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Between Two Feasts

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The three courts of Moses' tabernacle and the three main feasts of Israel's worship answer the question many are asking today: What time is it? & Where are we going from here?

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Most of us could testify that we experienced great joy when we were born again or, as we say, "got saved." It was a profoundly life-changing experience. The Lord was so near and dear to us. Then we settled into the everyday life of being a Christian according to the church traditions in which we found ourselves. As time passed and we felt more and more burdened down with church work, we began to sense, "There's gotta be more to being a Christian than this."

Some new believers were baptized in the Holy Spirit at the same time of their conversion, as should be the norm, but for many of us, the experience came later. Out of a thirst for more of Him we took that leap of faith and were filled with the Holy Spirit, even with the evidence of speaking in tongues. Once again, for so many of us, this "baptism" was a wonderful and fresh experience of the Lord Jesus. How could we have missed that for so many years? It almost felt like we had been "saved" again. We experienced the gifts and ministries of the Spirit that we read about in the Bible. The scriptures came alive in ways they had never before. We couldn't stop talking about Him and "the baptism" to others. We called it the full gospel on the conviction that until "the baptism" we had only known a partial gospel. Some people jokingly said we needed to be locked up for a few months until the new wore off. The sad truth is, in many ways, the new did wear off. We took all that was new and fresh and dynamic, and molded for ourselves new forms of "doing" church. We turned gems of revelatory truth into doctrinal formulas and camped around them -- faith, healing, deliverance, sonship, prosperity, headship and submission, home church, and many other teachings. Many of us left churches for other churches or went into home fellowships so we could be among others who had this experience and believed like we did.

Now, what at one time seemed like the full gospel is proving not to be so full after all. We deceived ourselves into thinking that our hype was His presence. The joy we felt then is waning and once again we find ourselves thirsting for more. Increasing numbers of us feel as though we are going through a transition. We cannot go back to where we have been; yet, we don't know where to go from here. We feel somewhat lost, bewildered, alone, and stuck "out there" somewhere. We don't fit in anywhere anymore. All of those past experiences in the Spirit were wonderful. No one can take those away from us, but we now find ourselves longing for more, to move on, to move upward, to go to a place in Christ we have never been before. The things of this world really are growing dimmer, and the light of His love and life beckon us onward. How do we understand where we have been and where we are going from here?

The beginning of the answer is this: We are in a time of transition. We are passing from one feast to another -- from Pentecost to Tabernacles. We are leaving Pentecost in pursuit of Tabernacles.

The feast of Pentecost speaks of that time from the first century until now, when all true believers should have experienced the new birth and the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Tabernacles speaks of a time yet to be fulfilled -- a time forward.

In order to have some understanding of that time forward, let us reach into a time past when God, whose name is Yahveh (Yahweh), gave instructions to Moses in the wilderness for Israel's worship, service, and behavior. The answer is there, embedded within the mystery of the three main courts of Moses' tabernacle in the wilderness as they correspond to three main feasts of Israel's worship.

An uninformed, cursory reading of these courts and feasts would cause one to ask, "What are they for?" They seem so arbitrary, but they are not! The eternal purposes of God, the Father, are mysteriously hidden within them. Father-God, through the inspiration of His Holy Spirit, is opening up this mystery to us, and more so in these latter days.

The Tabernacle and feasts are types and shadows in the natural realm -- symbols that were given then to picture something spiritual now. The scriptures themselves confirm this principle. "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." 1 Cor. 15:46. (Also read Rom. 5:14; 1 Cor. 10:11; Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 8:5, 10:1; and 11:19.)

An understanding of the tabernacle of Moses and these feasts will help us to understand the times that we are in and where we are going from here.

MOSES' TABERNACLE IN THE WILDERNESS

Yahveh commanded Moses to make a tabernacle for Him while he and the children of Israel were in the wilderness. Ex. 25-26. Moses' tabernacle was called, among other names, "the tabernacle of the congregation." The congregation was in reference to Israel. This was to be their tabernacle. They were to make it. They were to serve in it through the priesthood. They were to meet God there. Yahveh's overall purpose for the tabernacle was to meet and commune with His people. "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." Ex. 24:8.

PATTERNED ACCORDING TO YAHVEH'S INSTRUCTIONS

Yahveh gave specific instructions for building this tabernacle. Every detail had significance and represented something pertaining to both Jesus and to all true believers who are His temple.

He gave the pattern for the tabernacle to Moses, who in turn appointed, according to Yahveh's instruction, Bezaleel, Aholiab, and others to make it. Ex. 31:1-11. They were anointed of the Holy Spirit in wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship to make it. No one else but these persons had the inspiration to make it. And so they did! They made it exactly according to the pattern. Everything had a reason for being there. Some of this is illustrated below.

THE THREE COURTS OF MOSES' TABERNACLE

The Tabernacle of Moses consisted of three courts: the Outer Court with the brazen altar for burnt sacrifices and a laver for washing; the Holy Place with the table of showbread, the candlestick, and the altar of incense; and the Holy of Holies with the ark of the covenant, mercy seat, and cherubim.

I place these courts in three columns to later show how they correspond to other aspects of our walk with the Lord and to illustrate this transition I believe we are in.

Outer Court	Holy Place	Holy of Holies
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THREE ANNUAL FEASTS

While in the wilderness, Yahveh also gave instructions for the three main annual feasts of Israel's worship:

"Three times you shall keep a feast unto Me in the year. You shall keep the feast of unleavened bread...And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of your labors, which you have sown in the field; and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when you have gathered in your labors out of the field." Exod. 23:14-16. [Also, Deut., 16:16].

Passover is the first major feast of Israel's worship. This spring feast was first instituted and observed in Egypt as told in Exodus 12. Specific instructions are given in various places in the Old Testament for observing this feast. Lev. 23:5ff. The feast of harvest (or first fruits) also known as Pentecost (or Feast of Weeks) is the second main feast of Israel's worship. Passover was the first fruits of the barley harvest and Pentecost was the first fruits of the wheat harvest. It is celebrated fifty days after Firstfruits in the Jewish month of Sivan (May/June). Ex. 34:33; Lev. 23:15-16; Deut. 16:10,16; and 2 Chron. 8:13. The Passover meal is observed on the evening of the 14th day of Nisan (March/April). The seven days that follow are called the feast of Unleavened Bread, ending with Firstfruits. Lev. 23:5-6.

The feast of harvest known as Pentecost (or Feast of Weeks) is the second main feast of Israel's worship. It is celebrated fifty days after Firstfruits in the Jewish month of Sivan (May/June). Ex. 34:33; Lev. 23:15-16; Deut. 16:10,16; and 2 Chron. 8:13.

The feast of Ingathering known as Tabernacles is the third main feast of Israel's worship. This fall feast is celebrated during the Jewish month of Tishri 15-22 (September/October). This feast is also celebrated in three parts: Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles.

These feasts correspond in purpose and function with the courts of Moses' tabernacle as illustrated below. It is difficult to make a case showing how every detail of the feasts and the courts correspond because they serve different purposes. There may even be an apparent contradiction here and there; nevertheless, that these feasts and courts broadly correspond with each other is quite apparent. The purpose of this study is not to delve into these correlations, but is to show us where we are now and where we are going from here -- from Pentecost to Tabernacles.

Outer Court	Holy Place	Holy of Holies
Passover	Pentecost	Tabernacles

The Outer Court is where animals were sacrificed on the altar of burnt offerings for the forgiveness of sins. This corresponds with the sacrifice of lambs at Passover. Thus, I refer to the Outer Court as the Outer Court of Passover.

The Holy Place is where the priests ministered to the Lord with the consecrated bread, the oil-burning candlestick, and the altar of incense. Ex. 30:27. These are types of things that represent the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Though this bread of His presence (showbread) in the Holy place was consecrated, no mention was made that it had to be unleavened; therefore, the assumption is that it was leavened. This would correspond to the leavened bread of the feast of weeks (Pentecost). Lev. 23:16-17. The oil in the lampstand is a type of the Holy Spirit. The incense is a type of praise and intercession that is also associated with the work of the Holy Spirit as we have come to know it. The coal of fire for the altar of

incense corresponds with the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire. This court and feast correspond to one another. Thus, I refer to the feast of Pentecost as the Holy Place of Pentecost.

The Holy of Holies is where the High Priest alone went once a year on the Day of Atonement to atone for the sins of Israel. The Day of Atonement is observed as part of the fall feast of Tabernacles (also known as the Feast of Ingathering). Therefore, it is easy to see the correlation between the feast of Tabernacles and the Holy of Holies, further strengthening the notion that these courts and feasts correspond. Thus, I refer to the Holy of Holies as the Holy of Holies of Tabernacles.

THREE STAGES IN HISTORY

These three courts and corresponding feasts mark three significant periods in history: Jesus' crucifixion (the cross), the day of Pentecost following His crucifixion, and ultimately the day of the fullness of glory or ingathering into Jesus.

Outer Court	Holy Place	Holy of Holies
Passover	Pentecost	Tabernacles
Cross	Day of Pentecost	Fullness of Glory

Passover was fulfilled in history when Jesus died on the cross as the Lamb of God for the sins of the world. It encompasses His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." 1 Cor. 5:7-8.

Pentecost was fulfilled in history on the day of Pentecost as described in Acts, chapter 2. The Holy Spirit was given to seal us "unto the day of redemption." Eph. 4:30.

Tabernacles is yet to be fulfilled in history. It defines the ultimate intentions of God as expressed in Ephesians 1:10, 13-14:

"That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him...In whom you also trusted, after that you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory."

Just as Passover was fulfilled on the day of Passover and Pentecost was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, it is logical that Tabernacles would be fulfilled sometime during the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall of the year. A few New Testament scriptures may be pointing to the feast of Trumpets as the time that Tabernacles will be fulfilled in history, but who can say with certainty until after it occurs? Study Matthew 24:31; 1 Corinthians 15:52; and 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

Even though these are stages in history, it must be understood that Jesus was the incarnation (fulfillment) of all that the Outer Court, Holy Place, and Holy of Holies stood for. He was the incarnation of all that Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles stood for. He was the incarnation of all the laws, the prophets, and the psalms. Luke 24:44.

THREE ASPECTS OF GOD

These three courts and corresponding feasts reveal the three administrative aspects of the one and true God -- Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and Father.

Outer Court	Holy Place	Holy of Holies
Passover	Pentecost	Tabernacles
Cross	Day of Pentecost	Fullness of Glory
Jesus	Holy Spirit	Father God

Passover represents the ministration of Jesus who shed His blood as the atonement for our sins. "Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Pet. 1:18-19. 1 Corinthians 5:7 confirms that "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."

Pentecost represents the ministration of the Holy Spirit who was poured out on the disciples on the day of Pentecost. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 1:1-4

Tabernacles represents the ministration of the Father who will manifest (reveal) His sons in keeping with His promise to bring many sons to glory. "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory...." Heb. 2:10.

Tabernacles is not the end of all things, but is the beginning of the third feast that continues on until the fullness of times when Father gathers "together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him." Eph. 1:10. For, "When all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." 1 Cor. 15:28.

THREE PASSAGES IN OUR LIVES

These three courts and corresponding feasts mark three passages in our spiritual experiences in Jesus -- when we are born again, baptized in His Holy Spirit, and finally conformed into His image.

Outer Court	Holy Place	Holy of Holies
Passover	Pentecost	Tabernacles
Cross	Day of Pentecost	Fullness of Glory
Jesus	Holy Spirit	Father God
Born Again	Baptized in Spirit	Conformed

Our old Adamic nature of sin perished with Him in His death on the cross. We were buried with Him in His burial and were raised with Him in His resurrection. Rom. 6:2-6; 2 Cor. 5:17. John 3. When we accept by faith that Jesus died for our sins, we essentially die to sin on the cross with Him. Our old Adamic nature of sin perished with Him on the cross and was buried with Him in His burial, just as we will be raised with Him in His resurrection. Rom. 6:2-6; 2 Cor. 5:17.

Paul also explained it this way:

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2:20.

Pentecost is fulfilled in us when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit as were the disciples on the day of Pentecost. Not everyone who believes in Jesus accepts this experience as scriptural, but the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the power of Christ's lordship in our lives. Without this empowerment, we are left to work out our salvation in our own strength.

Tabernacles will be fulfilled in us when Jesus comes again in His people in the fullness of His glory. There are many speculations about when that will be and what that will look like, but we really cannot know. Nevertheless, there are scriptures that give us some clues. Rom. 8:18-19; 1 John 3:2; and Gal. 4:19.

Those who are foreknown and predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. 8:29) know within themselves that they are born again and baptized in the Holy Spirit. Likewise, many of them are being made to "know" intuitively by the Holy Spirit that this glory is already at work within them.

Others may think this speaks of elitism, but those who know this reality or who are beginning to know it are broken and crushed by it. For you see, they cannot be of this people in pride or arrogance, but in total and complete surrender of Self that He might be all in all. Knowing this about themselves, they no longer permit themselves to be ruled by the systems of this world, or by the prescribed ways of men. Rather, they are given to radical obedience to the Holy Spirit, and that is an offense to the flesh.

With Passover we receive His kind of life. With Pentecost we receive His power. With Tabernacles we come into the fullness of His nature. We must have His life before we can receive His power and we must have His power at work within us before we can have the fullness of His nature. His power is what perfects us. David wrote, "God is my strength and power: and He makes my way perfect." Sam. 22:33. The Lord spoke to Paul saying, "My grace is sufficient for you: for My strength [power] is made perfect in weakness." 2 Cor. 12:9. It is His power and our weakness.

We must go through one court in order to reach the next one. We must go through the Outer Court of Passover in order to get to the Holy Place of Pentecost, and we must go through the Outer Court of Passover and through the Holy Place of Pentecost in order to get to the Holy of Holies of Tabernacles. Each feast prepares us to go on to the next. We cannot bypass the first two feasts as we come to Tabernacles. Just as Passover was the beginning of months for the Israelites, so it is for us at our conversion. We have to begin in the Outer Court of Passover. We cannot begin anywhere else.

FROM EGYPT TO THE PROMISED LAND

This passage in our lives -- born again, baptized in the Spirit, and ultimately conformed into His image -- is expressed in "our" flight from Egypt, through the wilderness, to the Promised Land. This is another way to see where we are and where we are going.

Outer Court	Holy Place	Holy of Holies
Passover	Pentecost	Tabernacles
Cross	Day of Pentecost	Fullness of Glory
Jesus	Holy Spirit	Father God
Born Again	Baptized in Spirit	Conformed
From Egypt	Through the Wilderness	To the Promised Land

Egypt represents the bondage of our old man of sin and death from which God miraculously delivered us, redeemed us. It represents the Outer Court of Passover that was first celebrated by that first Passover meal. The death angel passed over us and we immediately fled our bondage of sin. We miraculously crossed over the Red Sea and that represents our baptism into Jesus.

The wilderness represents a time of testing, proving, and reproof -- our refiner's fire. The wilderness is intended to prepare us to go on to our appointed destination in Jesus. It represents the Holy Place of Pentecost. Good things happened in the wilderness. The cloud led us by day and the pillar of fire led us by night (types of the leading of the Holy Spirit). God miraculously provided water for us to drink (a type of the word of God, quenching our thirst) and provided manna for us to eat (a type of Jesus as the Bread of Life). He gave the law (setting forth His righteous requirement for His people that was fulfilled in Jesus). He gave us the design for the construction of the Tabernacle (a representation of God's eternal plan in Jesus). All the while, for forty years, our shoes and clothing did not wear out (evidence of God's faithful provision in our lives). This wilderness journey is intended to be our preparation for and passage to a better place, the land of promise -- our tabernacles.

The Promised Land represents the end of our salvation, our completion. It represents the Holy of Holies of Tabernacles -- Zion. We were to cross the Jordan and take possession of the land by utterly driving out the enemy of the land. God promised to fight our battles for us and He would have, had we entered into His rest in faith. But we did not. Nevertheless, He has sworn that there will be people to enter into His rest, who will take the land, who will come to the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ -- a people who will be as He is.

We find ourselves somewhere on the wilderness side of the Jordan river, waiting for that trumpet sound at which time we will follow the ark of the Covenant, the captain of our salvation into Tabernacles (Zion) where we will be gathered as one into Christ Jesus our Lord.

THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID

Acts 15:16-17 speaks of the time when the tabernacle of David will be restored. David's tabernacle, as with most natural things spoken of in the Old Covenant, pointed to something spiritual under the New Covenant. David's tabernacle was a mere tent, providing cover for the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark belonged in the Holy of Holies. Neither the Outer Court nor the Holy Place was present in David's tabernacle.

This signifies that when Tabernacles comes, the Outer Court of Passover and Holy Place of Pentecost will have passed away. More likely, Tabernacles will have absorbed them. The Holy of Holies of Tabernacles will be the only thing that remains. This is Zion, and Zion is that place in the Spirit where Jesus is the only thing there is. The sanctification will be completed. We will see Him as He is, and, when that happens, we will become as He is. 1 John 3:2. That which is in part will have passed away. The perfect will have come. 1 Cor. 13:10.

BETWEEN TWO FEASTS

Passover and Pentecost are old-order feasts that are passing away. This is where we are. We are moving beyond Pentecost; yet, we have not arrived at Tabernacles. Thus, we are in transition between these two feasts -- going from doing to being.

This is our present day dilemma. We are still in that feast where we look through a glass darkly and know only in part. 1 Cor. 13:12a. We still need the fivefold gift, ascension ministries of apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers. We still need the gifts of the Spirit. We still need to spur one another on in the faith. We still need to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit. Prophecy, tongues, healings, and deliverance belong here. These things prepare the way of the Lord's appearing and the fulfillment of Tabernacles. These things are given to help prepare the bride of Christ for His coming.

On the other hand, Tabernacles is where we see "face to face," where we shall know even as also we are known. 1 Cor. 13:12b. It has been clearly expressed in Romans 8:18-25 NKJ:

"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance."

We cannot make Tabernacles happen. We cannot usher it in before it is time. Only the Father knows the time. It is completely in His hands. Yet, I find I am no longer content to simply do or know, but deeply yearn to be (become) what I know and more so.

We say with Paul, the apostle,

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Php. 3:12-14

A people have been called who will be found faithful, who will attain that mark.