



# The Living God Ministries, Inc.

Montgomery & Spanish Fort, Alabama

August 7, 2020

## Gathering Branches of Trees

Warm hellos to you dear brethren, co-workers, spiritual family on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, and scattered children of God, from our offices here in Spanish Fort, AL.

My wife and I pray and hope this finds you all doing well, and that again your week has been blessed. I hope you are doing well and coping successfully with life's challenges.

We are continuing to have our seasonal normal warm and humid temps here on the Gulf Coast. I am anticipating the autumn change of colors, probably coming sometime soon after we return from the Feast of Tabernacles. Leaves on deciduous trees change from various shades of Green to Yellow, Red, Orange and Brown. Various crop leaves also change color such as Corn, Cotton, Peanuts and Soy Beans. I really enjoy the beautiful autumn colors and the welcome of a cooler temps.

Here's a trivia question you might find interesting. What conifer changes the color of its needles in the fall and then loses the needles before winter? The answer is, it would be the Larch tree also called the Tamarack. (Years ago we stayed at a condominium in the Wisconsin Dells area for the Feast of Tabernacles with the same name). The Western Larch is much bigger than the Eastern Larch. But they both display those bright Yellow needles in the fall season. Hard to miss! Growing up in Nebraska, trees have always been of interest to me, mostly because we didn't have a lot of them, and a part of God's creation I readily admire.

Why this discussion? Well, part of the celebration of the upcoming Feast of Tabernacles involved gathering *branches of trees* and constructing booths or huts from the branches. "*And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. 42 You shall live in booths seven days.*" (Leviticus 23:40, 42) It's a little bit puzzling that the branches were collected and then were assembled into the booths on the first day of the Feast, and that they spent time in the booths for seven days, not eight.

There is something about the ritual that fits with performing it on the first day of the Feast. Notice that "fruit" was also collected and evidently displayed in the hut or hung from the roof of the tabernacle. The Hebrew word translated "fruit" in v. 40 is translated as fruit 113 times in

the Authorized Version and is translated as fruit in v.40 in most other translations. The Hebrew word translated "boughs" in v.40 is a different Hebrew word than the Hebrew word translated "fruit." The Feast of Tabernacles is labeled "*the Feast of Ingathering at the year's end*" in Exodus 23:16 and Exodus 34:22. This Festival was a time to celebrate and rejoice in the abundance of the harvest which included fruit and nuts from trees and produce of various kinds.

We find, that the ritual of constructing these huts was seldom practiced by the Israelites. During the return of some of the Jews from Babylon to Jerusalem, Nehemiah the governor and Ezra the priest instructed the people from the Law. They read that "*the children of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths. . ."*" (Nehemiah 8:14-15) Then the comment is made that "*since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day the children of Israel had not done so*" (v.17) The instruction has slightly different wording than that in Lev 23:40. The leaders most likely paraphrased the instructions.

There are some interesting things to evaluate and contemplate concerning the ritual of taking the branches and boughs, and also the fruit of the trees, to construct these temporary huts or tabernacles. I find it interesting and fascinating that during the transfiguration of Jesus and the appearance of Moses and Elijah in the vision that Peter was moved to suggest, "*let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah*" (Matthew 17:4) Why did he suggest this? Did he understand the connection of the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles with the appearance of Christ in a glorified state and the resurrected Moses and Elijah at the time when the Kingdom of God would be set up? Just some thoughts to ponder, and share, as we draw closer to the Feast of Ingathering soon to be upon us.

As mentioned before, I so appreciate the many emails received from those of you who are convey to me that "you are blessed from this ministry, and share it with others". Our YouTube channel, Facebook page and various evening fellowships that you share do reach many for a first time. God continues to call those who are seeking Him and listening. The Kingdom of God is very real, and we must be about sharing that news! With the Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day (or Eighth Day) coming up, we'll be keenly focused on a time in the future when all nations will come to Him! For many it will be the first time. God speed that day.

Let's you and I stay strong, vigilant, and spiritually focused on the God who has called us, allowing Him to live in us, looking forward to that coming Kingdom of God! And, just like these fall Feasts, it IS coming! That is a promise.

Arms up friends! Our prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Please do pray for us as well.

**-Scott Hoefker**

(Pastor, *The Living God Ministries Gulf Coast*)

The schedule for this **Sabbath** is:

**August 7<sup>th</sup> / Friday: Evening Praise Sacrifice to welcome God's Sabbath - 6:30 pm** (via *teleconference* live connect with Stephen Glover and Friends.)

**August 8<sup>th</sup> / Saturday: Spirit and Truth Worship Services - 10:15 am**, with services held in **Montgomery** and in **Pearl, Mississippi** at our normal **10:15 a.m.** (with phone conference connection available from Montgomery and Live Webcast from the CCOG where Scott Hoefker will be giving the sermon message). A noon "potluck" meal will be enjoyed and shared in Montgomery shortly after worship services.

**August 8<sup>th</sup> / Saturday: Malachi 3:16 Sabbath Fellowship** (Interactive Bible Discussion) - **3:30 pm** from Montgomery. (Connecting live with all via *phone conference*).

Telephone Ministry (English): Call **1-712-770-4700**; then, when asked, enter Code **112165 #** to join.

(Note: All callers are muted and must press \*6 to comment and \*6 to resume mute.)

All times are listed in Central Standard Time zone.

Our Daily Bread Recordings

Sunday through Saturday / Our Daily Bread [listen anytime 24/7 to a recorded 15 minute message] Call 1-712-770-4709 (note this call in number is different and ends in "9"), then when asked, enter code 112165# [reference code numbers are on "Spiritual Fellowship Opportunities" on this website <http://www.tlministriesgc.org> or at "Resources/Archives" on <http://www.haggai114.net>]

Daily Fellowship Opportunities

Sunday – Friday / **Morning Sacrifice** (Prayers & Scripture Reading) at 6:00 a.m.

Sundays / **The Minor Prophets** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. [Whit, Logan & Friends]

Mondays / Africa Discipleship at 7:00 a.m. [Stephen & Moses]

**Almond Branch Fellowship** at 6:30 p.m. (Interactive) (Stephen & Friends)

Tuesdays / **Haggai Fellowship** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. (Interactive) [Stephen & Friends]

Wednesdays / Africa Discipleship at 7:00 a.m. [Stephen & Moses]

1st & 3rd Wednesday / **Sons of God Fellowship** (Young men training) at 6:30 p.m. [Stephen & Friends]  
2nd & 4th Wednesday / **Lydian's Fellowship** (Ladies) at 6:30 p.m. [Esther/Gayle/Laura & Friends]  
Thursdays / **Mt. Carmel Fellowship** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. [Scott & Friends]

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