



September 5, 2025

On the First Day of the Feast

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast of lower Alabama. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

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, coming sometime soon after we return from the Feast of Tabernacles. Here on the Gulf Coast 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 verse 40 in most other translations. The Hebrew word translated "boughs" in verse 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 though, 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 Leviticus 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 weekly Bible Basics interactive study and fellowship that you share in 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 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 their first time.

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 sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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