

Welcome to the Feast of Tabernacles—2006

Enduring to the End

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Greetings, brethren! Welcome to the Feast of Tabernacles 2006

As we look at the things happening in the world, we don't know how many Feasts that we will have. It depends on how everything works out. This why we need to realize and understand the importance of keeping the Feast.

In keeping the Feast, we can say that as well as learning from the Word of God, all the Feasts of God prepare us:

- for the Kingdom of God
- to be spiritual beings

So, what it actually is, it is an education from God so that we can grow

- in grace
- in knowledge
- in faith
- in hope
- in love

So that we can qualify through Jesus Christ by the grace of God to be in the Kingdom of God and to be rulers and kings and priests with Christ.

Let's see something very important concerning the Feast, and as we analyze this, let's also see that the Feast days of God are put into an equivalence of the greater commandments of God. Also, part of the covenant that we have with God.

Now, after God showed Himself in His glory to Moses, and then began re-giving the commandments, He once again said... This is also something we need to understand in this day, because there have been a lot of ministers who have gone off down the road with false doctrines and so forth. Likewise, there are a lot of brethren who not only follow them, but have their false doctrines and everything else, too.

What it really amounts to is what God is warning about here concerning:

- the people of the land
- the nations that they were going to inherit
- the things that they were observing for their gods

Exodus 34:12: "Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the people of the land where you go, lest it be for a snare in the midst of you." This is exactly what has happened in the

Churches of God. It has become a snare!

Granted, we're not going in to possess the land. Yet, we're going to possess the land when Christ returns, and we're going to do exactly the commands that are here when Christ returns and we are told what our jobs are and how we're going to carry it out. But today, *spiritually*, we need to apply it this way:

1. when we takeover rulership of the world in preparation for that:
2. we need to look into our lives to makes sure that we don't have any idols and any of the things of self

That we are not here trying to bring in different things and false interpretation and so forth.

Verse 13: "But their altars you shall destroy, their images *you shall* break, and their groves you shall cut down. for you shall worship no other god; for the LORD, Whose name is Jealous, *is* a jealous God" (vs 13-14).

How silly it is for people, as brought out by Isaiah, to take wood, stone, gold, silver—that God has created—and make an idol out of it and then bow down and worship it. As Isa. Says, take the rest that's leftover and makes a fire to heat himself and say that these gods are going to save us.

Likewise, we need to understand that Jesus said that He was *'the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no one comes to the Father except through Him!* It is very important that we take these verses and these Scriptures and apply them *physically* for what we will do when Christ returns, *spiritually* in our lives today so that we don't have any idols in our heart and false doctrines and myths that we are following, as we have seen so many people fall victim to.

Verse 15: "Lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice to their gods, and call you, and you eat of his sacrifice; and lest you take from their daughters for your sons, and their daughters go whoring after their gods and make your sons go whoring after their gods" (vs 15-16).

How do we do that in the Church of God today? *By looking out into the world and seeing how other people have created their own way of doing thing!* i.e. the Protestants, the Catholics, the Jews, and there are encroachments coming into the Church

of God all the time. People want something to scratch their itching ears, to satisfy them. But you see, the thing that really satisfies is:

- the Truth
- the righteousness
- the laws and commandments
- the love and grace

of God! Those are the things that really satisfy, so that we don't get ensnared into these things.

Verse 17: "You shall make no molten gods for yourselves." What have we talked about? *The first and the second commandments!*

Now He starts with the Feasts; so right in the middle of the first and second commandments we have God showing the equivalent strength of the Feast days.

Verse 18: "You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened *Bread*. You shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, in the time of the month Abib, for in the month Abib you came out from Egypt. All that opens the womb *is* Mine; all firstlings of male livestock, of oxen or sheep. But the firstling of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb. And if you do not redeem it, then you shall break its neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem. And none shall appear before Me empty" (vs 18-20).

Let's just apply this to the Church, too. We are the Church of the Firstborn; all of us are going to be part of the first resurrection, which then when we are born again are going to be firstborn.

Let's see something that we covered during Pentecost that's important for us to realize as we look at the requirements of God. When Christ returns and the resurrection takes place, that's when we will be born again. Here it talks about the whole Church, Jerusalem above, which is the mother of us all.

Isaiah 66:7: "Before she travailed, she gave birth; before her pain came, she delivered a man-Child [Jesus]... [notice how then goes over into the Church, because Jesus is the First of the firstborn, and we are the Church of the Firstborn]: ...Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such *things* like these? Shall the earth be made to bring forth *in* one day?... [Yes!] ...*Or* will a nation be born at once?...?" (vs 7-8)—yes, and we are that nation. We are a Holy nation, a royal priesthood. That's what we are!

"...For as soon as Zion travailed, she also gave birth to her children. Will I bring to the birth, and not cause to be born?" says the LORD.... [it's going to happen] ...'Shall I cause them to be born,

and shut the womb?' says your God.... [no] ...'Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all who love her. Rejoice for joy with her, all who mourn for her'" (vs 8-10).

Then it goes on to show how that blends into the reign of the saints and the Kingdom of God.

I want you to notice how, again, God shows how important that these days are, because He puts them on the same level and plane as the Ten Commandments.

The reason God does that is because in keeping the Ten Commandments and the Laws of God, as He shows us, that's the beginning of things. The Feasts and Holy Days then tell us what God is doing, and reveal the outline of the plan of how God is going to accomplish it. It is also how God teaches us, how the Father gives us understanding through Jesus Christ.

Exodus 34:21: "You shall work six days, but on the seventh day you shall rest. In plowing time and in harvest you shall rest. And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year's end" (vs 21-22). That's the ending of the harvest year.

Here's a promise that we need to claim both physically and spiritually as we keep the Feast, v 23: "Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel, for I will cast out the nations before you and enlarge your borders...." (vs 23-24).

That's exactly what's going to happen after we're resurrected and we come back to the earth with Christ to rule and reign. He's going to enlarge our borders and He's going to cast out the nations before us. They will either submit to Christ, or He's going to punish them. It's going to be very simple; it's not going to be as it is today.

"...Neither shall any man desire your land... [any of your possessions] ...when you shall go up to appear before the LORD your God three times in the year" (v 24). That's a promise.

So, we're all here and do one thing, don't worry about anything at home. God's going to take care of it. He'll put angels about your house, He'll watch over you and over what you have and do the things that are important, and bless you while you're keeping the Feast.

If you're in a situation that you can't get out and keep the Feast with other people, then also claim the promise, as you are keeping the Feast at home or maybe two, three or four of you there, or five or six or a dozen or so, because there are many, many

places where people are keeping the Feast of Tabernacles.

This is why every year we do the videos ahead of time. We ask God to bless them so it will be inspiring at the time, so that everyone who keeps the Feast—whether they're able to gather together or if because of age or physical limitations are not able to come—that all will be able to have a wonderful Feast and learn of the way of God!

Let's see the prophecies at the end, because I think the things that we have done down through time and what is happening right now is very important for us to understand. Really, the only way you can understand Matt. 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 is if you understand that there is modern communication.

Everyone wants to know when Christ is going to return. I'll tell you exactly when Christ is going to return: *I don't know! But God knows, so when it's time, it will be exactly as God has said!* That's why all the predictions of all men up to this time have been null and void, because there are many things yet in prophecy that have to be done.

Mark 13:1: "And as He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Master, see how splendid *the stones and buildings are!*'" That's quite a thing. People look to the physical things. God doesn't want us to look to the physical things. He wants us to look to the spiritual things. God is creating in us:

- spiritual character
- spiritual love
- spiritual strength

So that we can grow in grace and knowledge now, and we can prepare for the events that are ahead. As you and I know the things that we're going to read next are happening regularly, right on schedule and it's coming on down to the time of the end. We don't know how much time there will be.

Every time someone says that prophecy is speeding up, *no it's not, it's right on time!* Every time someone says that prophecy is slowing down, *no it's not, it's right on time!* The problem is our understanding of it. So, we need to keep reading these verses and looking at them, but as we read this let's understand that it's going to require mass communication like we have today to see all of these things unfolding.

Verse 2: "Then Jesus answered and said to him, 'Do you see these great buildings?...'" Of course, as they were going out, the stone going up from the floor of the Kidron Valley up to the level of where the temple was and then the wall and the high tower was 650-feet. So, it was a spectacular thing.

"...There shall not be left *a stone upon a stone* that shall not be thrown down.' And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives across from the temple... [and had a perfect view right down into the temple area from there] ...Peter and James and John and Andrew *came* privately *and* asked Him, 'Tell us, when shall these things be? And what *shall be* the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?' And Jesus *in* answering them began to say, '**Be on guard lest anyone deceive you**'" (vs 2-5).

We'll see how these things start out there. And of course, there are wars and rumors of wars all down through history to this time. But never have we had it where we know when it begins, in what place in the world that it is happened, and how these things are going. We can turn on our television sets and watch them.

Verse 7: "But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for it is necessary for *these things* to come to pass, but the end *is* not yet. For nation shall rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be earthquakes in different places, and there shall be famines and disasters. These things *are* the beginning of sorrows" (vs 7-8).

This is exactly what we are seeing. Right now, today, everyone of these things are happening: in the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia. There are earthquakes, and there are going to be more.

Verse 9: "But keep yourselves on guard..." Don't let your guard down, because here's one of the things that's going to happen. It happened then, and it's happened down through history, and it's going to happen again in our day.

"...for they shall deliver you up to councils and synagogues. You shall be beaten, and you shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a witness against them. And the Gospel must first be published among all nations. But whenever they lead you away *and* deliver *you* up, do not be anxious beforehand nor meditate *on what you should say*; but whatever shall be given to you in that hour, that speak..." (vs 9-11).

There's going to come a time when that's going to happen. Now is the time that we are preparing and being ready, by keeping our guard up.

"...For you are not the ones who are speaking, but the Holy Spirit. Then shall brother betray brother to death, and *the father the child*. And children shall rise up against *their* parents and shall put them to death. And you shall be hated by all *men* for My name's sake; but the **one who endures to the end, that one shall be saved**" (vs 11-13).

Let's talk about enduring to the end. Enduring to the end comes three ways; enduring to the end of your life, or enduring to the end when Christ returns.

I. **Be faithful unto death:**

God promises that you will be in *your place of safety!*

Isaiah 57:1: "The righteous perish, and no one lays *it* to heart..." In other words, the world doesn't understand, but we understand. We are seeing and are going to see many more of the long-time members in the Churches of God reach this place. God says, ***'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. The righteous has hope in his death'!*** *Because they have endured to the end!*

So, the first way you endure to the end is that you *die in the faith!* Because of that, God is going to protect you, preserve you and you're going to await the resurrection. In that, that's great hope! All who die in the faith and have died in the faith have it made. As Paul said, 'I have run the race and finished the course, and now there's a crown of life laid up for me. Not only for me, but also those who love His appearing.'

That's going to happen. We already touched on that in Isa. 66 with the resurrection and being born again when Christ returns.

"...and merciful men *are* taken away; none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace... [his final rest with God] ...they shall rest in their beds... [the bed of death] ...each one who walked in his uprightness" (vs 1-2). Then everything is set at that point.

II. **Those who go to a place of safety:**

Revelation 12: "Therefore, rejoice you heavens and those who dwell in Them. Woe to those who inhabit the earth and the sea! For the Devil has come down to you, having great wrath *because* he knows that he has *only* a short time.' And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the man-*Child*. And two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly to her place in the wilderness, where she is nourished *for* a time, and times, and half a time, from *the* face of the serpent" (v s 12-14).

Note Luke 17—It's going to be the angels who take people to a place of safety. God is the One Who is going to make that decision. So, the second way that you endure to the end is go to a place of safety and you will remain there alive until Christ

returns, and when the Feast of Pentecost comes, and the seventh trump is blown, you will be changed from flesh to spirit, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

III. **The Martyrs:**

Verse 9: "And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, who is deceiving the whole world..." And is he doing it today!

The ones he wants to come after are those in the Church of God. That's why Jesus said to 'be on guard that no man deceive you,' because the master deceiver Satan the devil is behind all the deceptions of men! The greatest deception is if it is one that looks right.

"...he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him. And I heard a great voice in heaven say, 'Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, who accuses them day and night before our God. **But they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb, and through the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death**'" (vs 9-11)—those are the martyrs. Let's talk about the martyrs:

- Why does God have them?
- What would God cause righteous people to be martyred?
 1. for a witness
 2. because they've already made a covenant of death in baptism so that physical lives are already dead and buried in Christ
 3. so that they will be able to complete their lives and endure to the end

That is going to be toughest proposition of all. No one likes to face a martyrdom. We read of it and we talk about it, but we never think it's going to happen to us. But sooner or later it's going to happen to us, and we still need to be faithful to the end. Let's see again where God gives the promise that:

- Christ will be there
- the Father will be there
- the Holy Spirit will inspire us

This is why we need to learn and understand the things that we need to learn and understand to have the Word of God written in our mind and heart, and to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being. God is going to give us eternal life and the rulership of this world! He's not going to give it people who are not going to

- love God
- do what is right
- teach what is right
- know how to rule

This is all a part of God’s plan!

Matthew 10:16: “Behold, I am sending you forth as sheep in *the* midst of wolves....” That’s more true today than back then. There are more wolves out there than you could ever begin to count.

“...Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves” (v 16). God wants us

- to be wise
- to be educated
- to know His Word

That’s what it’s all about with the Sabbath and the Holy Days, so that we are *preparing and growing*, so that we have *knowledge and understanding*. ***Never be satisfied with the knowledge and understanding that you have!*** Always be growing in grace and in knowledge.

Here’s what’s going to happen, v 17: “But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and you shall also be brought before governors and kings for My sake...” (vs 17-18).

We will be brought there as enemies of the state! Enemies of the new world order, which is coming instituted by men! They don’t realize that we are the pioneers for the ***true coming new world order through Christ!*** This is why we are to watch and see the things that go on, so that we know why we need to do things God’s way, how we need to do things God’s way. All of those things are important for us to realize and understand in our education in qualifying to be kings and priests and rule with Christ a thousand years.

“...for a witness to them and to the Gentiles. Now, when they deliver you up, do not be anxious *about* how or what you should speak; for in that hour it shall be given to you what you shall speak” (vs 18-19).

So, through the power of the Holy Spirit, God is going to accomplish it. If you have it in your mind and heart you’ll know exactly what to say. God will inspire it! We’ll see what they will do to you.

Verse 20: “For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you. Then brother will deliver up brother to death...” (vs 20-21)—and they will persecute you.

Was Jesus martyred? *Yes!* Verse 24: “A

disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is sufficient for the disciple that he become as his teacher, and the servant as his master....” (vs 24-25). This is what God is trying to do

- with His Word
- with His Spirit
- with His Truth
- with the Sabbath
- with the Holy Days
- with educating you to be kings and priests to rule with Him in the Kingdom of God

“...If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* those of his household? Therefore, do not fear them because there is nothing covered that shall not be uncovered, and *nothing* hidden that shall not be known. What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but do not have power to destroy the life; rather, fear Him Who has the power to destroy both life and body in Gehenna” (vs 25-28).

So, we need to prepare ourselves. Just like soldiers preparing for battle. They have to

- prepare themselves for live fire
- prepare themselves to understand about the enemy
- prepare themselves to be victorious in the battle

That’s what we are doing!

You know about Stephen, and what a witness that he gave! As you read it, it’s very evident that he understood the Word of God. He had it in his heart, he had it in his mind, he recited the whole history of the beginning with Abraham on down through Moses, through what the children of Israel did, and about David who was a king after God’s heart, how he found grace and so forth.

We understand that it is the *spiritual* that we are interested in. The physical things do not count, though we need physical things to live and exist. We are not to idolize them and set them up in our heart!

So, this what Stephen is saying, Acts 7:47: “But Solomon built Him a house....” Stephen was speaking to the Sanhedrin. These were the ones who loved the temple, who coveted the temple and the power, who wanted all of these things and would not recognize Christ, would not recognize what the Church was doing. This is actually God’s final warning to the Jews, and when they failed to heed this warning. It is was set in absolute certainty that Jerusalem and the temple system would be

completely obliterated, removed from the face of the earth.

Verse 49: “The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* a footstool for My feet. What house will you build for Me, says *the* Lord, or what *is the* place of My rest? Have not My hands made all these things?” (vs 49-50).

What Stephen is telling them is that they need to do the will of God, rather than their own will, and force God to accept their way. That’s the whole lesson of life going clear back to Adam and Eve, all the way down to our age, and in through to the Millennium that this is what men have to learn.

Notice what he said, he didn’t mince any words, v 51: “O stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so also *do* you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, of Whom you have become the betrayers and murderers; who received the law by *the* disposition of angels, but have not kept *it*” (vs 51-53).

That’s quite a witness! This is a model of what we’re going to have to do, what we’re going to have to say when we are called forward, the third category of us who are destined to be martyrs! We have a witness to say, and it’s right from God. He wants us:

- to be trained
- to be qualified
- to be yielded
- to have the Spirit of God
- to let the Spirit of God inspire us to say and to bring the witness that He wants us to bring

We are witnessing that the coming Kingdom of God is coming, and all these authorities and religious leaders, government leaders, business leaders, corporate executives and great high ‘mucky-mucks’ of this world are coming down to nothing! We are going to witness against them that are of the synagogue of Satan. We are going to tell them that their new world order is not going to succeed, and that the *true new world order of God is coming!* Just exactly like Stephen did here.

Verse 54: “And when they heard these things, they were cut to their hearts, and they gnashed their teeth at him.” They just sat there and their faces were blowing red, the veins were standing out on their faces as they gnashed their teeth and listened to him. I imagine that their faces got redder and blacker and blacker as they hated what Stephen was saying to them.

Verse 55: “But he, being filled with *the* Holy Spirit, looked intently into heaven *and* saw *the* glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, ‘Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right *hand* of God.’ Then they cried out with a loud voice, *and* stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord, and cast *him* out of the city *and* stoned *him....*” (vs 55-58).

It shows in Rev. 20 that we’re going to be beheaded! That’s what it says!

“...And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man called Saul. And they stoned Stephen, who called upon *God*, saying, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’.... [he endured to the end] ...And he fell to his knees *and* cried with a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not lay this sin to their charge.’ And after he had said this, he died” (vs 58-60).

Now, let’s understand something important. Let’s see where our loyalties must always lie:

- in faith
- in hope
- in love

This is how it is going to be.

Philippians 3:20: “But for us, the **commonwealth** of God exists in *the* heavens...” That’s where our loyalties lie. As a matter of fact, the Greek word here is ‘politeuma’ which is *our politics*. That’s why we don’t get involved in the politics of this world. That’s why we are not involved in saving the world now. We are preparing to truly save the world when Christ comes with the power and authority of the Father, and grants us the power and authority to do it.

“...from where also we are waiting for *the* Savior, *the* Lord Jesus Christ, Who will transform our vile bodies, that they may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the inner working of His own power, *whereby He is able* to subdue all things to Himself” (vs 20-21).

Now then, we know that Rev. 20 says that ‘thrones were set and judgment was given to them.’ Likewise it says it in Dan. 7. So, in order to receive that judgment we have to be taught; we have to learn. So, this Feast of Tabernacles, that’s exactly what we are going to do:

- we are going to cover the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles
- we are going to cover the special lessons of John 7-9
- we’re also going to cover *Judge Righteous Judgment*

{note booklet and sermon series: *Judge Righteous Judgment*}

We need to not only learn how to do it in our lives now, but this is going to train us and give us the understanding so that when we sit down with Jesus in His throne to judge, we will know how to judge! We will be trained!

Look at it this way: every Sabbath, every Holy Day, every Feast that we have, look at it as training. Every time you study the Bible it trains you. You're being taught of God! Every time you pray, you are asking for the heart and mind and spirit of God to understand to let God work through you, to let God do the things for you that He alone can do.

The way to make all of this happen in the way that God wants it to be; this is what we need to do in order to get it done in the way that God wants it done: Have our mind:

- fixed on God the Father and Jesus Christ
- fixed on what God has called us to do

let nothing deter us

- no distraction
- no deception
- no man
- no woman
- no government
- no religious leader

turn our head to the side

Mark 12:28: “**And one of the scribes who had come up to Him**, after hearing them reasoning together *and* perceiving that **He answered them well, asked Him, ‘Which is the first commandment of all?’** Then Jesus answered him, ‘*The first of all the commandments is, ‘Hear, O Israel. Our one God is the Lord, the Lord. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’* This *is the first commandment*” (vs 28-30)—the primary commandment.

This is the great overarching commandment that keeps us in contact with God and a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, and gives us the spirit to do and accomplish what He wants done.

Verse 31: “*And the second is like this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’* There is no other commandment greater than these.”

We also have another commandment from Jesus Christ, which fits in with the Feast of Tabernacles: ***Love one another as I have loved you!***

So, not only use this Feast to learn, but use this Feast to love the brethren, love each other, to

draw close to God and share things together. Those brethren that you have never met, *meet them, fellowship with them*. Don't always go with just the ones you always know, because they're also going to be in the Kingdom of God.

- those that need help, *help them out*
- those who are poor, *assist them*
- those who are widowed/widower and left alone, *take special care of them*

Help them to have a wonderful Feast.

Let this be a wonderful, great and joyous Feast where you can learn of God's way, participate in the training to qualify for the Kingdom of God and learn how to be rulers as kings and priests with Christ.

Since some don't want to be kings or priests, please understand that there are going to be plenty of other jobs, so you don't have worry. God is going to take very good care of every one of us.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Exodus 34:12-20
- 2) Isaiah 66:7-10
- 3) Exodus 34:21-24
- 4) Mark 13:1-5, 7-13
- 5) Isaiah 57:1-2
- 6) Revelation 12:12-14, 9-11
- 7) Matthew 10:16-21, 24-28
- 8) Acts 7:47, 49-60
- 9) Philippians 3:20-21
- 10) Mark 12:28-31

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 24
- Luke 21:17
- Revelation 20
- Daniel 7

Also referenced: Booklet and Sermon Series:
Judge Righteous Judgment

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