areas of stress? Do you feel that your life is in alignment with God's will or not? Reflect and pray about these things. Ask God to show you what changes you can make to let joy into your heart and life again.



Sukkot - Feast of Tabernacles

Study Questions

1. What are three ways God instructs us to celebrate Sukkot?
2. What is a Sukkah?
3. How did Yeshua's time on earth connect to Sukkot?
4. What does the bible say about Sukkot in the end times?
5. What does the Hebrew word for wilderness teach us?
6. Which appointed times come before Sukkot?
7. What are some traditions of Sukkot?
8. Why is Sukkot a season of joy?
9. What are we supposed to remember on Sukkot?
10. What does Sukkot mean to you?

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Todah Rabah

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Thank you for considering partnering with us with a one-time or monthly donation to further impact the younger generation in the Land of Israel and in the Nations.



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May the Lord bless and keep you, may He
lift up His countenance upon you and
give you Peace (Shalom)

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