



Oasis

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Sukkot & the Incarnation

By Moshe Morrison

The sukkah is a picture of Yeshua, the Word who became flesh and “tabernacled” among us. (John 1:14) Literally, the Word became flesh and “sukkahed” among us. Philippians 2:6,7 makes a similar declaration: **“Who, although he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond servant, being made in the likeness of men.”**

Yeshua came from the most solid and secure, permanent place. Even our well-built homes are but less than a shadow of the reality of the eternal realm. The biggest and the best of everything in every sphere on earth cannot compare with the dwelling place of God. Though He hears every cry and is intimately aware of every need on earth, He Himself is not subject to pain, suffering and death. Therefore, He chose to come, not only to a place of suffering, but as a person, one of us, in order to share in that suffering. By taking on a human body He took on that temporal frame, susceptible to all the afflictions of humanity. This is demonstrated by our leaving the security and comfort of our homes on the festival of Sukkot in order to dwell in a temporary structure, exposed to the full range of the elements.

The Birth of Messiah

There is good evidence that Yeshua’s birth actually took place on the first day of Sukkot. (See Sukkot – Yeshua’s Birthday, Oasis - October, 2005)

If Yeshua was born on the first day of Sukkot, then His brit (circumcision) would have been on Shemini Atzeret (the Eighth [day] of Assembly), the special eighth day celebration when Israel assembled to worship after the seven days of Sukkot had ended. This has tremendous significance as it relates to Yeshua’s intercessory role.

Intercession for the Nations

Sukkot is also called the “Feast of Ingathering.” It is a harvest festival, a time of great rejoicing and thanksgiving over the bounty that God has provided. This image also carries within itself the ultimate prophetic meaning of the harvest. It is indeed a celebration of ingathering, but not only in an agricultural sense, but in relation to the souls of men.

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In Numbers 29, we are told that on each of the first seven days of Sukkot the same sacrifices are offered with the exception of the number of bulls that were to be slain. On the first day there were 13, then 12 the next day, then 11 the next day and so on until the seventh day when there were seven. This makes a total of 70 bulls, the number traditionally understood to represent the nations of the world. God had called Israel to be a priestly nation, therefore, it was only natural that they do as a nation what priests were supposed to do - offer sacrifices on behalf of all nations to bridge the gap between them and God.

This is also connected to the prayers for rain that are part of the concluding Sukkot liturgy. Rain is both a picture of the word of God and the Spirit of God (Deuteronomy 32:2 and Isaiah 55:10, Ezekiel 39:29 and Isaiah 32:15), symbolic of that which is needed to prepare the hearts of the nations in the same way as natural rain was needed to achieve the agricultural harvest.

The sacrifices offered on behalf of the nations were to atone for sin. The outpouring of the Spirit on all humanity (Joel 2:28) would cause the transformation in their hearts and ultimately bring them in to the kingdom of God alongside of Israel.

On the eighth day only one bull was offered and that was specifically for Israel. One traditional comment on this says, "On the seven days of the feast of Tabernacles, the Israelites offered seventy bullocks for the seventy nations of the world. God said: 'Therefore on the eighth day there shall be an assembly for yourselves.' (Num. 29:35)

Gentiles and Jews

This ties together with the birth and "brit" (circumcision) of Yeshua in a very interesting way. In Romans 4:9-12, there is a discourse regarding Abraham as the father of both the uncircumcised and the circumcised.

"Is this blessing upon the circumcised, or uncircumcised also? For we say, 'Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness.' How then was it reckoned? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised;...that he might be the father of all who believe."

So in a sense, Abraham was both a Gentile and a Jew, in order for him to be the father of the faithful from both groups.

Yeshua can be seen in a similar light. It is true that He was born of a Jewish mother, but the official entrance into the household of Israel by the Abrahamic covenant occurs on the eighth day at circumcision. So we could say that symbolically for the first seven days of His life, He was as it were, in appearance as a Gentile; like Abraham, uncircumcised

Considering that Yeshua was born on the first day of Sukkot, Israel's priestly role on behalf of the nations was taking place every day during the first week of His life, He who was born to be the great high priest of Jews and Gentiles. Then, on the eighth day, when the focus was turned back to Israel, He was ushered into the fold of His people through the covenant of circumcision. It then could be said of Him that He would be both **"a light of revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel."** (Luke 2:32)

The Climax of the Age

In this we also have a hint of the climax of the age, when, after ministering to the nations, Yeshua reveals Himself to His own people. This is confirmed symbolically in the story of Joseph who was a type of the Messiah. Through his hand the whole world received bread in time of famine (Genesis 41:57), yet he insisted that all the Gentiles of his house leave him alone with his brothers (a symbolic picture of the whole Jewish nation) when he revealed himself to them (Genesis 45:1).

Rav Shaul speaks to this in Romans 11. Though the wild olive branches of the Gentiles have been grafted onto the cultivated plant from which natural Jewish branches have been broken, that is not the end of the story.

"For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written." (Romans 11:25,26)

It is easy to see in Sukkot both Jewish nationalism and universalism. What has been missed for so many centuries is the same combination in the Incarnation. With the exception of blatant anti-Semites, it has pretty much been recognized in the Church world that Yeshua was born a Jew. However, it has not gone much beyond that. But the Jewishness of Yeshua extends beyond the incidentals of His birth and upbringing. It is intimately connected to His return to, and the redemption of His people as a spiritual and national entity. The New Covenant of which Jeremiah prophesied and that Yeshua inaugurated is a national covenant with the house of Israel.

God opened the doors for the nations to enter the kingdom of God; however, a handful of Jewish believers here and there among the nations is not the ultimate fulfillment for which the Messiah gave His life. It is "all Israel" that is on His heart and is His goal. When we understand the festival of Sukkot as an illustration of, and a framework for the Incarnation, we see how Sukkot includes both the harvest from among the nations and the whole house of Israel gathered together in God's sukkah. ✨

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Our Vision:

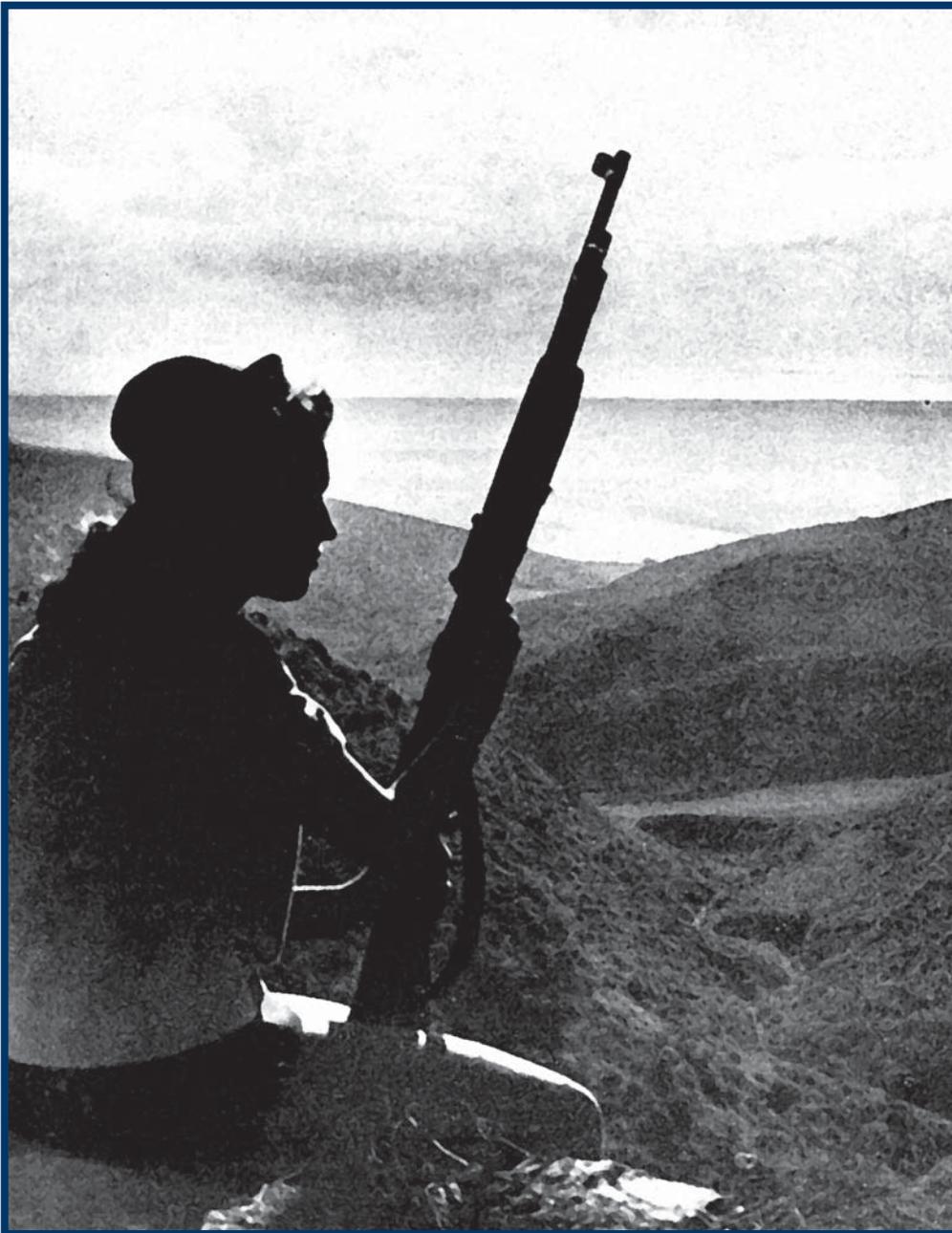
Tents of Mercy - to participate in today's historic exodus by assisting Israel's returning exiles.

No spectators in the Kingdom - to be a worshiping, sharing community based in homes, equipping each one for service.

Come back Yeshua - to welcome Yeshua home to Israel, by restoring the Jewish roots of New Covenant faith.

Soldiers and Kibbutzniks:

Heroes of



Massive stone reinforced bunkers and metal silhouettes of soldiers greet me, as I arrive at the peak of Mt. Bental in the Golan Heights. Morning wind whips across the top of the hill, while a cool mist surrounds it, gradually being burned off under the August sun. To the north, Mt. Hermon, brown and snowless, pops up in the distant background like a 9,000 foot 3-D picture in a fold-out kids' book.

From this dramatic vantage point you can see close to 360 degrees, observing the far north-eastern corner of Israel, right up to our border with Syria. Such a strategic, commanding position no doubt contributed to Mt. Bental being the site of one of the largest tank battles in history and bloodiest in the Yom Kippur War of 1973. Syria's tanks outnumbered Israel's by 1500 to 160. In spite of being reduced to only seven tanks, the Israelis withstood Syria's attack, causing them to retreat! The bunker I described is no longer an active army base, but a monument to this battle and to the Israeli soldiers who died in defense of their country.

In practically every direction one sees orchards, vineyards and carefully tilled fields. This abundance is the fruit of God's blessings and the hard work of kibbutzniks, the residents of Kibbutz Merom Golan, the first kibbutz established in the region after the 1967 war. A large fruit packing facility testifies to the fertility of the landscape surrounding the mountain. Their kibbutz is nestled against

the Golan

By Eitan Shishkoff

Mt. Bental and has become a favorite vacation spot for Israelis like ourselves, seeking refuge from the intense summer heat and congestion of the cities. Merom Golan's current location was established after the Yom Kippur War, only 35 years ago. This shocking fact underscores an immense achievement. How did they do it? There must have been a lot of inspiration, perspiration, cooperation and determination.

My mind and heart fill up with these interwoven themes of courage in battle, sacrifice, pioneering, and tenacity. I begin reflecting on our relatively young Messianic movement in Israel. In a way, we are the same age as the kibbutz. The Six Day War and Jerusalem's return to Jewish hands in 1967 was an enormous prophetic sign. However, it was about 35 years ago, following the Yom Kippur conflict, that Messianic congregations began to appear in the land. What qualities are needed among us to grow, to take root more extensively - to become established in a way that touches Israel as a nation? We need these same qualities that enabled the Israeli army to push back the surprise attack of Syria and Egypt. We need the perseverance and determination of the kibbutzniks who cleared land and dug wells, built homes and planted vineyards.

Before leaving the States to make aliyah, I wrote a piece for our first newsletter, published in April 1992. It was called "Spiritual Pioneers in Israel." In it I spoke of our calling to birth revival in Israel after 19 centuries of estrangement from our Messiah. I compared that calling with the early Zionists who came from Europe to rebuild a Jewish nation on the fallow ground of "Palestine." Now, sixteen

years after writing that article, I feel more strongly than ever that this is what it will take - the same attitudes of heart that have characterized the kibbutz pioneers and the dedicated infantry of Israel.

Of the institutions of Israel, the kibbutzim and the army are two of the most defining. Both demand collective action and shared resources. While one is distinctly egalitarian and the other hierarchical in nature, both speak of sublimating private goals for the achievement of larger, shared ones. It is no accident that such a strategic region as the Golan was first defended by Israeli soldiers and then developed by kibbutzniks.

What about our generation? It's never enough to look backwards. We view history in order to gain wisdom and inspiration to shape the future. We have been handed an opportunity - one crafted by the Most High as a prelude to His return to the planet. If that doesn't get our motor running, I don't know what will. Yet because of life's hardships and discouragements, the weakness of our frame and the forces of opposition, we must continually remind ourselves of the value of what we are called to do. Every wise commander, before sending troops into battle, reminds them of the values and purposes they are fighting for. Likewise, kibbutzniks pressed through the hardships and strain of pioneering by remembering the greater purpose of their endeavors. We must continually regain, refresh and reclarify the vision.

Nor can we proceed alone. In that original article, I wrote: "In the 1890's and following, the new pioneers relied on assistance from Jews and Christian

Zionists outside the land for supplies and encouragement. Over one hundred years later a similar relationship is being created. It is the linking in heart of those like ourselves, who have been called as spiritual pioneers, to the reestablishment of an Israel that embraces Yeshua as her King." Only with the dedicated help of Israel's friends in the Diaspora was the nation physically restored. Her spiritual restoration calls for nothing less.

Soldiers and kibbutzniks; these heroic pioneers captured my heart at Mt. Bental. We need to follow their example at this moment in the history of Israel. As spiritual pioneers, we must have both of these qualities. (1) Like IDF soldiers, we need the willingness and ability to fight, to stand, to sacrifice life if necessary. We must be brave, ready to battle side by side with fellow spiritual warriors for what we believe. (2) Like kibbutz farmers, we must be able to plow, to plant, to harvest, and to work patiently, day by day, sometimes seeing fruit only after many years. We will need to join our lives in a prolonged collective effort, raising our families and supporting each other.

Heading back down the winding road to the kibbutz I have fresh motivation. In an unexpected way, God met me on a mountain in the Golan. I know that although our task is difficult, there is no greater cause, nor higher goal to which we can devote our energies. I return to my wife, children and grandchildren who are waiting for a horseback ride at Kibbutz Merom Golan. I am glad to be an Israeli, glad to be a pioneer, ready to re-embrace the challenge of a lifetime. ✧