

THE TEMPLE

ITS MINISTRY AND SERVICES AS THEY WERE AT THE
TIME OF JESUS CHRIST

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CHAPTER 14

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

‘In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.’—[JOHN 7:37](#).

The Feast of Tabernacles

THE most joyous of all festive seasons in Israel was that of the ‘Feast of Tabernacles.’ It fell on a time of year when the hearts of the people would naturally be full of thankfulness, gladness, and expectancy. All the crops had been long stored; and now all fruits were also gathered, the vintage past, and the land only awaited the softening and refreshment of the ‘latter rain,’ to prepare it for a new crop. It was appropriate that, when the commencement of the harvest had been consecrated by offering the first ripe sheaf of barley, and the full ingathering of the corn by the two wave-loaves, there should now be a harvest feast of thankfulness and of gladness unto the Lord. But that was not all. As they looked around on the goodly land, the fruits of which had just enriched them, they must have remembered that by miraculous interposition the Lord their God had brought them to this land and given it them, and that He ever claimed it as peculiarly His own. For the land was strictly connected with the history of the people; and both the land and the history were linked with the mission of Israel. If the beginning of the harvest had pointed back to the birth of Israel in their Exodus from Egypt, and forward to the true Passover-sacrifice in the future; if the corn-harvest was connected with the giving of the law on Mount Sinai in the past, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost; the harvest-thanksgiving of the Feast of Tabernacles reminded Israel, on the one hand, of their dwelling in booths in the wilderness, while, on the other hand, it pointed to the final harvest when Israel’s mission should be completed, and all nations gathered unto the Lord. Thus the first of the three great annual feasts spoke, in the presentation of the first sheaf, of the founding of the Church; the second of its harvesting, when the Church in its present state should be presented as two leavened wave-loaves; while the third pointed forward to the full harvest in the end, when ‘in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things.... And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up

death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people (Israel) shall He take away from all the earth.’¹

The Names of the Feast

That these are not ideal comparisons, but the very design of the Feast of Tabernacles, appears not only from the language of the prophets and the peculiar services of the feast, but also from its position in the Calendar, and even from the names by which it is designated in Scripture. Thus in its reference to the harvest it is called ‘the feast of ingathering;’¹ in that to the history of Israel in the past, ‘the Feast of Tabernacles;’² while its symbolical bearing on the future is brought out in its designation as emphatically ‘the feast;’³ and ‘the Feast of Jehovah.’⁴ In this sense also Josephus, Philo, and the Rabbis (in many passages of the *Mishnah*) single it out from all the other feasts. And quite decisive on the point is the description of the ‘latter-day’ glory at the close of the prophecies of Zechariah, where the conversion of all nations is distinctly connected with the ‘Feast of Tabernacles.’⁵ That this reference is by no means isolated will appear in the sequel.

The Time of the Feast

The Feast of Tabernacles was the third of the great annual festivals, at which every male in Israel was to appear before the Lord in the place which He should choose. It fell on the 15th of the seventh month, or Tishri (corresponding to September or the beginning of October), as the Passover had fallen on the 15th of the first month. The significance of these numbers in themselves and relatively will not escape attention, the more so that this feast closed the original festive calendar; for Purim and ‘the feast of the dedication of the Temple,’ which both occurred later in the season, were of post-Mosaic origin. The Feast of Tabernacles, or, rather (as it should be called), of ‘booths,’ lasted for seven days—from the 15th to the 21st Tishri—and was followed by an Octave

¹ Isa. 25:6–8; comp. Rev. 21:4, etc.

¹ Ex. 23:16; 34:22.

² Lev. 23:34; and specially ver. 43; Deut. 16:13, 16; 31:10; 2 Chron. 8:13; Ezra 3:4.

³ 1 Kings 8:2; 2 Chron. 5:3; 7:8, 9.

⁴ So, literally, in Lev. 23:39.

⁵ Zech. 14:16–21.

on the 22nd Tishri. But this eighth day, though closely connected with the Feast of Tabernacles, formed no part of that feast, as clearly shown by the difference in the sacrifices and the ritual, and by the circumstance that the people no longer lived in 'booths.' The first day of the feast, and also its Octave, or Azereth (*clausura, conclusio*), were to be days of 'holy convocation,'¹ and each 'a Sabbath,'² not in the sense of the weekly Sabbath, but of festive rest in the Lord,³ when no servile work of any kind might be done.

It followed close upon the Day of Atonement

There is yet another important point to be noticed. The 'Feast of Tabernacles' followed closely on the Day of Atonement. Both took place in the seventh month; the one on the 10th, the other on the 15th of Tishri. What the seventh day, or Sabbath, was in reference to the week, the seventh month seems to have been in reference to the year. It closed not only the sacred cycle, but also the agricultural or working year. It also marked the change of seasons, the approach of rain and of the winter equinox, and determined alike the commencement and the close of a sabbatical year.⁴ Coming on the 15th of this seventh month—that is, at full moon, when the 'sacred' month had, so to speak, attained its full strength—the Feast of Tabernacles appropriately followed five days after the Day of Atonement, in which the sin of Israel had been removed, and its covenant relation to God restored. Thus a sanctified nation could keep a holy feast of harvest joy unto the Lord, just as in the truest sense it will be 'in that day'¹ when the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles shall be really fulfilled.²

The Three Chief Features of the Feast

¹ Lev. 23:35, 36.

² Lev. 23:39.

³ Lev. 23:25, 32.

⁴ Deut. 31:10.

¹ Zech. 14:20.

² Quite another picture is drawn in Hos. 9., which seems also to refer to the Feast of Tabernacles (see specially verse 5). Indeed, it is remarkable how many allusions to this feast occur in the writings of the prophets, as if its types were the goal of all their desires.

Three things specially marked the Feast of Tabernacles: its joyous festivities, the dwelling in 'booths,' and the peculiar sacrifices and rites of the week. The first of these was simply characteristic of a 'feast of ingathering:' 'Because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice—thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates.' Nor were any in Israel to 'appear before the Lord empty: every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which He hath given thee.'³ Votive, freewill, and peace-offerings would mark their gratitude to God, and at the meal which ensued the poor, the stranger, the Levite, and the homeless would be welcome guests, for the Lord's sake. Moreover, when the people saw the treasury chests opened and emptied at this feast for the last time in the year, they would remember their brethren at a distance, in whose name, as well as their own, the daily and festive sacrifices were offered. Thus their liberality would not only be stimulated, but all Israel, however widely dispersed, would feel itself anew one before the Lord their God and in the courts of His House. There was, besides, something about this feast which would peculiarly remind them, if not of their dispersion, yet of their being 'strangers and pilgrims in the earth.' For its *second characteristic* was, that during the seven days of its continuance 'all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths; that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt.'¹

The Booths

As usual, we are met at the outset by a controversy between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The law had it:² 'Ye shall take you on the first day the fruit³ of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook,' which the Sadducees understood (as do the modern Karaite Jews) to refer to the materials whence the booths were to be constructed, while the Pharisees applied it to what the worshippers were to carry in their hands. The latter interpretation is, in all likelihood,

³ Deut. 16:13–17.

¹ Lev. 23:42, 43.

² Lev. 23:40.

³ So correctly in the margin.

the correct one; it seems borne out by the account of the festival at the time of Nehemiah,⁴ when the booths were constructed of branches of other trees than those mentioned in [Leviticus 23](#); and it was universally adopted in practice at the time of Christ. The *Mishnah* gives most minute details as to the height and construction of these 'booths,' the main object being to prevent any invasion of the law. Thus it must be a real booth, and constructed of boughs of living trees, and solely for the purposes of this festival. Hence it must be high enough, yet not too high—at least ten handbreadths, but not more than thirty feet; three of its walls must be of boughs; it must be fairly covered with boughs, yet not so shaded as not to admit sunshine, nor yet so open as to have not sufficient shade, the object in each case being neither sunshine nor shade, but that it should be a real booth of boughs of trees. It is needless to enter into further details, except to say that these booths, and not their houses, were to be the regular dwelling of all in Israel during the week, and that, except in very heavy rain, they were to eat, sleep, pray, study—in short, entirely to live in them. The only exceptions were in favour of those absent on some pious duty, the sick, and their attendants,¹ women, slaves, and infants who were still depending on their mothers.² Finally, the rule was that, 'whatever might contract Levitical defilement (such as boards, cloth, etc.), or whatever did not grow out of the earth, might not be used' in constructing the 'booths.'³

The Fruit and Palm Branches

It has already been noticed that, according to the view universally prevalent at the time of Christ, the direction on the first day of the feast to 'take the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook,' was applied to what the worshippers were to carry in their hands. The Rabbis ruled, that 'the fruit of the goodly trees' meant the *æthrog*, or citron, and 'the boughs of thick trees' the myrtle, provided it had 'not more berries than leaves.' The *æthrog*s must be without blemish or deficiency of any kind; the palm branches at least three handbreadths high, and fit to be shaken; and each branch fresh, entire, unpolluted, and not taken from any idolatrous grove. Every worshipper carried the *æthrog* in his left hand,

⁴ [Neh. 8:15, 18](#).

¹ [Succ. 2. 4](#).

² [Succ. 2. 8](#).

³ [Succ. 1. 4](#).

and in his right the *lulav*, or palm, with myrtle and willow branch on either side of it, tied together on the outside with its own kind, though in the inside it might be fastened even with gold thread.¹ There can be no doubt that the *lulav* was intended to remind Israel of the different stages of their wilderness journey, as represented by the different vegetation—the palm branches recalling the valleys and plains, the ‘boughs of thick trees,’ the bushes on the mountain heights, and the willows those brooks from which God had given His people drink;² while the *æthrog* was to remind them of the fruits of the good land which the Lord had given them. The *lulav* was used in the Temple on each of the seven festive days, even children, if they were able to shake it, being bound to carry one. If the first day of the feast fell on a Sabbath, the people brought their *lulavs* on the previous day into the synagogue on the Temple Mount, and fetched them in the morning, so as not needlessly to break the Sabbath rest.

The Offerings

The *third characteristic* of the Feast of Tabernacles was its offerings. These were altogether peculiar. The sin-offering for each of the seven days was ‘one kid of the goats.’ The burnt-offerings consisted of bullocks, rams, and lambs, with their appropriate meat- and drink-offerings. But, whereas the number of the rams and lambs remained the same on each day of the festival, that of the bullocks decreased every day by one—from thirteen on the first to seven bullocks on the last day, ‘that great day of the feast.’ As no special injunctions are given about the drink-offering, we infer that it was, as usually,¹ $\frac{1}{4}$ of a hin of wine for each lamb, $\frac{1}{3}$ for each ram, and $\frac{1}{2}$ for each bullock (the hin = 1 gallon 2 pints). The ‘meat-offering’ is expressly fixed² at $\frac{1}{10}$ of an ephah of flour, mixed with $\frac{1}{4}$ of a hin of oil, for each lamb; $\frac{2}{10}$ of an ephah, with $\frac{1}{3}$ hin of oil, for each ram; and $\frac{3}{10}$ of an ephah, with $\frac{1}{2}$ hin of oil, for each bullock. Three things are remarkable about these burnt-offerings, First, they are evidently the characteristic sacrifice of the Feast of Tabernacles. As compared with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the number of the rams and lambs is double, while that of the bullocks is fivefold (14 during the Passover week, 5×14 during that of Tabernacles). Secondly, the number of

¹*Succ.* 3. 8.

² See the Art, by Pressel in Herzog’s *Real.-Encycl.* vol. 8.

¹*Numb.* 15:1-10.

²*Numb.* 29:12, etc.

the burnt-sacrifices, whether taking each kind by itself or all of them together, is always divisible by the sacred number *seven*. We have for the week 70 bullocks, 14 rams, and 98 lambs, or altogether 182 sacrifices (26×7), to which must be added 336 (48×7) tenths of ephahs of flour for the meat-offering. We will not pursue the tempting subject of this symbolism of numbers further than to point out that, whereas the sacred number 7 appeared at the Feast of Unleavened Bread only in the number of its days, and at Pentecost in the period of its observance (7×7 days after Passover), the Feast of Tabernacles lasted seven days, took place when the seventh month was at its full height, and had the number 7 impressed on its characteristic sacrifices. It is not so easy to account for the third peculiarity of these sacrifices—that of the daily diminution in the number of bullocks offered. The common explanation, that it was intended to indicate the decreasing sanctity of each successive day of the feast, while the sacred number 7 was still to be reserved for the last day, is not more satisfactory than the view propounded in the Talmud, that these sacrifices were offered, not for Israel, but for the nations of the world: ‘There were seventy bullocks, to correspond to the number of the seventy nations in the world.’ But did the Rabbis understand the prophetic character of this feast? An attentive consideration of its peculiar ceremonial will convince that it must have been exceedingly difficult to ignore it entirely.

On the day before the Feast of Tabernacles—the 14th Tishri—the festive pilgrims had all arrived in Jerusalem. The ‘booths’ on the roofs, in the courtyards, in streets and squares, as well as roads and gardens, within a Sabbath day’s journey, must have given the city and neighbourhood an unusually picturesque appearance. The preparation of all that was needed for the festival—purification, the care of the offerings that each would bring, and friendly communications between those who were to be invited to the sacrificial meal—no doubt sufficiently occupied their time. When the early autumn evening set in, the blasts of the priests’ trumpets on the Temple Mount announced to Israel the advent of the feast.

Special Service at the Temple

As at the Passover and at Pentecost, the altar of burnt-offering was cleansed during the first night-watch, and the gates of the Temple were thrown open immediately after midnight. The time till the beginning of the ordinary morning sacrifice was occupied in examining the various sacrifices and offerings that were to be brought during the day. While the morning sacrifice was being prepared, a priest, accompanied by a joyous

procession with music, went down to the Pool of Siloam, whence he drew water into a golden pitcher, capable of holding three log (rather more than two pints). But on the Sabbaths they fetched the water from a golden vessel in the Temple itself, into which it had been carried from Siloam on the preceding day. At the same time that the procession started for Siloam, another went to a place in the Kedron valley, close by, called Motza, whence they brought willow branches, which, amidst the blasts of the priests' trumpets, they stuck on either side of the altar of burnt-offering, bending them over towards it, so as to form a kind of leafy canopy. Then the ordinary sacrifice proceeded, the priest who had gone to Siloam so timing it, that he returned just as his brethren carried up the pieces of the sacrifice to lay them on the altar. As he entered by the 'Watergate,' which obtained its name from this ceremony, he was received by a three-fold blast from the priests' trumpets. The priest then went up the rise of the altar and turned to the left, where there were two silver basins with narrow holes—the eastern a little wider for the wine, and the western somewhat narrower for the water. Into these the wine of the drink-offering was poured, and at the same time the water from Siloam, the people shouting to the priest, 'Raise thy hand,' to show that he really poured the water into the basin which led to the base of the altar. For, sharing the objections of the Sadducees, Alexander Jannæus, the Maccabean king-priest (about 95 B.C.), had shown his contempt for the Pharisees by pouring the water at this feast upon the ground, on which the people pelted him with their *æthrogs*, and would have murdered him, if his foreign body-guard had not interfered, on which occasion no less than six thousand Jews were killed in the Temple.

The Music of the Feast

As soon as the wine and the water were being poured out, the Temple music began, and the 'Hallel'¹ was sung in the manner previously prescribed, and to the accompaniment of flutes, except on the Sabbath and on the first day of the feast, when flute-playing was not allowed, on account of the sanctity of the days. When the choir came to these words,² 'O give thanks to the Lord,' and again when they sang,³ 'O work then now salvation, Jehovah;' and once more at the close,⁴ 'O give thanks unto the Lord,' all the

¹ [Psa. 113–118.](#)

² [Psa. 118:1.](#)

³ [Psa. 118:25.](#)

worshippers shook their *lulavs* towards the altar. When, therefore, the multitudes from Jerusalem, on meeting Jesus, ‘cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way, and ... cried, saying, O then, work now salvation to the Son of David!’⁵ they applied, in reference to Christ, what was regarded as one of the chief ceremonies of the Feast of Tabernacles, praying that God would now from ‘the highest’ heavens manifest and send that salvation in connection with the Son of David, which was symbolised by the pouring out of water. For though that ceremony was considered by the Rabbis as bearing a subordinate reference to the dispensation of the rain, the annual fall of which they imagined was determined by God at that feast, its main and real application was to the future outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as predicted—probably in allusion to this very rite—by Isaiah the prophet.¹ Thus the Talmud says distinctly: ‘Why is the name of it called, The drawing out of water? Because of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, according to what is said: “With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”’ Hence, also, the feast and the peculiar joyousness of it are alike designated as those of ‘the drawing out of water;’ for, according to the same Rabbinical authorities, the Holy Spirit dwells in man only through joy.

The Daily Circuit of the Altar

A similar symbolism was expressed by another ceremony Which took place at the close, not of the daily, but of the festive sacrifices. On every one of the seven days the priests formed in procession, and made the circuit of the altar, singing: ‘O then, now work salvation, Jehovah! O Jehovah, give prosperity!’² But on the seventh, ‘that great day of the feast,’ they made the circuit of the altar seven times, remembering how the walls of Jericho had fallen in similar circumstances, and anticipating how, by the direct

⁴ [Psa. 118:29](#).

⁵ [Matt. 21:8, 9](#); [John 12:12, 13](#).

¹ [Isaiah 12:3](#). Of course, one or other of these two views is open, either, that the words of Isaiah were based on the ceremony of water-pouring, or that this ceremony was derived from the words of Isaiah. In either case, however, our inference from it holds good. It is only fair to add, that by some the expression ‘water’ in [Isa. 12:3](#) is applied to the ‘law.’ But this in no way vitiates our conclusion, as the Jews expected the general conversion of the Gentiles to be a conversion to Judaism.

² [Psa. 118:25](#).

interposition of God, the walls of heathenism would fall before Jehovah, and the land lie open for His people to go in and possess it.

The References in [John 7:37](#)

We can now in some measure realise the event recorded in [John 7:37](#). The festivities of the Week of Tabernacles were drawing to a close. 'It was the last day, that great day of the feast.' It obtained this name, although it was not one of 'holy convocation,' partly because it closed the feast, and partly from the circumstances which procured it in Rabbinical writings the designations of 'Day of the Great Hosannah,' on account of the sevenfold circuit of the altar with 'Hosannah;' and 'Day of Willows,' and 'Day of Beating the Branches,' because all the leaves were shaken off the willow boughs, and the palm branches beaten in pieces by the side of the altar. It was on that day, after the priest had returned from Siloam with his golden pitcher, and for the last time poured its contents to the base of the altar; after the 'Hallel' had been sung to the sound of the flute, the people responding and worshipping as the priests three times drew the threefold blasts from their silver trumpets—just when the interest of the people had been raised to its highest pitch, that, from amidst the mass of worshippers, who were waving towards the altar quite a forest of leafy branches as the last words of [Psa. 108](#). were chanted—a voice was raised which resounded through the Temple, startled the multitude, and carried fear and hatred to the hearts of their leaders. It was Jesus, who 'stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.' Then by faith in Him should each one truly become like the Pool of Siloam, and from his inmost being 'rivers of living waters flow.'¹ 'This spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive.' Thus the significance of the rite, in which they had just taken part, was not only fully explained, but the mode of its fulfilment pointed out. The effect was instantaneous. It could not but be, that in that vast assembly, so suddenly roused by being brought face to face with Him in whom every type and prophecy is fulfilled, there would be many who, 'when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. Others said, This is the Christ.' Even the Temple-guard, whose duty it would have been in such circumstances to arrest one who had so interrupted the services of the day, and presented himself to the people in such a light, owned the spell of His words, and dared not to lay hands on Him. 'Never man spake like this man,' was the only account they

¹[John 7:38](#).

could give of their unusual weakness, in answer to the reproaches of the chief priests and Pharisees. The rebuke of the Jewish authorities, which followed, is too characteristic to require comment. One only of their number had been deeply moved by the scene just witnessed in the Temple. Yet, timid as usually, Nicodemus only laid hold of this one point, that the Pharisees had traced the popular confession of Jesus to their ignorance of the law, to which he replied, in the genuine Rabbinical manner of arguing, without meeting one's opponent face to face: 'Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?'

The Man born Blind

But matters were not to end with the wrangling of priests and Pharisees. The proof which Nicodemus had invited them to seek from the teaching and the miracles of Christ was about to be displayed both before the people and their rulers in the healing of the blind man. Here also it was in allusion to the ceremonial of the Feast of Tabernacles that Jesus, when He saw the 'man blind from his birth,' said:¹ 'As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world;' having 'anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,' just as He told him, 'Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam (which is, by interpretation, Sent).' For the words, 'I am the light of the world,' are the same which He had just spoken in the Temple,¹ and they had in all probability been intended to point to another very peculiar ceremony which took place at the Feast of Tabernacles. In the words of the *Mishnah*,² the order of the services for that feast was as follows: 'They went first to offer the daily sacrifice in the morning, then the additional sacrifices; after that the votive and freewill-offerings; from thence to the festive meal; from thence to the study of the law; and after that to offer the evening sacrifice; and from thence they went to the joy of the pouring out of the water.' It is this 'joy of the pouring out of the water' which we are about to describe.

The Ceremonies in the Court of the Women

At the close of the first day of the feast the worshippers descended to the Court of the Women, where great preparations had been made. Four golden candelabras were

¹ John 9:5.

¹ John 8:12.

² *Succah* 5. 2, 3, 4.

there, each with four golden bowls, and against them rested four ladders; and four youths of priestly descent held, each a pitcher of oil, capable of holding one hundred and twenty log, from which they filled each bowl. The old, worn breeches and girdles of the priests served for wicks to these lamps. There was not a court in Jerusalem that was not lit up by the light of 'the house of water-pouring.' The 'Chassidim' and 'the men of Deed' danced before the people with flaming torches in their hands, and sang before them hymns and songs of praise; and the Levites, with harps, and lutes, and cymbals, and trumpets, and instruments of music without number, stood upon the fifteen steps which led down from the Court of Israel to that of the Women, according to the number of the fifteen Songs of Degrees in the Book of Psalms. They stood with their instruments of music, and sang hymns. Two priests, with trumpets in their hands, were at the upper gate (that of Nicanor), which led from the Court of Israel to that of the Women. At cock-crowing they drew a threefold blast. As they reached the tenth step, they drew another threefold blast; as they entered the court itself, they drew yet another threefold blast; and so they blew as they advanced, till they reached the gate which opens upon the east (the Beautiful Gate). As they came to the eastern gate, they turned round towards the west (to face the Holy Place), and said: 'Our fathers who were in this place, they turned their back upon the Sanctuary of Jehovah, and their faces toward the east, and they worshipped towards the rising sun; but as for us, our eyes are towards the Lord.'

A fragment of one of the hymns sung that night has been preserved. It was sung by the 'Chassidim' and 'men of Deed,' and by those who did penance in their old age for the sins of their youth:

The Chassidim and Men of Deed.

'Oh joy, that our youth, devoted, sage,
Doth bring no shame upon our old age!'

The Penitents.

'Oh joy, we can in our old age
Repair the sins of youth not sage!'

Both in unison.

'Yes, happy he on whom no early guilt doth rest,
And he who, having sinned, is now with pardon blest.

Significance of the Illumination

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It seems clear that this illumination of the Temple was regarded as forming part of, and having the same symbolical meaning as, 'the pouring out of water.' The light shining out of the Temple into the darkness around, and lighting up every court in Jerusalem, must have been intended as a symbol not only of the Shechinah which once filled the Temple, but of that 'great light' which 'the people that walked in darkness' were to see, and which was to shine 'upon them that dwell in the land of the shadow of death.'¹ May it not be, that such prophecies as [Isa. 9.](#) and [60.](#) were connected with this symbolism? At any rate, it seems most probable that Jesus had referred to this ceremony in the words spoken by Him in the Temple at that very Feast of Tabernacles: 'I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.'²

The Six Minor Days

Only the first of the seven days of this feast was 'a holy convocation;' the other six were 'minor festivals.' On each day, besides the ordinary morning and evening sacrifices, the festive offerings prescribed in [Numb. 29:12-38](#) were brought. The Psalms sung at the drink-offering after the festive sacrifices (or *Musaph*, as they are called), were, for the first day of the feast, [Psa. 55.](#); for the second, [Psa. 29.](#); for the third, [Psa. 50](#), from ver. 16; for the fourth, [Psa. 94](#), from ver. 16; for the fifth, [Psa. 94](#), from ver. 8; for the sixth, [Psa. 81](#), from ver. 6; for the last day of the feast, [Psa. 82](#), from ver. 5. As the people retired from the altar at the close of each day's service, they exclaimed, 'How beautiful art thou, O altar!'—or, according to a later version, 'We give thanks to Jehovah and to thee, O altar!' All the four-and-twenty orders of the priesthood were engaged in the festive offerings, which were apportioned among them according to definite rules, which also fixed how the priestly dues were to be divided among them. Lastly, on every sabbatical year the Law was to be publicly read on the first day of the feast.¹

On the afternoon of the seventh day of the feast the people began to remove from the 'booths.' For at the Octave, on the 22nd of Tishri, they lived no longer in booths, nor did they use the *lulav*. But it was observed as 'a holy convocation;' and the festive sacri-

¹ [Isa. 9:2.](#)

² [John 8:12.](#)

¹ [Deut. 31:10-13.](#) In later times only certain portions were read, the law as a whole being sufficiently known from the weekly prelections in the synagogues.

fices prescribed in [Numb. 29:36–38](#) were offered, although no more by all the twenty-four courses of priests, and finally the ‘Hallel’ sung at the drink-offering.

The Pouring and Lighting post-Mosaic

It will have been observed that the two most important ceremonies of the Feast of Tabernacles—the pouring out of water and the illumination of the Temple—were of post-Mosaic origin. According to Jewish tradition, the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night had first appeared to Israel on the 15th of Tishri, the first day of the feast. On that day also Moses was said to have come down from the Mount, and announced to the people that the Tabernacle of God was to be reared among them. We know that the dedication of Solomon’s Temple and the descent of the Shechinah took place at this feast.² Nor can we greatly err in finding an allusion to it in this description of heavenly things: ‘After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.’¹

Whether or not our suggestions be adopted as to the typical meaning of the two great ceremonies of the ‘pouring out of the water’ and the Temple illumination, the fact remains, that the Feast of Tabernacles is the one only type in the Old Testament which has not yet been fulfilled.

² [1 Kings 8.](#); [2 Chron. 7.](#)

¹ [Rev. 7:9, 10.](#)