



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Pass The Promise Series, Lesson 27

Lesson Title: The Festival of Sukkot – Thanksgiving
Take Home Point: God wants to bless us with joy. We are to say thank you back to him.

Warm-Up:

I have worked with a man for many years who has an interesting and thoughtful tradition. Every Thanksgiving, he calls or sends a message to the person who hired him, thanking that person for hiring him. He also does the same with his current manager. Over the years, he has experienced some hard times and had some bosses that were difficult. But he still did it. I asked him why, and he told me, "It's my way of celebrating God's provision. I thank them, and at the same time I am thanking God. So many people don't have jobs or really struggle to get by. Why shouldn't I be grateful?" It was a good lesson for me.

Read: Leviticus 23:33-44; Deuteronomy 16:13-15; Nehemiah 8:13-18

Observation (What happened?):

Why did God want the Israelites to live in booths, or tents, for the seven days of the feast?

How were the the people to respond to God's blessings? What was the principal attitude and emotion God desired for them?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why do you think God commanded this feast to take place?

Why was the celebration recorded in Nehemiah so joyful? What made it extra special?

Insight:

When God imparted his law to Israel as recorded in Leviticus, he ordained three feasts to be celebrated annually. The first was Passover to commemorate God's deliverance from slavery in Egypt. It was a solemn occasion filled with reminders of when God's people were set free. Jesus died for us at Passover (John 13:1) and we celebrate our rescue from sin. The second was the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, celebrated 50 days after Passover. It was one day of rejoicing and giving to those in need. God gave us his Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). The third was Sukkot which you read about in the Bible reading. The celebration included living in temporary shelters for seven days to remember the tents the Israelites lived in after leaving Egypt. We always remember that this earth is a temporary place for us; our permanent home is in heaven with God (John 14:2,3,24).

Application (What does it mean to me?):

What traditions do you, or your family, have to remember and celebrate his blessings?

How long has it been since you thanked God for his salvation from sin and death, his constant presence, and his many other blessings? Regardless of how long it has been, take some time to do it now.