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Bible
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE



FEAST OF TABERNACLES
Pictures the World Tomorrow

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Lesson 30

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About Our Cover . . .

The silver sculpture on our cover portrays the scene described in Isaiah 11:6-9, and is symbolic of the soon-coming world tomorrow. This utopian world—a time of peace that will extend even to the animal world—is pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles, the sixth of God's seven annual festivals. Tens of thousands of God's people and their families enthusiastically look forward each year to observing this festival at dozens of sites around the world. Let's learn about the Feast of Tabernacles and the millennial age under the rule of Jesus Christ that it portrays!

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FEAST OF TABERNACLES

When the Whole World Will Be Called

Only after Christ returns to earth and deposes Satan will the great spiritual harvest of humans begin.

GOD is not in competition with Satan! He is not trying to save the whole world now!

Long ago Jesus Christ announced that His message, the good news of the Kingdom of God, would be preached in this age merely as a *witness* to all nations—not to convert them (Matt. 24:14).

When God sets His hand to save the world, He will save it!

When the World Will Be Saved

God's seven annual festivals picture the steps in God's Master Plan of salvation for all mankind.

The first three festivals, which occur during the spring in the Northern Hemisphere, picture great events leading to the first spiritual harvest of

Spirit-begotten human beings into God's Family.

From previous lessons we learned that the Passover is a memorial of Christ's sacrifice for our sins. The Feast of Unleavened Bread pictures our putting sin away and our constant need to obey God. Pentecost pictures the spiritual begetting and the maturing of the firstfruits of God's plan.

Then, during the fall in the Northern Hemisphere, come the last four festivals. They portray tremendous events yet to occur in God's plan. The Feast of Trumpets, the first of these four, pictures the return of Jesus Christ to raise the firstfruits to immortality and to set up God's government on earth. The Day of Atonement pictures the deposing, removal and binding of Satan for 1,000 years. With Satan's sinful influence gone, mankind can then be reconciled—made *at one*—with God.



Then 1,000 years of peace and prosperity will follow. Those who are the firstfruits of God's spiritual harvest—*first born* into God's Family and co-inheritors with Jesus Christ—will join Him in ruling the earth. The Spirit-born saints will be given the opportunity of bringing the spiritual knowledge of salvation to every human then alive and to those born during the Millennium.

This happy Millennium is pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles—the sixth of God's seven annual festivals picturing His plan of salvation.

Early Theologians Acknowledged the Millennium

The New Testament Church taught the meaning and observance of God's festivals and Holy Days throughout the Roman Empire. Even many in the early Christianity that fell away from the truth retained for some time the doctrine of the Millennium—the 1,000-year rule of Christ and the Spirit-born saints (Rev. 20:1-6). The fact of the Millennium was commented on for *hundreds of years*—long after the death of the apostles.

Notice the testimony from the writings of theologians of the second and third centuries:

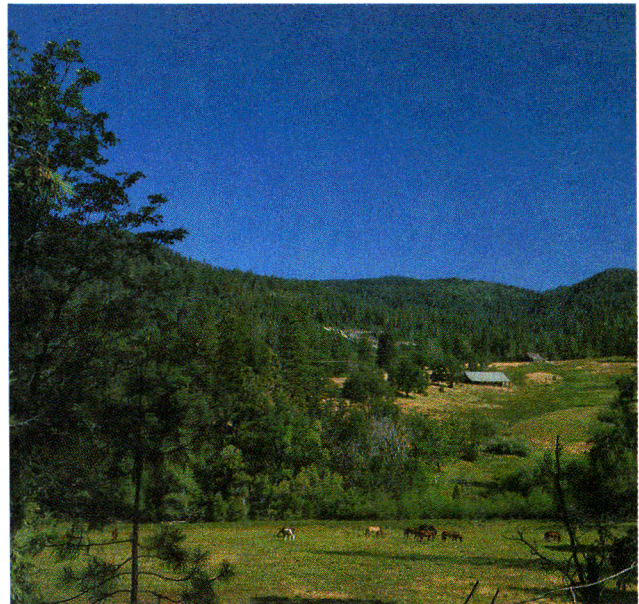
In the second century, Papias of Hierapolis (in Asia Minor) is quoted as having said: "There would be a certain millennium after the resurrection, and that there would be a corporeal reign of

Christ on this very earth" (*Ecclesiastical History*, Eusebius, translated by Isaac Boyle, book 3, chapter 39).

Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, France, wrote in the latter half of the second century: "For in as many days as this world was made, in so many thousand years it reaches its consummation."

Then, after quoting several Old Testament passages referring to the Millennium, he continues: "All such things refer not to heavenly matters, but to the times of the kingdom, when the earth has been restored by Christ" (*Against the Heresies*, translated by F. R. Montgomery Hitchcock, book 5, chapters 28, 35).

The early third century produced the same testimony. From Carthage, North Africa, Tertullian



Left: Warren Watson—AC, right: Nathan Faulkner—AC

FAMILY TOGETHERNESS—The Feast of Tabernacles is a time of rejoicing for the entire family. It is a foretaste of the coming utopia that will transform the earth.

acknowledged the possibility of a promised Millennium on the earth (*Against Marcion*, book 3, chapter 25). Later writers, too, could be cited.

Truth Later Rejected

In the fourth century the book of Revelation was removed from the general reading list of the established Christian church. Why? Because it plainly referred to the Millennium. "Thus the troublesome foundation on which *chiliasm* [a Greek word for the doctrine of the Millennium] might have continued to build was got rid of" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition, article "Millennium").

Writing about this period of time, Edward Gibbon, in his book *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, states: "The doctrine of Christ's reign upon earth was . . . considered by degrees as a doubtful and useless opinion, and was at length rejected [by false Christianity] as the absurd invention of heresy and fanaticism" (chapter 15).

During and after the reign of Emperor Constantine, who ruled from A.D. 306-337, leaders in the established Christian church began to look upon the Roman Empire as the Kingdom of God. They

began to view the millennial rule of Jesus Christ as having already begun!

Some professing Christian leaders of the 20th century have even gone so far as to claim that the doctrine of the millennial rule of Christ is not to be found in either the New Testament gospels or epistles, or even in the traditions of the apostles (*The Question Box*, William N. Emch, p. 380).

But, now, let's turn to the Bible, the source of truth, and learn what it reveals about the Millennium, as pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles.

LESSON 30

God's Harvest—the Feast of Ingathering

God's annual festivals, as we learned in previous lessons, began to be made known to the congregation of ancient Israel—God's Church in the wilderness (Acts 7:38)—when the nation was first formed in Egypt.

Let's notice God's instructions regarding the observance of the sixth annual festival and how it pictures the coming Millennium, when the whole world will be converted and given an opportunity for salvation.

1. Does the Feast of Tabernacles begin five days after the Day of Atonement? Lev. 23:33-34; Deut. 16:13-15.

2. Does the Feast begin with a Holy Day on which all ordinary work is forbidden, and on which people are to gather before God? Lev. 23:35. Did God command that this annual festival be kept forever? Verse 41.

COMMENT: The Feast of Tabernacles was also called the Feast of Ingathering (Ex. 23:16; 34:22) because it celebrated the late summer-early autumn harvest (Lev. 23:39).

This harvest festival was to be a time of great rejoicing and thanksgiving for God's abundant blessings. Today, God's Church makes known to the world that it pictures the future ingathering of the great harvest of Spirit-begotten human beings into God's Family during the 1,000-year period known as the Millennium.

3. Does the annual Feast of Tabernacles last for more than one day? Lev. 23:34; Deut. 16:15.

COMMENT: As we learned in previous lessons, God used the two yearly harvest seasons in the Northern Hemisphere to picture the future spiritual harvests of mankind into His divine Family.

The spring grain harvest is small compared to the great fall harvest. The first harvest is represented by a single day—the Festival of Pentecost. It pictures the spiritual firstfruits, the relatively small number of people whom God has called into His Church before Christ's return, when they will be born into God's Family.

But the Feast of Tabernacles lasts a full seven days. This shows that God's great second harvest of mankind will take a long period of time to be reaped. People will be born physically, called of God and, after fulfilling their life's purpose of growing in God's character, born spiritually into His Family all during the 1,000 years.

4. Who would decide where the Feast of Tabernacles was to be observed? Deut. 16:16.

COMMENT: Only God, working through His chosen servants, chooses the place (or places—Ex. 20:24) where the Feast is to be observed, and only He changes the location—as circumstances warrant.

In ancient Israel, God chose where His people were to keep the Feast. Today, God works through the government He has placed in His Church. God leads those in charge to select appropriate Feast sites around the world to accommodate the members of His Church worldwide. Tens of thousands of God's people and their families travel to these sites to observe this great Feast.

Ancient Israel Failed to Keep the Feast

Even though God revealed His festivals to the children of Israel and commanded that these festivals be kept forever, the people soon rebelled. Many finally refused to keep the Feast of Tabernacles on the days God ordained, eventually failing to keep it altogether. Let's learn what happened, and

what the results of their disobedience were.

1. Where was the place that God originally set His name—designating it as the place the Feast of Tabernacles was to be kept? Josh. 18:1. Were some of the children of Israel obedient at that time in keeping the Feast? Judg. 21:19. And in rejoicing? Verse 21.

2. Did the parents of Samuel, who became one of God's greatest prophets, keep this Feast every year? I Sam. 1:3, 21; 2:19.

COMMENT: The yearly sacrifice mentioned in these verses refers to the Feast of Tabernacles.

3. Did God later change the location for the Feast of Tabernacles and, in the early years of King Solomon, have a temple built there? I Kings 8:1-2, 10-11. Did Solomon call the people early to the Feast to spend a week in dedicating the newly finished Temple? Verse 65.

COMMENT: The Israelites observed the Feast of Tabernacles in the days of Solomon. But even then, the nation did not fully observe it in the way or manner God commanded (see Nehemiah 8:17).

4. What did wicked King Jeroboam do after he and the northern 10 tribes rebelled against Rehoboam, Solomon's son? I Kings 12:32-33.

COMMENT: Jeroboam assumed that where and when God's Holy Days were kept didn't really make any difference to God. His action was normal for a carnal-minded person who knows little about who or what God really is. Jeroboam's concept of how to worship God was merely his own human idea (verse 33).

Be sure to read the whole passage from I Kings 12:26 to the end of chapter 13. The 13th chapter reveals how God mercifully gave Jeroboam further admonition—backed up by miracles (verses 3-4, 6)—and a further opportunity to repent.

But Jeroboam did not repent of changing the

Because of their continued disobedience—chiefly their utter disregard of God's weekly and annual Sabbaths—the Israelites . . . were transported into slavery.

date the fall festivals were to be observed (verse 33), and as a result he suffered a terrible penalty (verse 34).

5. Why did God finally allow the people of Israel and Judah to be militarily defeated and then deported to foreign lands? Ezek. 20:13, 16, 19-21, 24, 34.

COMMENT: Notice that in these verses the word "sabbaths" is plural, meaning the annual Sabbaths as well as the weekly Sabbath. The Bible usually speaks of the weekly Sabbath in the singular.

Because of their continued disobedience—chiefly their utter disregard of God's weekly and annual Sabbaths—the Israelites, and later the Jews, were transported into slavery.

6. Had the small remnant of Jews who returned from Babylon under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah learned that God is the Lord? Neh. 8:1.

COMMENT: After 70 years of subservience to Babylon, God had become real to those few Jews, as well as to those who remained in the lands of their captivity. They now knew He was *really* God.

7. Did they immediately begin to keep God's Holy Days, including the Feast of Tabernacles? Verses 2, 14, 17-18. And did they immediately set about learning God's laws that, if kept, lead to peace, happiness and prosperity? Compare Nehemiah 8:18 with Deuteronomy 31:10-11.

8. Did the remnant of Jews find the Feast of Tabernacles a time of "very great gladness"? Neh. 8:17-18.

COMMENT: The Holy Days now held vivid meaning for the few thousand Jews who returned from captivity. Their eyes were open—symbolic of what will occur to humanity after the Second Coming of Christ.

Jesus Kept the Feast

1. During Jesus Christ's human life, were the descendants of the Jews who returned still keeping the Feast of Tabernacles? John 7:2.

COMMENT: The Apostle John called the celebration the "Jews' feast" because he wrote primarily for the Gentiles. Before conversion, the Gentiles saw the feasts only as a part of the "different" religion of the Jews. The nation Israel had lost the knowledge of God's Holy Days, but Judah had preserved the Old Testament Scriptures and the festivals of God and God's calendar.

2. What unmistakable command did Jesus give His brothers and sisters? Verse 8.

3. Did Jesus, Himself, keep the Feast? Verse 10. Did everyone know that Jesus always kept God's feasts and therefore naturally expected Him to be in Jerusalem to observe the Feast of Tabernacles? Verse 11.

COMMENT: Note that Jesus' purpose in going to Jerusalem was not merely to preach to and instruct people. He had numerous opportunities to address the multitudes who followed Him continually.

4. Did Jesus have every reason not to go up to Jerusalem? Verses 1 and 10.

COMMENT: Jesus had been present at the Feast from the first day, although He did not stand up to teach until near the middle of the seven days (verse 14). He had arrived secretly and remained out of the limelight because certain of the religious leaders were seeking—out of jealousy—to kill Him.

5. Was Jesus merely following an Old Testament practice or was He setting a New Testament example? Matt. 28:19-20; I Pet. 2:21; I John 2:4-6.

COMMENT: With such dangerous circumstances, if ever there was an excuse not to attend one of God's feasts, surely this was one. But Jesus was there—boldly setting us an example that we should do likewise.

Jesus condemned the errors in the “tradition of the elders” (Matt. 15:2-3, 6, 9). He always made it clear that God's laws were still binding, and went on to magnify them. Notice His words in Matthew 5:21-22: “Ye have heard . . . but I say.” Christ kept every one of God's commandments, including all of God's Holy Days.

All Nations to Keep the Feast in the Millennium

1. In the Millennium, will Israelite tribes in addition to Judah keep the Feast of Tabernacles? Hos. 12:8-9. Will all Gentile nations join them in keeping the Feast? Zech. 14:9, 16.

COMMENT: After returning to earth in power and glory, Christ will start immediately to reeducate the people of the world through His annual festivals. The world will come to know that Christ is the Lord, and that God's Master Plan pictures the way to physical blessings and spiritual salvation.

3. What will happen to those nations that at first refuse to keep the Feast of Tabernacles and thus refuse to be reeducated to God's way, in their ignorance refusing salvation? Verse 17.

COMMENT: Christ will at first have to rule with “a rod of iron” (Rev. 12:5), symbolizing absolute authority, until the nations are convinced that their fathers' ways—their “old-time religions”—do not lead to salvation.

4. What will happen if nations still refuse to obey? Verses 18-19.

COMMENT: Those with this attitude, who stubbornly refuse to obey, will suffer from drought. If they still do not change their attitudes, plagues will afflict them until they submit to God. There are some who think God doesn't mean *they* should keep His feasts today. They say: “Well, I'll keep the days God made holy when I have to, *but I*

won't keep them now.” God allows them to refuse. But only those who obey Him now will be protected through the time of trouble just ahead.

Time of Great Physical and Spiritual Rejoicing

1. What is the divinely set theme for the annual observance of the Feast of Tabernacles? Deut. 16:14-15. (Notice the words *surely rejoice* in verse 15. Other translations, such as the *Revised Stan-*

The Feast of Tabernacles is a time of great rejoicing. . . . It pictures . . . the prosperity, happiness, joy and universal peace that will exist worldwide.

dard Version, render this “be altogether joyful.”)

2. Does God intend for everyone—regardless of age, social class or economic level—to rejoice during the Feast? Read verse 14 again. Does God intend for a husband to take his wife and children with him to rejoice together at the Feast? Deut. 16:14; 12:5, 7, 12.

3. Does God say that good food should be eaten to increase one's joy and happiness during the Feast? Deut. 14:26.

COMMENT: The Feast of Tabernacles is a time of great rejoicing. For ancient Israel, it was a time of rejoicing because the abundant winter's food supply was taken in just before the Feast.

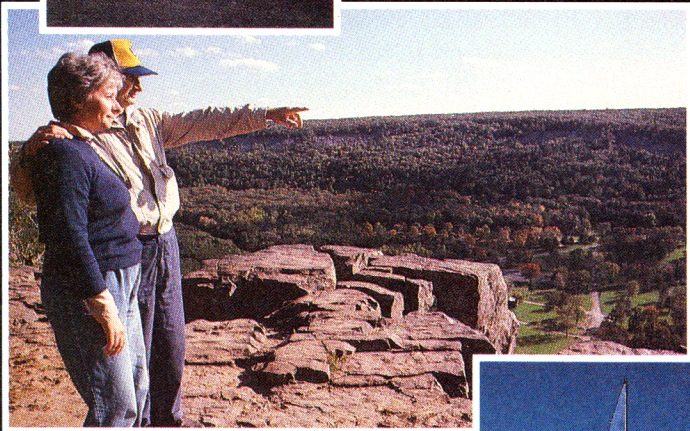
But the Feast has far greater significance for God's Church today. It pictures—is a foretaste of—the prosperity, happiness, joy and universal peace that will exist worldwide under the righteous rule of Jesus Christ. Universal adherence to God's laws and revealed way of life will make the world tomorrow a supremely happy place—a utopia!

4. Does God command His people to save a second tithe (10th) of their income throughout the year to be spent in traveling to and attending the Feast? Deut. 14:22-26.

COMMENT: The Feast of Tabernacles gives God's people the opportunity to live joyfully for one week—to live above what they would normally be able to afford—that they may experience a foretaste of the wealth the whole world will enjoy.

5. When the Holy Spirit is poured out freely during the Millennium, what will happen to the basic attitude or nature of humans? Ezek. 36:26-27; Isa. 11:9. Will there also be a change in the nature

The Feast of Around t



Spiritual instruction, family fun mark Feast. Top left: Acapulco, Mexico (photo by Charles Buschmann); right, St. Petersburg, Fla. (Sherly J. Togans Jr.). Center: Wisconsin Dells, Wisc. (David Malcomsin). Bottom left: Ocho Rios, Jamaica (Paul Kemp); right, Corpus Christi, Tex. (June Quinn).

Each year the members of God's Church observe the Feast of Tabernacles at dozens of sites all around the earth. It is the highlight of the entire year for them!

Tabernacles the World



A picture of God's coming Kingdom. Center, from top, Legaspi City, Philippines (Ric Perez), Anchorage, Alaska (Alan Preston), Naro Moru, Kenya (Tom Purnell). Photo of earth from space courtesy NASA.



God's festivals, still in force now, picture the steps in God's Master Plan; the Feast of Tabernacles points to Jesus Christ's glorious rule on earth in the coming Millennium.

God's people rejoice. Top, Rapid City, S.D. (Doug Johannsen). Second row left, Regina, Sask. (Richard Schempp); right, Norfolk, Va. (Roger Meyer). Above, Ulladulla, Australia (Brian Hose). Left, Goa, India (J.P. Moses).

of animals so that all creatures will be peaceful and harmless? Isa. 11:6-8; 65:25.

COMMENT: Once God places His Spirit within repentant mankind during the Millennium, people will begin to express outgoing love and concern for others and will obey God. This coming change in the very nature of humans is the chief reason why the Feast of Tabernacles previews this time with such great rejoicing!

What Christ's Government Will Be Like

The coming government of God will not be a democracy, or any other form of human government. In the world tomorrow Christ will rule supreme from world headquarters in Jerusalem (Rev. 19:16; Jer. 3:17). Ruling with and under Him will be the Spirit-born saints (Dan. 7:14, 27).

Christ will be over the saints. His position will be that of the Husband. The saints—then immortal children of God—will constitute the Bride of Christ. They will be in the position of a wife, subject to her Husband—Christ.

1. In the Millennium, how will Christ's supreme government be administered in all parts of the earth? Luke 19:17, 19.

COMMENT: Christ was showing through the parable of the pounds that those who develop their abilities will be rewarded with positions of rulership. There will be local administrative districts—some larger, some smaller—that will be administered by the Spirit-born children of God!

2. Does Luke 13:28 reveal the names of several faithful servants of God who will be given high positions under Christ in the Kingdom of God? Who will rule over the modern descendants of Jacob? Jer. 30:7-9; Ezek. 37:24-25.

COMMENT: The patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and

In the world tomorrow Christ will rule supreme from world headquarters in Jerusalem. . . . Ruling with and under Him will be the Spirit-born saints.

Jacob, and other men of God such as Joseph, Job, Moses and David, will be brought back to life, immortal, in glorified power, to occupy high executive positions in the new world government.

3. Will Christ have certain other chief assistants, each ruling over a major nation? Luke 22:29-30; Matt. 19:28.

4. How will the immortal spirit rulers serve the people? Rev. 1:6; 5:10; I Cor. 6:2.

COMMENT: To help curb the possibility of tyranny, many governments in the world today are divided into separate branches. For example, in the United States of America, the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government are separate. Then there is the teaching field, which, in democratic countries, is separate from (though in most cases overseen by) the government.

In God's coming Kingdom on earth, however, these four functions will be united. The Head of the God Family establishes the laws (the legislative function). The God Family will enforce the laws (the executive function). It will also interpret those laws and judge cases concerning them (the judicial function). And the God Family will be responsible for the educational function—it will faithfully teach the people God's law.

Each divine ruler will serve his subjects in genuine love and concern (I John 4:16), never acting selfishly (Matt. 20:26-27).

5. How much power will each ruler exercise, under Christ, in his own area? Rev. 2:26-27.

COMMENT: Absolute and definite authority will exist on the spot in all parts of the world. Yet all governmental policies will be based on the pattern laid down from world headquarters by Christ Himself, and each ruler under Christ will be responsible to Him. God's government will be perfectly organized, devoid of useless red tape and excess-baggage bureaucracies.

6. Will this divine government be permanent? Dan. 7:14, 18.

COMMENT: No time or money will be wasted on campaigning and elections. There will be no politicians to cater to special organized groups or classes. In the world tomorrow God will appoint His resurrected saints as the rulers and educators, and no lobbyists or other pressure groups will be able to corrupt them.

There will be no insurrections, no rebellions—God can't be overthrown. Satan's failed coup proved that! Nor will any member of the God Family ever turn into another adversary (I John 3:9). All members will have been proved in advance during their mortal lifetime.

7. Will the Spirit-born teachers in God's Family take a personal part in bringing about a full comprehension of God's law, and in directing people to take right action? Isa. 30:20-21.

COMMENT: The sudden appearance of the spirit rulers, or a voice, as if from nowhere, will cause potential lawbreakers to freeze in the act. With proper guidance from Christ and with Satan's sin-

ful influence restrained (Rev. 20:1-3), violence and crime will be stamped out.

8. How successful will the priest-teachers be in teaching the knowledge of God's way to the world? Jer. 31:34; Hab. 2:14; Isa. 11:9.

9. Will God do more than merely make knowledge available? Compare Isaiah 25:6-7 with Isaiah 29:10-12 and Romans 11:7-8. (Notice the words "spread over all nations" in Isaiah 25:7.)

COMMENT: "And in this mountain"—the government of God—He will make the Millennium one great feast of rejoicing. The Feast of Tabernacles is the antitype!

God will destroy the covering of spiritual blindness that has hidden the truth from all nations. No religious confusion will long exist because Satan will have been restrained. Humans will then be teachable—their minds will be opened to God's revealed truth.

People will begin to live God's way of love—the way of giving and outgoing concern for others—the way of the true values—the way of peace, of happiness, of well-being, of joy and, ultimately, spiritual salvation.

A World Free from Fear!

In the millennial world pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles, people will no longer have the influences of Satan and the false glitter of "this present evil world" to distract them from overcoming their human nature.

God's way will become the popular and broad way. It will be the way society will be going. People will want to follow God's way of life because of the happiness and joy they know it will bring.

Pressures in society that now urge people toward conformity with this present evil world will then be changed to working toward conformity with God's standard, toward overcoming human nature and building perfect, holy and righteous character.

1. When Christ has forcibly put down those who fill the earth with violence, will He abolish the fear of war? Isa. 2:4. Will He do so by exercising supreme authority to rebuke many nations? Same verse.

COMMENT: Imagine! Never again any destruction of the fruit of years of labor! No more waste of human life! No young men drafted from their homes, their lives upset, to have their minds warped with hate!

2. Will there be any reason to fear that Christ will be a tyrannical ruler? Ps. 72:1-4, 8, 12-14; Isa. 11:5. Will He make perfect decisions? Verses 2-3.



Randy Cole—AC

WORLD PEACE—Under the supreme authority of Jesus Christ, weapons of war will be abolished from the earth (Isa. 2:4).

Will the poor receive righteous judgment from Him? Verse 4.

3. Will there be any fear of wild animals? Hos. 2:18, first part; Isa. 11:6-8; Ezek. 34:25. What about wars—will the weapons of war be abolished from the earth? Hos. 2:18, last part.

COMMENT: There will be worldwide peace and people will convert their weapons of war into farming tools. The Millennium will be a time of peace that will extend even to the animal world.

4. In the secure, rejuvenated world tomorrow, will it be said to the fearful: "Be strong, fear not . . . God will . . . save you"? Isa. 35:4.

5. Will God liberate people from the fear of sickness and disease? Isa. 33:24; Jer. 30:17. Will the handicapped—both physically and mentally—be miraculously healed? Isa. 35:3-6.

COMMENT: Education about true health and the miraculous healing of all sickness and disease will mean radiant health for everyone in the world tomorrow!

6. Will there be fear of accidents in the Millennium? Notice the principle of personal responsibility in Exodus 21:29, 33-34 and 22:6.

COMMENT: When God's law goes forth from Zion (Isa. 2:3), the principle of personal responsibility will be taught worldwide. People will be concerned

about the welfare of others and will be their "brother's keeper"!

There will be few accidents. But if someone should occasionally be careless—and God sometimes does allow an accident to teach a lesson—the miraculous healing power of Christ will be ever available.

7. Will fear and worry exist in the cities of tomorrow? Or will they be filled with radiantly happy families? Jer. 33:10-11; Zech. 8:4-5.

COMMENT: People will no longer be afraid of their neighbors. They won't have to worry about living next door to someone who is mentally unbalanced, a pervert or a killer. The old won't have to fear being attacked and brutally beaten by some juvenile delinquent out looking for fun.

8. Will the fear of food shortages—a spectre that constantly haunts many areas of the world today—be gone? Ezek. 34:26; Isa. 30:23-24; Amos 9:13; Jer. 31:12. Will the old waste places be made fertile, and will beautiful forests spread in the Millennium? Isa. 41:14-20; 35:1-2, 6-7.

COMMENT: Most of the earth's land surface will become productive during the millennial age. Forests, agricultural areas and fish-filled lakes and streams will be found all over the world, with no more polluted rivers or ravaged landscapes.

9. Confusion of languages is one of the major barriers to cooperation between peoples. Will God give the whole world a pure language so all can serve Him with one accord? Zeph. 3:9.

COMMENT: In the Millennium, Christ will usher in an era of worldwide literacy and education through a pure language. People everywhere will speak, read and write that same language.

10. What about the lack of confidence that plagues so many? Will those who really "know the Lord" dwell with confidence? Ezek. 28:26.

COMMENT: Reeducation will take care of that.

People will no longer be afraid of their neighbors The fear of food shortages [will] be gone People everywhere will speak, read and write [the] same language.

People won't be taught self-confidence, but confidence in Christ dwelling in them through the Holy Spirit.

11. What kind of fear will remain? Isa. 59:19; Jer. 32:39-40.

COMMENT: This fear is not terror and misery,

but the mature, sound-minded realization that disobeying the laws God has set in motion for our good leads to nothing but wretchedness, filth and deprivation.

The Feast of Tabernacles was given that we might learn to fear God always (Deut. 14:23). People will fear to disobey God, a right kind of fear that most people do not have in today's world.

Israel to Be God's Model Nation

At His return, Christ will deliver the remnant of the descendants of ancient Israel, who will be made captive in the coming Great Tribulation. They will not be changed to immortality at Christ's return, but rather restored to the Promised Land as physical human beings.

David, who ruled as king over all the tribes of Israel during his mortal lifetime, will be resurrected to immortality. And as God promised, David will once again become Israel's king after God unites the modern-day descendants of ancient Israel.

1. Will the remnant of Israel that are alive at Christ's coming be eager to enter into a "perpetual covenant" with Him? Jer. 50:4-5. Will Christ's blood cleanse all Israel so that in living a converted, truly Christian life, this nation will reach the apex of joy and gladness and material prosperity? Jer. 33:7-9.

COMMENT: The return from captivity of a very few—mostly from Judah and Levi—did not fulfill the ultimate intent of this prophecy. They never attained great prosperity. Nor did they even approach the degree of wealth Israel possessed under David and Solomon. When this prophecy is fulfilled, "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:26)!

During the Millennium, God will bestow upon obedient Israel all of the great material blessings He promised to give their ancestors had they obeyed (Lev. 26; Deut. 28).

The British nations and the United States—the modern-day descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh—became the wealthiest and most powerful nations on earth in this end time (because of Abraham's obedience to God). But their recent status among nations is only a foretaste of even greater wealth and power (in God's service) to come once all of Israel is living in obedience to the government of God.

2. Abraham's offspring were prophesied to become extremely numerous (Gen. 13:16). Will Israel's population reach its zenith in the Millennium? Ezek. 36:10-11; Isa. 60:21-22. How does God describe this future explosive spread of Israelites

into every part of the globe? Isa. 27:6.

3. Will Israel inherit the *whole earth*? Isa. 54:2-4. Thus will all nations be blessed because of Abraham's "seed"? Gen. 28:14. But how? Isa. 61:9; 62:1-2, 7. Will the Gentiles therefore want to learn God's way and become obedient to Christ? Isa. 2:1-3.

COMMENT: Israel was intended to be a blessing to the rest of the world both materially and spiritually. The Gentiles, too, will be blessed as they follow Israel's outstanding example of obedience to God! And they will also be blessed spiritually by becoming Abraham's "seed"—spiritual Israelites—through Christ (Gal. 3:28-29), becoming Spirit-begotten and finally Spirit-born into the very Family of God.

In the Millennium, the 12 tribes of Israel will for the first time become God's *model nation*—the leaders all nations will want to follow!

The Marriage of the Lamb

Let's now notice some interesting parallels that can be drawn between the Feast of Tabernacles and the coming "marriage supper" of Jesus Christ and His Spirit-born Church.

1. Will the marriage of the Lamb occur after Jesus Christ's return? Rev. 19:6-7. Will it be an occasion of great rejoicing? Same verses.

COMMENT: Notice how Christ's marriage is a time for great rejoicing after the war, darkness and trouble that will occur before Christ's return, pictured by the Feast of Trumpets!

2. In biblical pattern, how long does a marriage feast last? Judg. 14:2, 10, 12. Does the Feast of Tabernacles span the same length of time? Lev. 23:34.

COMMENT: The seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles are like the seven days of the ancient marriage feast and are a type of the marriage of Christ and His Bride the Church.

3. Like a wife bound to obey her husband as long as he lives, will the Bride of Christ obey Him forever? I Cor. 7:39; Eph. 5:22-27, 32. Did Nehemiah read the law to the people every day of the Feast of Tabernacles? Compare Nehemiah 8:18 with Deuteronomy 31:10-11.

COMMENT: Those who in the Millennium will be added to the Bride of Christ must learn God's law in their life—and learn it well—so they can teach it to others in the world tomorrow.

4. Does Christ emphasize in the New Testament the necessity of an inner change, brought about by the Holy Spirit, to enable one to be ready for the marriage of the Lamb? Matt. 25:6-10.

5. Did ancient Israel, during the days of Moses, have the heart to fear and obey God? Deut. 5:29; 29:4. But when they receive the Holy Spirit, will it enable them to obey? Jer. 32:39-40.

COMMENT: The Sinaitic Covenant was a marriage agreement (Jer. 31:32). When Israel persistently broke the terms of the agreement—committed spiritual adultery—her sins divorced her from the One who later became Jesus Christ (Jer. 3:8, 14; 31:32; Isa. 59:2).

God's true Church is composed of spiritually

In the Millennium, the 12 tribes of Israel will for the first time become God's model nation—the leaders all nations will want to follow!

minded Israelites. A Gentile-born person can enter God's Church only by becoming a spiritual Israelite (Eph. 2:11-18; Rom. 4:16; 9:4-5; John 4:22).

Christ will not marry another. He will remarry Israel—an Israel that is immortal and spiritual, not carnal, as at Sinai. Note that the Bride is—before the marriage—called His "wife" (Rev. 19:7) in the sense that it is Israel again, only this time converted, righteous and spiritual.

Christ, the Lamb, is spirit. His wife must also become spirit, if it is to be a lasting congenial marriage. She will be a reborn, purified and cleansed Israel (II Cor. 11:2), who will have "made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7).

Spiritual Israel will be the rulers of the fleshly nation Israel. Israelites of the flesh who become qualified, as well as Gentiles, will be added to God's ruling Family throughout the Millennium as they are born again.

The entire 54th chapter of Isaiah describes spiritual Israel remarried to Christ, in contrast with the physical nation of Israel during the preceding 3,500 years. Notice especially the first six verses. The Church has been desolate—the truly converted few—until the making of the New Covenant, a marriage covenant. But fleshly Israel never multiplied as fast as the Church of converted Israel will multiply during the Millennium.

The God Family is preparing for the greater things still in the future. The Millennium is only the beginning of eternity—of happiness, accomplishment and joy that will last forever.

The Meaning of Booths

The Feast of Tabernacles, besides being called the Feast of Ingathering, is sometimes called the Feast of Booths. That is because during the seven days of the Feast, the ancient Israelites were to live in booths. Let's understand the significance of dwelling in booths and what it means for God's people today.

1. Were God's people to live in booths—that is, temporary dwellings—during the Feast of Tabernacles? Lev. 23:42. What is a booth? Verse 40.

COMMENT: A *booth* or *tabernacle* is a temporary dwelling. God commanded the ancient Israelites to live in temporary shelters made of tree branches while observing the Feast of Tabernacles. For God's people who attend the Feast today in many different climates, tents, campers, motel or hotel rooms are appointed as temporary dwellings.

2. Was this manner of keeping the Feast of Tabernacles to be a continual reminder of Israel's 40-year sojourn in the wilderness? Verses 42-43. Why? Was it because Israel lived in *temporary* dwellings during that time? Verse 43.

COMMENT: During their 40 years in the wilderness, the Israelites had no permanent dwellings. They were merely *heirs* to the land God had promised to give them—they were not yet *inheritors*.

3. Were Israel's years of wandering in Sinai meant to be only a temporary state of affairs? Deut. 8:2. Was it to last only until the rebellious generation was dead? Num. 14:29, 33-34.

COMMENT: The rebellious generation in the wilderness is a type of all carnal, rebellious people. And the temporary dwellings typify the fact that humans even in the 1,000 years will be mortal, and that human life and society throughout the Millennium will be only temporary. What is permanent is eternal life.

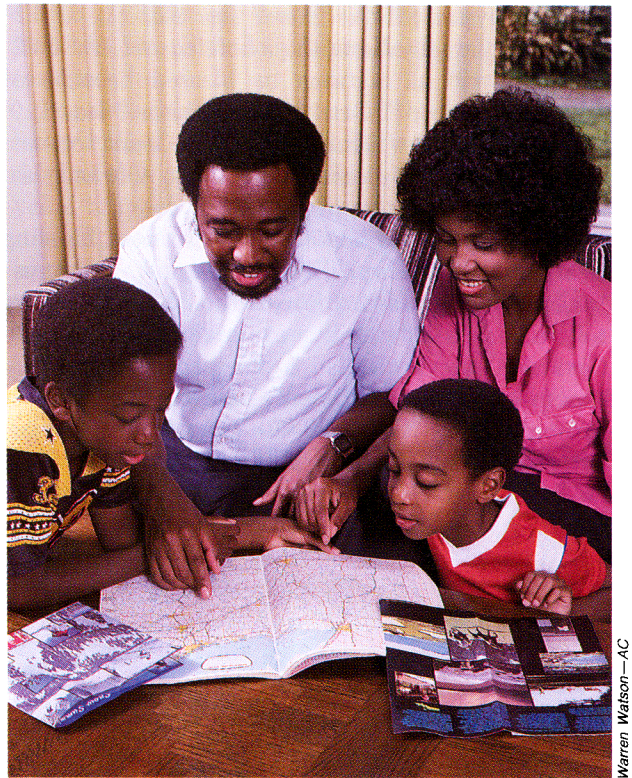
4. Did the Israelites' forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob also live in temporary dwellings as heirs, but not yet inheritors? Heb. 11:9, 13.

COMMENT: "Sojourn" is "a temporary stay." Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were strangers or aliens in the Promised Land, living in a temporary fashion all their days. They did not then receive the inheritance God had promised to give them.

Their dwelling in "tabernacles" (booths) pictured that they were yet only heirs—not yet inheritors—of eternal life in God's Kingdom and eternal possession of the land.

5. Are true Christians today "strangers and pilgrims" in this physical life? I Pet. 2:11.

COMMENT: Like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,



FEAST PLANNING—Making festival plans together with the whole family helps promote family unity.

God's Spirit-begotten children are *in* the wilderness of this world, but are not *of* it (John 17:11, 14). They are separate from the world (Rev. 18:4)—heirs, but not yet inheritors, of their permanent dwelling place, the promised Kingdom of God!

6. Did Peter, near the end of his life, compare his physical body to a temporary "tabernacle"? II Pet. 1:14.

COMMENT: As mortal beings, made of the dust of the ground, humans are destined to die. Only by receiving God's Spirit can a person hope to live forever.

But Spirit-begotten Christians have the hope of eternal life abiding in them (I John 5:11). Their physical bodies—with all their imperfections, their natural desires, their weaknesses, aches and pains—are meant to last only long enough for them to learn to serve God in this life.

By staying in temporary dwellings each year during the Feast of Tabernacles, God's people are reminded of this important knowledge. They understand that this physical life is only *temporary*—that they are merely pilgrims in this present life, waiting to inherit the Kingdom of God!

With all this in mind, let's now draw several further analogies, comparing Israel's 40 years of

wandering with the coming Millennium.

Just as ancient Israel, after escaping from Pharaoh—a type of Satan—was given in the wilderness a temporary period of comparative isolation from Satan’s influence, so will the whole world enter 1,000 years of rest from Satan’s rule. During that 40 years Israel was welded into a nation organized under God’s government. During the Millennium, the whole world will be similarly organized under God’s government.

Forty is the number of trial and test. (See in any Bible concordance how often God’s people were tested for 40 days or 40 years.) Israel in the wilderness was a type of all people who will go through trials and tests in overcoming their human nature, even during the Millennium.

7. How will God draw the 1,000-year period of testing to a close? Rev. 20:3, 7-9.

8. Will a condition of permanency finally be reached in the plan revealed in God’s Holy Days of the seventh month? I Kings 8:2.

COMMENT: *Ethanim* means “[the month of] permanent things.” Next month’s lesson will show how and when God’s plan leads to permanency—eternal inheritance instead of “sojourning.”

9. After Christ returns and establishes the rule of the Kingdom of God on earth, will God’s Kingdom and government continue to expand? Isa. 9:7. Also notice Matthew 13:33.

COMMENT: The government of God, like leaven in a lump of dough, will gradually spread throughout the whole earth in the Millennium. Eventually thousands of millions will be spiritually converted. The great harvest of humans, pictured by the autumn harvest in the Holy Land, will be gathered into the Kingdom of God—born again as divine members of the ruling Family of God during the Millennium.

By the end of the 1,000 years, the Family of God will be ready for the final step in God’s Master Plan of salvation.

How God’s People Keep the Feast Now

1. Will Jerusalem again be chosen as the center of worship in the Millennium? Zech. 2:12. Is Jerusalem not now the primary place for all people to keep the Feast of Tabernacles? John 4:21.

COMMENT: Jerusalem was rejected in the autumn of A.D. 66 and turned over to the Romans. God withdrew His name. But in the Millennium Jerusalem will again be the place where God’s people will keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

2. Does God intend for His people to be free from this world’s system and its ways? Rev. 18:4;

II Cor. 6:14-18. Also notice Exodus 10:7 and 15:1, last part.

COMMENT: God intends the Feast of Tabernacles to separate and free His people from the world and its evil influences. This great festival gives them a special time and setting, in which they are free from the routine cares of the world, to think more about God’s purpose for life and how to attain it.

Living in temporary dwellings for an entire week—away from their everyday surroundings, jobs and most negative influences—God’s people *picture* by their observance of these seven days the universal freedom and peace that will exist when Satan is gone and the Spirit of God is available to every human (Joel 2:28, 32).

3. Is the Feast of Tabernacles a time of rejoicing for the entire family? Deut. 12:5, 7, 12; 16:13-14.

COMMENT: Tens of thousands of God’s people and their families enthusiastically look forward annually to observing the Feast at dozens of sites around the world. It is the highlight of the entire year!

These are days of continuous, genuine Christian fellowship. Members and their families participate in various exciting, fun-filled Church-sponsored activities, as well as sight-seeing and other special attractions unique to each site. The sincere concern and fellowship, the spiritual nourishment and just plain good fun whets one’s appetite for the next year’s Feast, making the ordinary “vacations” of the past seem humdrum by comparison!

But just as the Feast of Tabernacles is a physical feast filled with rejoicing, it is also a *spiritual* feast of education and preparation. Members of God’s Church receive instruction from God’s ministers

God’s people at the Feast demonstrate now, by the way they live together in harmony . . . what the world will be like after Christ returns!

through inspiring sermons to help them further prepare to rule and teach with Christ during the Millennium.

God’s people at the Feast demonstrate now, by the way they live together in *harmony*, what this entire world could be like if everyone followed God’s laws!

If you have not already read it, our free book *The Wonderful World Tomorrow—What It Will Be Like* provides additional understanding. Why not write for it?

A Glimpse of Tomorrow's World



"The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."

ISAIAH 65:25

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

ISAIAH 35:1

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it."

ISAIAH 2:2

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

ISAIAH 2:3

"They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."

ISAIAH 65:22

"Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow."

JEREMIAH 31:13

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

ISAIAH 2:4

"For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

ZEPHANIAH 3:9

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

EZEKIEL 36:26

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

REVELATION 3:21

"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

DANIEL 7:27

"And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them."

EZEKIEL 34:27

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

ISAIAH 9:7

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."

ISAIAH 11:6

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

ISAIAH 11:9

"And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof."

ZECHARIAH 8:5

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped."

"Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert."

"And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes."

ISAIAH 35:5-7