

SUKKOT SPECIAL 2020!

(Complete Edition)

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Prayer for Blessing the Scriptures

Barchu et-Yahweh hamvorach

(*Cong.* Baruch Yahweh hamvorach lay-oh-lam va-ed)

Baruch Yahweh hamvorach lay-oh-lam va-ed

Baruch ata Yah-weh, Elo-hay-nu Melech Ha-Olam

Asher bachar banu michol ha-ah-meem

Ve-nah-tan lanu et-torah tow

Baruch ata Yah-weh no-tayn ha-Torah (ve'breet chah-dash-ah)

ALL READ IN UNISON IN ENGLISH:

Bless Yahweh, Who is to be blessed

Blessed is Yahweh, Who is to be blessed forever and ever

Blessed are You, Yahweh our Elohim, King of the Universe,

Who chose us from all the peoples and gave to us the Torah

Blessed are you Yahweh, who gave us the Torah (and the Renewed Covenant Scriptures)

2020 Fall Feast Schedule!

(Timings for airing of content are based on the Eastern United States. If there are any variations between this schedule on what is on the published 2020 ETC, this schedule has the final word. **High Shabbats, where no work is allowed until the following sunset, are in bold.** *Special programming is in red.*)

Thursday, October 1st (before sunset) → Sukkot Special Complete

Thursday, October 1st sunset to Friday October 2nd sunset → 1st day of Sukkot

Friday, October 2nd sunset to Saturday October 3rd sunset → Shabbat Chol

Ha Moed (Sabbath in the middle of Sukkot)

Thursday, October 8th → Ve-Zot Ha-Baracha Parsha/Hoshana Rabba¹

Thursday, October 8th sunset to Friday, October 9th sunset → Last day of Sukkot/Shemini Etzeret (Simchat Torah if outside of Israel.)

Friday, October 9th → Recycle back to Bereshit.

1) Origins of the Feast of Ingathering (from Genesis and Exodus)

Our first hint of Sukkot is here, in Genesis:

¹ Traditionally the 54th and last parsha of Ve-Zot Ha-Baracha is read on Shemini Etzeret (22 Tishri). However ETC rules allow it to be read the day before, Hoshana Rabba, if 22 Tishri hits on a Thursday night, which it does this year. This is not a postponement rule of any kind as I frequently criticize the rabbinic calendar for doing, because it does not affect feast timing. Rather, the reason is to avoid making a back to back parsha of Ve-Zot Ha-Baracha and the first of the new set, Bereshit.

So that day Esau turned back towards Seir, **but Jacob made his way to Succoth, where he built himself a house and made shelters (*sukkot*) for his livestock;** that is why the place was given the name of **Succoth**. Jacob arrived safely at the town of Shechem in Canaanite territory, on his return from Paddan-Aram. He encamped opposite the town and for one hundred pieces of silver he bought from the sons of Hamor father of Shechem the piece of land on which he had pitched his tent. There he erected an altar which he called 'El, Elohim of Israel'. (Genesis 33:16-20 NJB)

This word for “shelters” are actually “mangers” or “feeding troughs” for animals but the same word in Hebrew-*sukkot*—is used here. If that foreshadowing is as direct as I think it could be, then Esau may have forgiven Jacob on Yom Kippur and Jacob in turn could be building his “booths” on what will be Sukkot! The linkages to the NT on this point are of course profound, but we will deal with those later.

Meanwhile, another interesting Messianic allusion that links to Yeshua and Sukkot is at the end of Genesis:

“You, Yehudah, your brothers praise you; your hand is on the neck of your enemies; your father’s children bow down before you. Yehudah is a lion’s cub; from the prey you have gone up, my son! He bowed down, he crouched like a lion. And like a lion, who does rouse him? The scepter shall not turn aside from Yehudah, nor a Lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to Him is the obedience of peoples. Binding his donkey to the vine, and his donkey’s colt to the choice vine, he washed his garments in wine, and his robes in the blood of grapes. His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk”. (Genesis 49:8-12, The Scriptures 1998)

Getting back to Genesis 33 for just a moment though, Sukkot also makes sense particularly to be foreshadowed by Jacob. Commemorating the wandering in the wilderness of the Israelites, there could not be a greater wandering patriarch than Jacob (Deuteronomy 26:5)! Jacob “wandered” more than 20 years, as compared with Israel, the nation named after him, who did so for 40 years.

The Hebrew moedim as a rule though were mostly meant to follow the agricultural cycles of harvests throughout the year. (Barley = Pesach; Wheat harvest completion and first fruits for of corn = Shavuot; Grapes = Sukkot.) The start and ends of the agricultural year were each by the Full Moon, and science has shown that the full moons of spring and fall are the ideal time to seed and harvest. That is why, for example, the old name for Sukkot was “the Feast of Ingathering” (Exodus 34:22) because that was when the final harvest of the year would be “brought in” at the turn of the year, or fall equinox.

Such is the case, linking these feasts to the solar year, when we read Genesis 8:22 that “seedtime and harvest, summer and winter, shall not cease”. As I have said a lot lately,

those terms are clearly linked by two Hebrew words (*tekuwfa* and *teshuvah*) to equinoxes just as “summer and winter” in Hebrew are referring to solstices.

Sukkot though was probably also sanctified because it represents the seventh Full Moon of the year, just as Yom Teruah was sanctified as the seventh New Moon of the year. The sanctification of the 7th day (Shabbat), the 7th week (Omer count), the 7th year (Shemittah/Land Sabbath) and 7 x 7th year (year 49 of a 50 year Jubilee cycle), more than justifies seeing the 7th New and 7th Full Moons also sanctified in Torah.

However, what may be surprising to some is this: What follows from that logic is the proof that the Hebrews kept solar months as well as lunar months and the solar month count would have to be fixed to ensure that Passover is in month 1 and Tabernacles is in month 7, thus explaining those “turns” of the year that Scripture exclusively links to spring and fall.

Sukkot is also a major part of an even larger moed structure that is the entire seventh month. Once Yom Teruah and Yom Kippur is concluded, there are quite a few important days packed in and around this feast. Specifically, the first and second days are of high importance, with day 1 an Annual (or High) Shabbat. Of course the Shabbat during this 8 day feast is also very important, after which we get to a kind of double occasion, known as Shemini Atzeret or Simchat Torah.

These last two occasions are usually celebrated together on the last day of the feast. The word SHEMINI refers to the 8th day after Sukkot starts and is called “the greatest day of the Feast” in the Gospel of Yochanan. While Israelis usually do both occasions—each with a lot of Torah reading and liturgy, they separate Simchat Torah for the 23rd. Diaspora Jews however put Simchat Torah on the 22nd of Tishri. Either way, both occasions, whether on one day or two, are dealt with separately and that is how I will deal with them here.

2) Sukkot and the Wilderness Years

"But on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the produce of the land, you will celebrate the feast of Yahweh for seven days. The first and eighth days will be days of rest. On the first day you will take choice fruit, palm branches, boughs of leafy trees and flowering shrubs from the river bank, and for seven days enjoy yourselves before Yahweh your Elohim. You will celebrate a feast for Yahweh in this way for seven days every year. This is a perpetual law for your descendants. "You will keep this feast in the seventh month. For seven days you will live in shelters: all the citizens of Israel will live in shelters, **so that your descendants may know that I made the Israelites live in shelters when I brought them out of Egypt, I, Yahweh your Elohim.**" ' **Moses then promulgated Yahweh's solemn festivals to the Israelites.** (Leviticus 23:39-44 NJB)

This verse in Leviticus is actually not quite what it appears to be on first glance--it's almost being less than forthcoming to us in this sense: Almost all Jewish sources will

quote this as “proof” that Sukkot at this time was used to commemorate the 40 years in the wilderness, but the fact is, this is not correct.

Yes, it is true that it mentions the Israelites living in shelters when they were brought out of Egypt, but Leviticus takes place in the first two years from Exodus, not during the official 40 year period of wandering that commences in Numbers 13 and 14, because the Israelites don't leave Sinai until Numbers 10-11. Therefore, the reference could only refer to either the 2 years at Sinai or the 42 year total wandering time, but not 40 years.

3) Sukkot and the First Temple (1 Kings 8:1-66)→extemporaneous commentary

Sukkot was also when the Temples were dedicated, starting with Solomon!

4) Linkage to Hanukkah

Hanukkah often became a kind of “backup Sukkot.” After Hanukkah was instituted in 164 BCE and the Hasmonean Royal line made secure completely some years later, it became common for Israeli soldiers who could not be in Jerusalem for the feast because of their duties, to do much the same rituals at Hanukkah that they missed at Sukkot. In particular, there was a fire ritual done on Shemini Atzeret that was modified for Hanukkah! And in a way, the original dedication process for the Second Temple would begin during Sukkot and end just before Hanukkah as we read here in Haggai:

On the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the word of Yahweh was addressed to the prophet Haggai as follows: Speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel governor of Judah, to Yeshua son of Yehozadak the high priest and to the remnant of the people. Say this, "Is there anyone left among you who saw this Temple in its former glory? And how does it look to you now? Does it not seem as though there is nothing there? But take courage now, Zerubbabel!-Yahweh declares. Courage, Yeshua son of Yehozadak high priest! Courage, all you people of the country!-Yahweh declares. To work! I am with you -- Yahweh Sabaoth declares-⁵ and my spirit is present among you. Do not be afraid! For Yahweh Sabaoth says this: A little while now, and I shall shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I shall shake all the nations, and the treasures of all the nations will flow in, and I shall fill this Temple with glory, says Yahweh Sabaoth. Mine is the silver, mine the gold!-Yahweh Sabaoth declares. The glory of this new Temple will surpass that of the old, says Yahweh Sabaoth, and in this place I shall give peace -- Yahweh Sabaoth declares." '

On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of Yahweh was addressed to the prophet Haggai as follows, 'Yahweh Sabaoth says this, "Ask the priests to give a ruling on this: If someone is carrying consecrated meat in the fold of his gown and allows the fold to touch bread, broth, wine, oil or food of any kind, will that become holy?" ' The priests replied, 'No.' Haggai then said, 'If anyone rendered unclean by contact with a corpse touches any of these things, will that become unclean?' The priests replied, 'It will become unclean.' Haggai then spoke out. 'It is the same with this people,' he said, 'the same with this

nation, in my view -- Yahweh declares -- the same with everything they turn their hands to; and whatever they offer here is unclean.

'So now think carefully, today and henceforth: before one stone had been laid on another in the sanctuary of Yahweh, what state were you in? You would come to a twenty-measure heap and find only ten; you would come to a vat to draw fifty measures and find only twenty. Everything you turned your hands to, I struck with wind-blast, mildew and hail, and still you would not return to me -- Yahweh declares. So think carefully, today and henceforth (from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day the foundation of the sanctuary of Yahweh was laid, think carefully) 'if seed-corn is still short in the barn, and if vine and fig tree, pomegranate and olive tree still bear no fruit. 'From today onwards I intend to bless you.'

On the twenty-fourth day of the month the word of Yahweh was addressed a second time to Haggai, as follows, 'Speak to Zerubbabel governor of Judah. Say this, "I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. I shall overturn the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the power of the kings of the nations. I shall overthrow the chariots and their crews; horses and their riders will fall, everyone to the sword of his comrade. When that day comes -- Yahweh Sabaoth declares -- I shall take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel my servant -- Yahweh declares -- and make you like a signet ring. For I have chosen you -- Yahweh Sabaoth declares." '(Haggai 2:1-23 NJB)

END PART 1

PART TWO: RENEWED COVENANT INSTANCES OF SUKKOT

5) Renewed Covenant instances of Sukkot.

Sukkot only has one direct mention in the Renewed Covenant, with Yeshua observing it in all of Yochanan 7 and 8. As a result, this is the core source of our NT readings throughout this 8 day period.

It does however seem to have been alluded to in Matthew 17. It seems that Peter thought they would all tarry in Galilee for Sukkot, which is why he suggested building booths for Yeshua and his friends who stopped by for the Transfiguration—Moshe and Eliyahu! But the text says “he did not know what he was saying” because Peter should have known this feast can only be done in Jerusalem.

However, the most important event associated with Sukkot—by far—is that this is the actual time of the Nativity. Yeshua is actually born the night before Sukkot, or the 14th of Tishri, which translates to Friday, September 13th, 5 BCE.

This has been the heart of my research two decades now, and the reasoning for this time will be shown shortly.

Fausset's Bible Dictionary:

The feast of tabernacles is referred to in John 7:2,37, 8:12. Yeshua alludes to the custom of drawing water from Siloam in a golden goblet and pouring it into one of the two silver basins adjoining the western side of the altar, and wine into the other, while the words of Isa. 12:3 were repeated, in commemoration of the water drawn from the rock in the desert; the choir sang the great *hallel*, and waved palms at different parts of Ps. 118, , namely, verses 1,25,29.

Virtually Yeshua said, I am the living Rock of the living water. Coming next day at daybreak to the temple court as they were extinguishing the artificial lights, two colossal golden candlesticks in the center of the temple court, recalling the pillar of fire in the wilderness, Yeshua said, "I am the Light of the world" (John 8:1,2,12). As the sun by natural light was eclipsing the artificial lights, so Yeshua implies, I, the Sun of righteousness, am superseding your typical light. "The last great day of the feast" is the *'atsereth*, though the drawing of water was on previous days not omitted. Joy was the prominent feature, from whence the proverb, "he who has never seen the rejoicing at the pouring out of the water of Siloam has never seen joy in his life" (Succah 5:1).

My commentary:

While this is a very interesting suggestion, I should point out that Yochanan 7:37 says this was "the last and greatest day of the feast" and 8:2 talks about the woman in adultery being brought to Yeshua "the next morning". So if Yochanan 7:53-8:11 is historical, this "light of the world" speech would actually be the day AFTER Sukkot, or 23 Tishri. However, today in Israel, some assemblies celebrate Simchat Torah on this very day and don't combine this with the 8th day, so perhaps this means such was also done in Israel in Yeshua's time?

On the other hand, this story of the woman taken in adultery is NOT in the 4 earliest GREEK manuscripts of John nor in any of the Eastern Aramaic manuscripts in the Peshitta family. It was only added to later Aramaic manuscripts in the 7th century onwards VIA TRANSLATION from late Greek sources.

Please note this does not necessarily mean the story of the adulteress did not happen; it may only mean it was not preserved in the written record until later, by which time it is also possible that some of the events were over simplified. For example, they should have also brought the MAN to be stoned as well, if they really caught the woman in the act of illicit sex with him.

But getting back to the main point, if we remove 7:53-8:11 from Yochanan's timeline, then there is no "extra" day after Shemini Atzeret, and old Fausset's may end up being right in that the "light of the world" speech is relating to Shemini Atzeret after all.

Fausset's concludes: The feast was called Hosanna, "save we beseech Thee." Isa. 11 refers to the future restoration of Israel; the feast of tabernacles connected with chapter 12

doubtless will have its antitype in their restored possession of and rest in Canaan, after their long dispersion; just as the other two great feasts, Passover and Pentecost, have their antitype respectively in Messiah's sacrifice for us, and in His writing His new law on our hearts at Pentecost. Jewish tradition makes Gog and Magog about to be defeated on the feast of tabernacles, or that the seven months' cleansing shall end at that feast (Ezek. 39:12). Rest after wanderings, lasting habitations after the life of wanderers, is the prominent thought of joy in the feast, alike in its former and in its future celebration.

6) Prophetic ramifications of Sukkot.

It is generally well understood that Yeshua fulfilled the spring feasts during his First Coming, such as by dying during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As a result, many believers also accept the idea that Yeshua will return the 2nd time during the Fall feasts—whether that is Yom Teruah, Yom Kippur or Sukkot is a matter of personal preference and debate. The advantage of Sukkot however is that Yeshua was born just prior to the start of this feast, so it makes sense he would return at that time as well.

Now let's read and discuss the relevant Torah, Haftorah and Renewed Covenant portions with extemporaneous commentary Please note that readings which are repeated on more than one day of the feast are read only once.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE 1ST, 2ND AND 7TH DAYS OF SUKKOT, ALONG WITH THE SHABBAT IN THE MIDST OF THE FEAST.

Torah:

1) Leviticus 22:26-23:44 (first 2 days)

SEH (22:28) = sheep or goat. The Hebrew word can refer to either animal. This is also a deep *remez* (hint) about us, because Scripture talks about sheep and goats being separated as an image of judging the righteous and the wicked (Matthew 25:32).

MELEKETH AVODAH (23:7) = service work. We talked recently about the general prohibition of “expanding kingdom/domain” on a Shabbat. Here though this term is well defined as any work that is not necessary for the preparation of food.

OMER (23:10) = 1/10th of an ephah (see Exodus 16:36). It was also the daily measure for manna and for a meal offering (see Leviticus 5:11, 6:13 and Numbers 15:4). The omer included barley and had a weight of approximately a half a gallon.

Note on 23:11: While there has been much debate about the Torah term “morrow after the Shabbat” over the centuries, Targum Onkelos attempts to settle the matter by stating in the Aramaic *mibetar yoma tava*, or “from after the yom tov”, which Rabbi Israel Drazin translates as ‘after the holiday’. The reference to a *yom tov* is a technical one that designates an annual Shabbat, so this means “the day after the 15th” which is to say, the

16th of Abib, as the start of the omer count. See: *Onkelos on the Torah: Understanding the Bible Text (Leviticus)*, p. 187.

This is also similar to a reading in the Aramaic Peshitta Tanakh which is “on the day after” without inclusion of the word “Shabbat”, as it appears Jews in Babylon were also trying to clarify the Hebrew there as well. The Greek translation too, called the Septuagint, also tweaks its language to say “morrow after the first day”—with “first day” referring to the Feast of Unleavened Bread and therefore “morrow” is once again the 16th. When combined with testimony from the 1st C Jewish historian Josephus (*Antiquities*, 3:250) that clearly said first fruits of the barley were offered both “on the second day of unleavened bread” and “the sixteenth day of that month”, this is the overwhelming weight of evidence proving how the term “morrow of the Sabbath” was meant to be understood. The vague references (Samaritan Pentateuch, Dead Sea Scrolls and Masoretic Text) are in no way contradicted by the more specific ancient witnesses as to what the intended meaning was, By contrast the Karaites are almost completely alone in their belief to the contrary.

CHUKAT OLAM BECHOL MOSHVOTEYCHEM LEDOROTEYCHEM (23:21) = an eternal statute for all generations, wherever you live. Perhaps one of the clearest statements of these Feasts applying outside of Israel and regardless as to whether a Temple or priesthood is functioning within her.

ZICHRON (23:24) = remembrance. Others though think a secondary meaning, as “sounding” is intended. Still others use both, “a sounding of remembrance”, which in my view is the best choice.

MELECHA (23:28) = work. This word appears by itself without the clarification of “service work” (*melekeh avodah*) because even food preparation is banned on Yom Kippur.

SUKKOT (23:34) = thatched huts in this context as opposed to just “shelters” or “booths” which are a bit too general a description.

2) Numbers 29:12-16 (first 2 days)

CHAG (29:12) = festival or feast, another description of the appointed time (moed) that is Sukkot. Obviously not all MOEDIM are CHAGIM (feasts).

Haftarah:

3) First Day: Zechariah 14:1-21 (extemporaneous commentary)

VEASAFTI ET-KOL HA-GOYIM EL-YERUSHALYIM LAMILCHAMA (14:2) = For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem. As Revelation teaches, the armies mass at Har Megiddo (Armageddon) but the battle is for Jerusalem. Revelation though never shows the battle take place but merely declares YHWH will win it for us.

KEYOM HILACHAMU BEYOM KERAV (14:3) = as He (YHWH) fights on a day of war. This may be a reference to the battle Abba YHWH (or Yeshua) will fight for us in the End Times.

VEAMDU RAGLAV BAYOM HAHU AL HAR HAZEYTIM (14:4) = and on that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. Perhaps a reference to Yeshua's return. Various authorities talk about Messiah returning to the Mount of Olives first.

MAYIM CHAYIM (14:8) = living waters. The general pattern in this part of Zechariah is that a great supernatural event where there is neither day nor night will be followed by the living waters coming back to Jerusalem. While the details between this and Revelation have some differences, I can't help but wonder why these are the only two books that talk about 4 horsemen of the apocalypse and at the end Yeshua says, "Let he who thirsts come and drink of the living water freely" (Revelation 22:17).

In general it seems that Zechariah 14 is describing the battle that Revelation omits, where the armies muster at Har Megiddo. In particular 14:12 bears a creepy resemblance to 2 Peter 3:10. If this is so, then again we are confronted with the prophetic ramifications of Sukkot which seems to be tied not just to Yeshua's actual return but to the final battle as well. It is this idea that seems confirmed also in this part of Zechariah.

The Haftorah for the 2nd day of Sukkot, 1 Kings 8:2-21 has already been read, so it won't be repeated here.

4) Exodus 33:12-34:26 (Shabbat during Sukkot)

VAYOMAR PANAY YELECHU VAHANICHOTI LACH (33:14) = My Presence will go before you. Now the Messenger (Yeshua) is withdrawn and Abba YHWH Himself is going before Moshe directly.

VAYOMER YAHWEH EL MOSHE PSOL-LECHA SHNEY LUCHOT AVANIM KARISHONIM VECHATAVTI AL-HALUCHOT ET-HADEVARIM ASHER HAYU AL-HALUCHOT ET-HADEVARIM ASHER HAYU AL-HALUCHOT HARISHONIM SHIBARTA (34:1) = Yahweh said to Moses, 'Carve out two tablets for yourself, just like the first ones. I will write on those tablets the same words that were on the first tablets that you broke. The Rabbis believe that this was on 1 Elul. 40 days and 40 nights on the mountain later and Moshe comes down 10 Tishri, Yom Kippur. See Seder Olam 6, Exodus 34:28 and Deuteronomy 10:10.

VECHAG HA'ASIF TKUFAT HASHANA (34:22) = Literally: and the Feast of the Harvest that is just after the Turning of the Year. The word TKUFAT (turn) therefore also means "fall equinox" since Sukkot is designed to happen at this time, but also "turning" in the sense that the Hebrew lunar year also turned over at the end of Elul.

RESHIT BIKUREY ADMATECHA TAVI BEYT YAHWEH ELOHEYCHA LO-

TEVASHEL GEDI BACHALEV IMO (34:26) = Bring the first fruits of your land to the Temple of Yahweh your Elohim. Do not [eat] goat's meat cooked in milk of its own mother. Notice the prohibition is only with respect to goat's meat, not all forms of meat. The chances of any meat though being boiled in the same milk of its mother today is almost impossible for those of us who buy food at supermarkets. The Rabbis ignore the fact that Abraham served milk and meat to YHWH and two messengers in Genesis 18 and there is no way around the fact that Abraham brought both the milk and the meat at the same time. Bible.ort.org deliberately ignored GEDI (goat) in their translation to make it sound that all meat could not be prepared in this manner.

5) Ezekiel 38:18-39:16 (Haftorah for Shabbat during Sukkot)→extemporaneous commentary

END PART 2

PART THREE: HOSHANA RABBA AND MORE SCRIPTURE READINGS

6) Hoshana Rabbah (7th day of Sukkot)

The seventh day of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot, the 21st day of Tishri is known as **Hoshana Rabbah** (Aramaic: **הושענא רבא**, "Great Supplication"). This day is marked by a special synagogue service, the Hoshana Rabbah, in which seven circuits are made by the worshippers with their lulav and etrog while the congregation recites *Hoshanot*. It is customary for the scrolls of the Torah to be removed from the ark during this procession. In a few communities a *shofar* is sounded after each circuit.

Hoshana Rabbah is known as the last of the Days of Judgment which began on Rosh Hashanna. The Zohar says that while the judgment for the new year is sealed on Yom Kippur, it is not "delivered" until the end of Sukkot (i.e., Hoshana Rabbah, the last day of Sukkot), during which time one can still alter their verdict and decree for the new year.

Consequently, an Aramaic blessing which Jews give each other on Hoshana Rabbah, **פיתקא טבא** (*pitka tava* or *piska tava*), which in Yiddish is "A *guten kvitel*", or "A good note", is a wish that the verdict will be positive.

In this spirit, it is a custom in many congregations that the cantor wears a kittel (long sleeved linen robe with a linen sash—AGR) as on the High Holidays. Since Hoshana Rabbah blends elements of the High Holy Days, Chol HaMoed, and Yom Tov, in the Ashkenazic tradition, the cantor recites the service using High Holiday, Festival, Weekday, and Sabbath melodies interchangeably.

Among Sephardi Jews, prayers known as Selichot (forgiveness) are recited before the regular morning service (these are the same prayers recited before Rosh Hashanah). In the different prayers of this day, Syrian Jews pray in the same maqam (melody) as on the high holidays. In Amsterdam and in a few places in England, America, and elsewhere, the shofar is also sounded in connection with the processions. The latter practice reflects the idea that Hoshana Rabbah is the end of the High Holy Day season, when the world is judged for the coming year. Because Hoshanah Rabbah is also linked to the high holidays as well as being a joy filled day some Hasidic communities such as Satmar have the

custom of having Birkhat Kohanim/Priestly Blessing recited during the Musaf service. Some communities such as Bobov will only do this if it is on Friday. However this practice is not generally done.

It is customary to read the whole of Tehillim (Psalms) on Hoshana Rabbah eve. There is also a custom to read the book of Deuteronomy on the night of Hoshana Rabbah.

Seven Hoshanot

The modern-day observance of the rituals of Hoshana Rabbah are reminiscent of the practices that existed in the times of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. During Sukkot, the four species are taken in a circuit around (inscribing the perimeter, not circumscribing the actual building) the synagogue once daily. On Hoshana Rabbah, there are seven circuits.

Making a circuit around the reading desk on Sukkot while each person holds the four species in his hands has its origin in the Temple service, as recorded in the Mishnah: "It was customary to make one procession around the altar on each day of Sukkot, and seven on the seventh day" (Sukkah 4:5). The priests carried the palm branches or willows in their hands. The entire ceremony is to demonstrate rejoicing and gratitude for a blessed and fruitful year. Moreover, it serves to tear down the iron wall that separates us from our Father in Heaven, as the wall of Jericho was encompassed "and the wall fell down flat" (Joshua 6:20). Furthermore, the seven circuits correspond to the seven words in the verse: *Erhatz benikayon kappay, va'asovevah et mizbahakha Yahweh* - "I wash my hands in purity and circle around Your altar, O Yahweh" (Psalms 26:6).

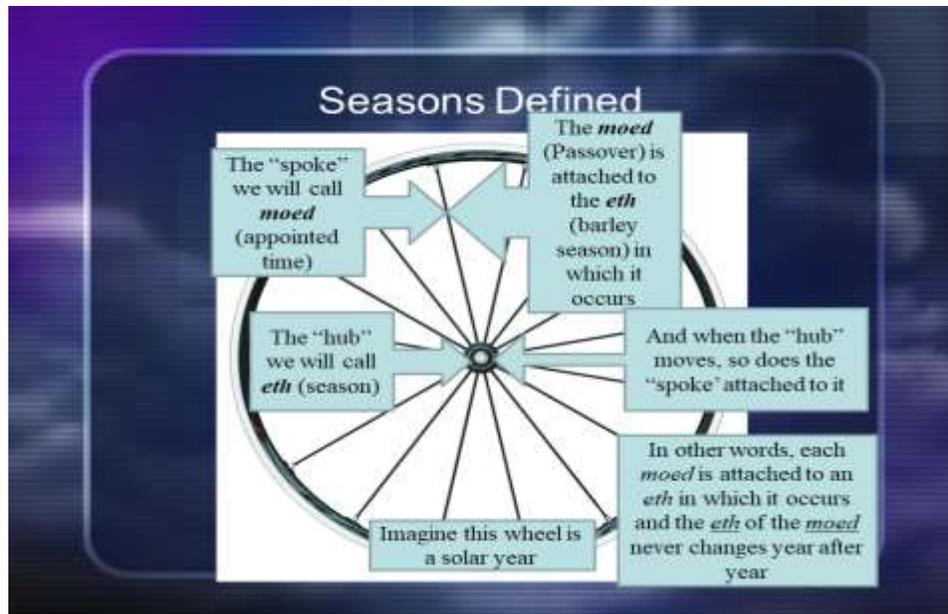
Each "hoshana" is done in honor of a patriarch. (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moshe, Aaron and David)

Five willow branches

At the conclusion of a number of *Piyyutim* (liturgical poems), five willow branches are beaten on the ground or other surface to symbolize the elimination of sin. This is also symbolic as a prayer for rain and success in agriculture.

Prayers for Messiah

The hoshanot are accompanied by a series of liturgical verses climaxing with, "*Kol mevasser, mevasser ve-omer*" (The voice of the Herald [Elijah] heralds and says)—expressing hope for the speedy coming of the Messiah. (Wikipedia)



7) Numbers 29:35-30:1 (Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah)

SHEMINI ATZERET TIHYEH LACHEM (29:35) = eighth day of retreat, so this is also known as a "retreat festival".

'On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly; you shall do no laborious work. 'But you shall present a burnt offering, an offering by fire, as a soothing aroma to YHWH: one bull, one ram, seven male lambs one year old without defect; their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bull, for the ram and for the lambs, by their number according to the ordinance; and one male goat for a sin offering, besides the continual burnt offering and its grain offering and its drink offering. 'You shall present these to YHWH at your appointed times, besides your ¹votive offerings and your freewill offerings, for your burnt offerings and for your grain offerings and for your drink offerings and for your peace offerings.'" Moses spoke to the sons of Israel in accordance with all that YHWH had commanded Moses. Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the sons of Israel, saying, "This is the word which YHWH has commanded. (Numbers 29:35-30:1 NAU)

8) Deuteronomy 14:21-16:17 (Shemini Atzeret)

GER (14:21) = stranger. Rabbis make an interesting comment (Stone Chumash, p. 1013) that in this context GER does not mean proselyte, because they perceive there could be another class of GER that lives among the Jews but only observes the Noachide laws and does not have to abstain from unkosher meat. They further point out that if PROSELYTE was meant here, the unkosher meat would be prohibited to him as well as any other Jew. While on the surface this appears to solve some problems, I maintain that there is one Torah for the Jew and for the foreigner in their

midst and that Noachide laws are a rabbinic illusion. It's not that those rules aren't in the Torah—it's their misapplication that is at issue here. Rather, the regulation seems to be meant to not let food go to waste that is unfit for the altar but that can in other ways extend human life.

SHEMITTAH (15:1) = letting drop, or a temporary remission of debts.

QARA (15:9) = cry out against you. The word can also mean to “proclaim publicly, read”, which has a sense that the poor man could embarrass you publicly if you bend the shemmitah law to avoid paying him back.

TIKAPHETZ ET-YADKHA (15:7) = draw together or close your fist. This command follows the phrase “harden your heart”—a rebuke given against Pharaoh—to show that bad mental attitudes lay the foundation for bad actions. Yeshua's halacha though went further than just opening one's hand to help the poor. Instead, he wanted an open hand that was HIDDEN from public view, i.e. “don't let your left hand know what your right is doing”.

16:1-2 from Bibleort.org:

Safeguard

Adjusting the lunar calendar so that Nissan remains in the spring (*Rosh HaShanah* 21a; *Yad, Kiddush HaChodesh* 1:1).

along with other sheep and cattle

(Ramban). Or, 'sacrifice sheep as the Passover offering, along with the cattle' (Targum; *Sifri*; Rashi). The other animals are the special festival offering, known as the Chagigah. This consisted of a peace offering (*Yad, Chagiga* 1:1).

NOTE: Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12/Ve-Zot Ha-Barachah, which is done at Simchat Torah, is being treated as a separate parsha, so that will be discussed at the time.

Genesis 1:1-2:3 (Simchat Torah), but will be thoroughly gone over in Bereshit, coming next week.

9) Historical Commentary on Sukkot 1 (Josephus)

Upon the fifteenth day of the same month, when the season of the year is changing to winter, the law enjoins us to pitch tabernacles in every one of our houses, so that we preserve ourselves from the cold of that time of the year; as also that when we should arrive at our own country, and come to that city which we should have then for our metropolis, because of the temple therein to be built, and keep a festival for eight days, and offer burnt offerings, and sacrifice thank offerings, that we should then carry in our hands a branch of myrtle, and willow, and a bough of the palm tree, with the addition of the pome citron.

That the burnt offering on the first of those days was to be a sacrifice of thirteen bulls, and fourteen lambs, and fifteen rams, with the addition of a kid of the goats, as an expiation for sins: and on the following days the same number of lambs, and of rams, with the kids of the goats; but abating one of the bulls every day till they amounted to seven only.

On the eighth day all work was laid aside, and then, as we said before, they sacrificed to Elohim a bullock, a ram, and seven lambs, with a kid of the goats, for an expiation of sins. And this is the accustomed solemnity of the Hebrews, when they pitch their tabernacles. (Josephus, Antiquities 3:244-247)

“When the multitude are assembled together to the holy city for sacrificing, every seventh year, at the feast of tabernacles, let the high priest stand upon a high desk, where he may be heard, and let him read the laws to all the people; and let neither the women nor the children be hindered from hearing, no, nor the servants either; for it is a good thing that those laws should be engraved in their souls, and preserved in their memories, that so it may not be possible to blot them out; for by this means they will not be guilty of sin, when they cannot plead ignorance of what the laws have enjoined them.

“The laws also will have a greater authority among them, as foretelling what they will suffer if they break them: and imprinting in their souls by this hearing what they command them to do, that so there may always be within their minds that intention of the laws which they have despised and broken, and have thereby been the causes of their own mischief. Let the children also learn the laws, as the first thing they are taught, which will be the best thing they can be taught, and will be the cause of their future felicity.”

“Let everyone commemorate before Elohim the benefits which he bestowed upon them at their deliverance out of the land of Egypt, and this twice every day, both when the day begins and when the hour of sleep comes on, gratitude being in its own nature a just thing, and serving not only by way of return for past, but also by way of invitation of future favors.

“They are also to inscribe the principal blessings they have received from Elohim upon their doors, and show the same remembrance of them upon their arms; as also they are to bear on their forehead and their arm those wonders which declare the power of Elohim, and his goodwill toward them, that Elohim's readiness to bless them may appear everywhere conspicuous about them.” (Josephus, Antiquities, 4:209-213)

(About 152 BCE) **When Jonathan had received this letter, he put on the high priest's robe at the time of the feast of tabernacles,** four years after the death of his brother Judas, for at that time no high priest had been made. So he raised great forces, and had abundance of armor prepared.

This greatly grieved Demetrius, when he heard of it, and made him blame himself for his slowness, that he had not anticipated Alexander, and got the goodwill of Jonathan, but had given him time so to do. However, he also himself wrote a letter to Jonathan, and to the people, the contents whereof are these:—“King Demetrius to Jonathan, and to the nation of the Jews, sends greetings. Since you have preserved your friendship for us, and when you have been tempted by our enemies, you have not joined yourselves to them; I both commend you for your fidelity, and exhort you to continue in the same disposition; for which you shall be repaid, and receive rewards from us; **for I will free you from the greatest part of the tributes and taxes which you formerly paid to the kings my predecessors, and to myself**; and I do now set you free from those tributes which you have ever paid; and besides, I forgive you the tax upon salt, and the value of the crowns which you used to offer to me: and instead of the third part of the fruits of the field, and the half of the fruits of the trees, I relinquish my part of them from this day: ⁵⁰ and as to the poll money, which ought to be given me for every head of the inhabitants of Judea, and of the three toparchies that adjoin to Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, and Perea, that I relinquish to you for this time, and for all time to come. (Josephus, Antiquities 13:46-50)

And after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, “We are departing from here.” But, what is still more terrible, **there was one Yeshua bar Khanan-Yah, a common man and a husbandman**, who, four years before the war began (62 CE, Jewish War started in the year 66—AGR), and at a time when the city was in very great peace and prosperity, came to that feast whereon it is our custom for everyone to make tabernacles to Elohim in the temple, began suddenly to cry aloud, “A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegroom and the bride, and a voice against this whole people!” This was his cry, as he went about by day and by night, in all the lanes of the city.

However, certain of the most eminent among the populace had great indignation at this dire cry of his, and took up the man, and gave him a great number of severe stripes; yet he did not either say anything for himself, or anything peculiar to those who chastised him, but still went on with the same words which he cried before.

Hereupon our rulers supposing, as the case proved to be, that this was a sort of divine fury in the man, brought him to the Roman procurator; where he was whipped till his bones were laid bare; yet he did not make any supplication for himself, nor shed any tears, but turning his voice to the most lamentable tone possible, at every stroke of the whip his answer was, “Woe, woe to Jerusalem!” (The Jewish War, 6:300-304)

10) Historical Commentary on Sukkot 2 (Philo)

And this number is consecrated and dedicated to Elohim when the perfect fruits of the soul are offered up. For, on the feast of tabernacles, besides all other sacrifices, it is ordered that the priest should offer up seventy heifers for a burnt offering. Again, it is in accordance with the computation of seventy that the phials of the princes are provided, for each of them is of the weight of seventy shekels; since whatever things are associated

and confederate together in the soul, and dear to one another, have a power which is truly attractive, namely, the sacred computation of seventy, which Egypt, the nature which hates virtue, and loves to indulge the passions, is introduced as lamenting; for mourning among them is computed at seventy days. [Genesis l. 8.]

This number, therefore, as I have said before, is familiar to Moses, but the number of the five outward senses is familiar to him who embraces the body and external things, which it is customary to call Joseph; for he pays such attention to those things, that he presents his own uterine brother, [Genesis xlv. 22], the offspring of the outward sense, for he had no acquaintance at all with those who were only his brothers as sons of the same father, with five exceedingly beautiful garments, thinking the outward senses things of exceeding beauty, and worthy of being adorned and honored by him. (Philo, The Migrations of Abraham 1:202-203)

The last of all the annual festivals is that which is called the feast of tabernacles, which is fixed for the season of the autumnal equinox. And by this festival the lawgiver teaches two lessons, both that it is necessary to honor equality, the first principle and beginning of justice, the principle akin to un-shadowed light; and that it is becoming also, after witnessing the perfection of all the fruits of the year, to give thanks to that Being who has made them perfect.

For the autumn (*metoporon*), as its very name shows is the season which comes after ('meta') the fruits of the year (ten *oporan*) are now gathered into the granaries, on account of the providence of nature which loves the living creatures upon the earth.

And, indeed, the people are commanded to pass the whole period of the feast under tents, either because there is no longer any necessity for remaining in the open air laboring at the cultivation of the land, since there is nothing left in the land, but all is stored up in the barns, on account of the injuries which otherwise might be likely to visit it from the burning of the sun or the violence of the rains. It is also intended as a commemoration of the long journeying of their ancestors, while making which through the desert they lodged in numerous tents for many years, while stopping at each halting place. And it is proper in the time of riches to remember one's poverty, and in an hour of glory to recollect the days of one's disgrace, and at a season of peace to think upon the dangers that are past.

Again, the beginning of this festival is appointed for the fifteenth day of the month, on account of the reason which has already been mentioned respecting the spring season, also that the world may be full, not by day only but also by night, of the most beautiful light, the sun and moon on their rising opposite to one another with uninterrupted light, without any darkness interposing itself between so as to divide them.

And after the festival has lasted seven days, he adds an eighth as a seal, calling it a kind of crowning feast, not only as it would seem to this festival, but also to all the feasts of the year which we have enumerated; for it is the last feast of the year, and is a very stable and holy sort of conclusion, befitting men who have now received all the produce from

the land, and who are no longer in perplexity and apprehension respecting any barrenness or scarcity. (Philo, The Special Laws, 2:204-211)

Haftorah for Simchat Torah: Joshua 1:1-18 (PLEASE SEE THE NOTES FOR VE-ZOT HA-BARACHA)

11) Remaining readings for the rest of Sukkot: Yochanan 1:1-14, 7:1-8:59 (Shemini Atzeret only)

7:37. Aph (Gwynn, A Select Library of Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 323): “Let everyone who is thirsty come and drink.”

¹ “rivers of living water.” Earlier in Yochanan we learned two important things about these living waters: First, Yeshua spoke of the Temple that was his body (Yochanan 2:21), and second, that when he was in Samaria near their sacred spring on Mount Gerizim he talked about “living waters springing up for eternal life” (Yochanan 4:11).

Now here at the Temple during the last day of Sukkot Yeshua is giving a far deeper teaching on the same idea. For the last seven days of the Sukkot Feast, there was a ritual of drawing living water out of the Siloam Pool, but this ritual was not done on the 8th and last day (Ryrie Study Bible (NASB), pp. 176-177), so Yeshua used that occasion to say basically, “If you thought that living water you saw over the last week was something, wait until you see the real living water that I will give you!”

Finally, Mashiyach’s use of “springs” at Gerizim and “rivers” at the Yerushalayim Temple is significant because both a river and a spring are each named “Gihon”, a word that also means “gushing” and is I believe pointing to Yeshua saying the Temple is located over the Gihon Spring, a living water source, that he is contrasting with his better living water. If the Temple were at the traditional site which has neither rivers nor springs of living water, the metaphor and tie in to Gihon would not make any sense.

7:38. “rivers of living water will flow from his belly”. Again recalling Yochanan 2:21 where we are told the Temple Yeshua spoke of was his body and Yochanan 4:11 where he referred to “living waters springing up for eternal life”, it is significant that Yeshua says this at the Temple. The reason is that both a spring and a river are named “Gihon” and the Temple was most definitely located right above this source of water so that the masses of animal waste could be cleaned off every day.

7:40. Aramaic grammar allows for the reading to be either “a prophet” or “the Prophet,” the latter being a Messianic title. However, Old Syriac Siniaticus drops the phrase “prophet” altogether and says they were saying “This is the Messiah,” while the Greek texts add the definite article and say “The Prophet.” The combination then of internal textual context and wider testimony confirms the Messianic title of “The Prophet” to be the correct reading.

7:42. It is very ironic that the Pharisees here are assuming that because Mashiyach is known as “Yeshua of Nazareth” that he must have been born there, hence their objection

that based on Micah 5:1-2 that he had to have been born in Bethlehem, which of course he was, but they didn't know that!

7:49 (2). “No one from the Pharisees believed him, except this people who do not know Torah and are accursed.” A very intriguing statement, because it suggests that some believers in Yeshua had even at this early period came *out* of Pharisaic practice and abandoned Oral Law for Yeshua's teachings. However this kind of represents an unfair and circular argument in that the Pharisees say that to follow Yeshua is to prove ignorance of Torah and be under a curse, and these “facts” are said to derive from the fact that they are now following Yeshua, without a single Scripture to support the specious claim. The fact is, Yeshua's followers knew the Written Torah better and practiced it in greater purity and consistency than the Pharisees who weighed it down through the prism of Oral Law. For an extensive and specific refutation by Yeshua of these ideas, see Matthew 23.

Nicodemus is known as Nakdimon ben Gurion in the Talmud, an endearing name given to him for causing a very favorable rain, and for the sun to return after it had set. The Talmud says his real name was Boni, it records that someone with a similar name was executed as one of Yeshua's five disciples: *It is taught: Yeshu had five disciples - Matai, Nekai, Netzer, **Buni**, and Todah. They brought Matai [before the judges]. He said to them: Will Matai be killed? It is written (Psa 42:2) “When [=Matai] shall (I) come and appear before G-d.” They said to him: Yes, Matai will be killed as it is written (Psa 41:5) “When [=Matai] shall (he) die and his name perish”*-Talmud Sanhedrin 43a. Mattai is clearly “Matthew”. “Todah” is a match for “Thaddeus” in Aramaic.

But “**Buni**”, most likely the “Boni” referred to earlier is Nakdimon. It is an odd happening that a man so revered in the Talmud should, under another name, be executed for heresy. On the other hand, Josephus speaks of many Rabbis opposing the assassination of Ya'akov Ha Tzadik (James the Just) so double traditions are not without precedent. Another case is Rabbi Gamaliel, Paul's teacher, who is remembered fondly in both the Talmud and NT.

7:52. “The Prophet will not rise out of Galilee”. The Greek NT renders this line “no prophet rises out of Galilee”, which cannot possibly be correct as more than one prophet actually did arise out of Galilee, including Elisha (1 Kings 4:12, 19:16), Jonah (2 Kings 14:25) and Nahum (“Capernaum” or “Nahum's Town” is named after him and tradition says his grave is in that place) and quite possibly several others. What appears to have happened is that the Greek version of the NT confused two things from the Aramaic. First the verb *qum* (rise) looks the same in both past and future tenses. And second, as we have seen throughout this part of Yochanan, the reference is to “The Prophet” rather than “a prophet”. As a result, the true reading from the Aramaic is not “no prophet rises out of Galilee” but instead “The Prophet [the Mashiyach] will not rise out of Galilee”! Since the context is talking about if Yeshua is the Mashiyach, this only makes sense. Otherwise the Pharisees don't even know their own history, which is an idea many would find untenable.

7:53 (which is not in the most ancient witnesses). The story of the woman taken in adultery (Yochanan 7:53-8:11), is missing from the four earliest Greek codices of John and from the Eastern Peshitta manuscript tradition as well. However, it is possible that during Mar Ephrem's writing career (350-373), the tradition of this later story was beginning to circulate in Aramaic, because it is only in these disputed lines that we get a direct reference to Yeshua physically writing anything. Hence Mar Ephrem's comment that "With a reed that he wrote, and that he chased the evil one from his house" (McCarthy, p. 302) may be indirectly referencing this event. However, even if that is true, it seems that in Mar Ephrem's time the story had not reached its final form in Aramaic, because all versions of that incident say Yeshua wrote on the ground with his finger, not a reed.

8:1 (2). While other research on the topic of the Pericopa Adulterae (John 7:53-8:11) suggests the story first originated in Old Latin texts, Syriac tradition offers another version. On folio 264-b of the Mingana manuscript there is rubric notation which translates as: This story is not found in all manuscripts, but Abba Mar Paulae found it one of the Alexandrian manuscripts and translated it into Syriac as written here in the Gospel of John. The find was also mentioned by A. Mingana in Catalog, Vol. 1, column 63. The Alexandrian manuscript is almost certainly written in Greek, but it may also be both traditions are correct. The original Pericopa Adulterae still seems to be from Old Latin and from there it could have easily been put into Greek at Alexandria and from there into Syriac. The "Abba Mar Paulae" mentioned is also known as Paul of Tella, who did a complete Aramaic Tanakh translation from the Greek Septuagint in 617 CE.

In a very interesting development, the Buchanan Bible Renewed Covenant manuscript, dated to 1190 CE and the oldest surviving manuscript of its kind from India, reads according to the older eastern text here, omitting John 7:53-8:11. This tells us that the Church of the East in India, also known as the St. Thomas Christians, resisted Catholic pressures to conform their readings to the later western variety. The fact that they were able to do so at such a late date is truly remarkable. For more information see William Wright, A Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge, p. 1041.

8:11. Although this entire incident of John 7:53-8:11 is lacking in the four earliest Greek codices of John and in all the earliest Aramaic Peshitta witnesses, one Aramaic translation of an original Greek work from the early 3rd century, known as *The Teaching of the Apostles* appears to have a memory of it or something very similar:

For if you do not receive him who repents, because you are merciless, you sin against YHWH Elohim, because you do not obey our Master and Elohim in acting as He acted ; for even He to that woman who had sinned, her whom the elders placed before him and left it to judgment at His hands, and went away ; He then who searches the hearts, asked her and said to her, " Have the Elders condemned you, my daughter? She said to him, No, Lord. And our Savior said, Go, and return no more to do this, neither do I condemn you." – Margaret Dunlop-Gibson, Didascalia Apostolorum in English, pp. 39-40.

It is very interesting to note that while this shorter version has the Pharisees bring the woman to Yeshua for judgment, the direct errors in the longer account that draw its authenticity into question are not nearly as overt here. In fact, if we did not have the longer version to consult and determine this was related to it, none of the other errors would be obvious. The shorter account, for example, does not directly say whether or not the man was also brought and the event could be happening with the Sanhedrin if all we knew was this shorter tale.

8:12. Aph (Gwynn, [A Select Library of Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church](#), p. 348): “And again he said, ‘I am the light of the world.’” Like the water ritual described earlier, Sukkot had a fire ritual as well. Called “the illumination of the Temple,” it involved special prayers and songs while four massive golden menorahs were lit up in the Court of Women, so that everyone could see them. These large menorahs were also fed by olive oil from special pipes, as described in Zechariah 4:11-12 though admittedly not for this exact application. However, the Talmudic memory for this ritual being done on the end of the first day of Sukkot is very strong (Sukkah 5:2). For more information see Dr. Jacob Neusner’s “The Mishnah” (Yale: 1992), pp. 288-289. Yeshua is also using this famous ritual to make the point that his light, like his waters, are eternal. The word he uses for “world” can also mean “universe” or “eternity”. And, if he were saying something like “I am the Eternal Light”, that would put him in direct contrast with the Temple, but that he would say he superseded it, as one greater than the Temple and Solomon was now here.

8:28 (2). This is an extremely interesting and profound reading in Aramaic. There are two fascinating possibilities which are both tied to the phrasing of amty (when) d’tryromatch (you will lift up) l’breh anasha (the son of man) hayadyn (then you will know) d’ena-na (that I am that I am). In this first case, Yeshua appears to be identifying himself as “I am that I am” or Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh, the name that Father Yah calls himself in Exodus 3;14-16. There are other times in Yochanan where this connection is clearer than here, but the very possibility is intriguing, though not conclusive. I have opted for a second option, which uses ena-na as an emphatic statement such as “It is I” or “I am he”, and hence, “When you lift up the Son of Man you will know that I am him, the Son of Man.” This is Yeshua telling the Pharisees that when they arrange for the Romans to “lift him up”, i.e. crucify him, they will shortly see a sign proving he is the Son of Man, or the Messiah. Though John does not mention what the sign was, a simple process of elimination proves that sign to be the three hours of darkness between the 6th and 9th hours mentioned by Matthew, Mark and Luke.

The phrase *tzebot naphshi* is unusual in Aramaic in terms of meaning “my will”; a much easier and clearer way to express that thought is with *tzevyani*, the same root for “will” Yeshua uses. Instead, this is a very rare application of using *nephesh* conjugated as first person possessive *naphshi* to mean “my own” or “my own self.” While that translation is not in doubt at all, the word *naphshi* opens up another possibility, perhaps intended simultaneously with the conventional reading, as “will my soul” literally or “will of my soul” idiomatically. If Yeshua means that as well, then the phrase “when you lift up the

Son of Man” is not talking about his Heavenly Father resurrecting him but when his enemies arrange for the Romans to lift him up on to the stake.

8:33. Greek translations suggest that the Pharisees knew nothing of the slavery of the Hebrews prior to the Exodus. However, Aramaic has two words that can mean "bondage." The one used here, **abdota**, refers to indentured servitude in working off a debt (as in Ya'akov working for Laban); not "slavery" as was the case in Egypt, which is another word. Upon leaving Egypt the Israelites spoiled gold from the Egyptians, as YHWH commanded Moshe. This was certainly not the original plan of the Egyptians, so the Pharisees' original point is that they are not indebted to anyone. However, Yeshua responds that if they think they get a free pass because of their ancestry, they are wrong. Every individual must work and apply himself to Torah according to Mashiyach, and be growing in righteousness, which is how one redeems their own soul from sin/debt; otherwise they remain slaves to sin.

8:58. ¹ In a very interesting variant, Mar Ephrem in his Diatessaron Commentary (McCarthy, p. 257), says “Before Abraham was, I am”, which agrees with the Greek. However, all known Peshitta witnesses and even OSS read “Before Abraham was, I was/I have been,” which makes a lot more sense in context. The Pharisees said, “You are not yet fifty years old and you claim to have seen Abraham”, so Yeshua says back that he was in fact before Abraham without explaining that such existence was not in the flesh, but as the unnamed heavenly Messenger who told Abraham to not sacrifice Isaac. It seems then, since Mar Ephrem did not read Greek, that some translations of NT documents from Greek into Aramaic or Syriac made their way to Mar Ephrem, perhaps and most likely during his stay at Edessa during the last ten years of his life.

Special Note: The events in Yochanan 9:1-41, where Yeshua heals another blind man, is on the Shabbat following the end of Sukkot, or Saturday, October 20th in 29 CE (Gregorian time). Ironically this is the time when Jews in Babylon would have recycled back to Genesis 1, even as we do here today, though Israel at this time was on a triennial cycle. Still, I find it very interesting that the blind man gets a new lease on life with new sight at the very moment nearly all Jews over the past 1700 years would have been recycling their time too! Shemini Etzeret ends up being the most thoroughly documented feast day, second only perhaps to Pesach itself, but who knew it stretched across parts of a whopping two chapters in Yochanan??? But, there is one more reference to Sukkot that we have not yet seen until now:

Here is the patience of the Set Apart believers who keep the commandments of Elohim, and the faith of Yeshua. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying: "Write, 'Blessed are the dead that die in Master YHWH from now on.' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their toils; for their deeds do accompany them.'" And I looked, and lo, a white cloud; and upon the cloud sat one who was like the Son of man; and on his head was a crown of gold, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another Messenger came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud. And he thrust his sickle over the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another Messenger came out of the temple that is in heaven,

having also a sharp sickle. And another Messenger came out from the altar, having authority over fire. And he cried with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying: "Thrust in your sickle which is sharp, and gather the clusters of the vineyard of the earth, because the grapes of the earth are ripe." And the Messenger thrust in his sickle on the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast (it) into the wine-press of the wrath of the great Elohim. And the wine-press was trodden, up to the horses' bridles, for a thousand and six hundred furlongs. (Revelation 14:12-20 AENT)

So it seems that we have come full circle from looking at the Sukkot patterns from Genesis! We now I believe can see that Yeshua's Second Coming is at least broadly linked to the Fall Feast season which, as it is also a Day of Master YHWH, is also a time for Him to cut down our enemies and re-purify the world, even as He also purified the First Temple at that time! Our harvest then is unto eternal life in Mashiyach as time resets again into the Millennial Age. What better time to do this than at Sukkot? And, perhaps this is also why, we have this reading:

And I saw new heavens and a new earth: for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away; and the sea was no more. And I saw the Set Apart city, the New Jerusalem, descending from Elohim out of heaven, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. **And I heard a great voice from heaven, which said: "Behold, the tabernacle of Elohim is with men; and he dwells with them:** they will be his people; and Elohim will be with them, an Elohim to them. And every tear will be wiped from their eyes; and there will no more be death, nor mourning, nor wailing; nor will pain be any more; because the former things are passed away." (Revelation 21:1-4-AENT)

And:

"I am Alap and the Taw, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the Completion. Blessed are they who do His (Master YHWH's) Mitzvot that they may have a right to the tree of life and may enter through the gates into the city. Without (will be) dogs and sorcerers, and sexual sinners and manslayers and idolaters, and everyone that loves and does falsehood. I Yeshua have sent my Messenger to testify to you these things before the assemblies. I am the root and offspring of Dawid: like the splendid star of the morning. **And the Spirit and the bride say, 'You come.' And let him that hears, say, 'You come.' And let him who thirsts, come; and he that is inclined, let him take the living water freely.**" (Revelation 22:13-17-AENT)

So the first passage tells us to wait for the return of the ultimate Tabernacle while the second one tells of a feast whose elements include a great wedding and eternal life for all. I'm ready for *that chag!* How about the rest of you? And with all that said and done, only one thing remains:

*CHAG SAMEYACH! Peace and blessings,
Andrew Gabriel Roth, September 29th, 2020*

Later this week we will be exploring the final parsha of the year, *Ve-Zot Ha-Baracha*, the Blessing of the Tribes, or Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12, our Haftorah reading will be Joshua 1:1-18 and our Renewed Covenant reading will be Matthew 17:1-9 and Jude 1:8-9. Stay tuned!