

## John 23 – Sukkot: Messiah’s Joy (Feast of Booths)

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John 7:1-13

### Sukkot: Feast of Tabernacles

- Booths-Tents {Temporary}
- Linked Wilderness trials (Called vs Chosen), saved in fleshly body & eternity future new body (Mt 22:11-14), (Co 15:42-49)
- Final harvest feast also called *Feast of Ingathering* – A Time of Great Joy



### Most Favored of Jewish Feasts

- One of the three harvest feasts Jewish men required to attend annually (Maybe once a lifetime for Diaspora)
  - Pesach {Passover} – Barley Harvest: Sacrifice of Christ
  - Shavuot {Pentecost} – Wheat Harvest: Gift of Spirit
  - Sukkot {Booths} – Fruit Harvest: Millennial Kingdom
- Lasted eight days, nine in Diaspora, with dancing, singing for joy: Salvation of the Lord {David} (2Sa 6:16-18)

## Only Feast Celebrated in Future

- This is the only feast celebrated by everyone in the Millennial Kingdom (Ze 14:16-21)
  - This typifies the eternal celebration of the Lord seen several times in Revelation by angels, Jews, and Gentiles (Re 4:9-11; 5:8-14; 7:9-17; 11:15-19; 15:1-5; 19:6-8; 21:22-22:3)
  - In New Jerusalem there will be river of water
  - In New Jerusalem Christ is the Light of the world
  - Correlates to the Jewish Water and Light Festivals

## Christ Continues His Trinitarianism

- The events suggest that this Sukkot was probably the last one Jesus would experience so He continues His public declaration of New Covenant salvation (Trinity)
  - This celebration would have been attended by tens of thousands of Jews, including Diaspora and proselytes
  - Making a public declaration here would have been carried throughout the old empire regions and beyond

## John Begins this Discourse at Home

- The family prepares to go to Sukkot including Jesus' brothers who are chiding Jesus to go with them
  - Jesus had stayed in Galilee since healing the man at the Pool of Bethesda (House of Mercy) since the Jewish authorities wanted Him dead (Before His time) (Jo 5:1-17)
  - They were probably chiding Him because many of His disciples in Galilee deserted Him; Jerusalem would be a means of replenishing the ranks or infuriating the Jews

## Jesus' Family Untrustworthy

- Events in other Gospels show Jesus' family did not understand His purpose, tried to control Him (MR 3:31-35)
  - His brothers were lost as John makes clear here
  - His mother, raised in Judaism, believes in Him but also struggles to understand the difference between what she was taught about Messiah and what He is saying about His true purpose - One with the Father
  - She occasionally thought He was unstable (Faith crisis) (MR 3:20-21)

## Problem is the Source of Advice

- The brothers give sound advice but their motives were suspect; they were lost so wanted Jesus to fail
  - Remember: the flesh is worthless for anything of God
  - Spirit is only true guidance and witness for Christ {Us}
  - Insinuates that if Jesus reveals Himself at Jerusalem His ministry will be quickly extinguished
  - They disguise their motives behind concern for growth

## Ministry Needs Exposure to Grow

- Their advice is born from fleshly, worldly hatred
  - Ministry of God must follow God's direction
  - God will produce the growth as He deems necessary
  - Accepting the world's methods places the ministry under Lucifer's control who will co-op it for his goals
- Lucifer may be tempting Jesus to lust for His own self-aggrandizement {Developing ministry apart from God}

## Jesus Deals in Honesty

- Jesus immediately confronts them with the foundation of their advice - sinful flesh
  - They are of the world {Probably saved *after* Resurrection}
  - Their advice works for worldly projects because they would seek for worldly acclaim - False teachers  
(Jn 7: 23-3; Jude 4, 8-11)
  - They attribute these same motives to Jesus - Scoffers  
(Jn 1:22-31)

## Jesus Contrasts Himself to Them

- Jesus is *not* of this world; therefore, the world *hates* Him, seeking to kill Him
  - He testifies truthfully about the world's sinfulness
  - He offers words of life He received from the Father
  - They would rather see Him dead than repent
- The Opening Hymn: Light has come into the world only to be rejected, even by His chosen ones (Jn 1:9-11)

## Supposed Controversy

- In the English it *appears* that Jesus practices deception, lying, separating Himself from His family
  - If He lies, He sins making Him unacceptable as sinless sacrifice for sin - His death would be meaningless
  - Christ tells them to go up (Aorist Imperative) to Sukkot
  - He will not go (Present Indicative) *at that time* {Idiom?}
  - In other words, He will not travel with them {Implied}

## Christ Goes Privately

- The impression is that Jesus travels alone, that would be very unsafe; it is *assumed* His apostles go with Him
  - He enters Jerusalem incognito to attend Sukkot
  - He mingles in the crowd listening to their muttering
- A little known fact is that Sukkot is on or near His birthday with His miraculous conception in December

## Crowd is Mumbling

- The attendees are muttering, mumbling among themselves about Him and His ministry
  - People from all over the known world have heard of Him since coming to Jerusalem due to His earlier healing of the *religious* man at the Pool of Bethesda and the rumors of His miracles in Galilee
  - Who is He? Good or Bad!

## Who Is He?

- Many say He is a *good* man because of the miracles He has performed
  - These take the position of Nicodemus, a good man from God or else He could not do these miracles
- Many believe He is leading the people astray because His teachings do not follow the teachings of the Rabbis nor the Sadducees; probably the majority opinion

## No One Speaks Openly

- Imagine the volatility of thousands of emotional people in a confined space muttering about the purpose of one man and His impact on *their* truth
  - Each supposes he/she has knowledge of the truth, able to clearly know Jesus' purposes
  - Remember, each *sees* as through an enigma due to sinfulness; therefore, what truth can they perceive clouded by their sinful or ignorant worldviews?

## Fear Stalks the Crowd

- These milling multitudes mutter *fearfully* in case the Jewish authorities hear and punish them
  - Speaking favorably of Christ will get them exiled from Jewish society, a death sentence in a Jewish enclave
  - This is a crowd moved by fear, maintained by *false* teachings and herded by tyrannical elitist authority
  - They are not united to worship God but divided by fear and sin; time for great joy becomes a time of great fear

## Contrasting God and Man

- The emphasis of Sukkot was lost
- Sukkot was to be a celebration of great joy in God's goodness and His salvation; for the Jew, of course
- Instead, it has become a time of intrigue and fear with little thought of God and more emphasis on religious correctness to maintain one's position in society

## Roman Presence

- During these *festivals* the Romans maintained a large garrison at Fort Antonio which looked down into the Temple courtyard
  - Romans would not hesitate to dispatch troops to violently put down *any* signs of unrest
- Roman presence is a pall over over the confusion of festive Jerusalem adding to the fear of this joyous season

## Joy of God's Redemption - Missed

- Jews have missed the truth of Sukkot, even today
  - This festival celebrates not only their past but also God's redemptive plan into eternity future
  - The festival was to be a look ahead to their final redemption rather than a celebration of their rebellious past in their Wilderness wanderings, a mark of shame
  - This festival stretched back to God's promise to Man & Woman celebrating completion of man in God's Image

## Into This Quagmire Strode God

- Then Son of God enters this celebration teaching them the meaning of His salvation they have celebrated for nearly a millennium and a half
- Christ will burst upon them shattering their *certainty* of God based in ignorance with His eternal truth-Trinity
- How so like us who think we *know* God, in our *certainty*