

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON FEAST OF TABERNACLES

1. **Question:** What is the Feast of Tabernacles?

Answer: The Feast of Tabernacles is an annual festival that was instituted by the Almighty God since the days of Moses the prophet during the historic journey of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan. On that occasion the children of Israel were by law enjoined to make offerings to the Lord and to dwell in booths as a memorial of their experience in the wilderness when God made them live in booths under His protection. The ordinance concerning the Feast is recorded at Leviticus 23: 33-43. It is often called THE FEAST OF FEASTS OR THE FEAST OF REJOICING as It was celebrated to show appreciation to God for His goodness on His people and to pray for more of His benefits in the succeeding year. It is also called the Feast of Ingathering because it was celebrated when they had gathered in their corn and their wine. - Deuteronomy 16:13.

God's instruction was to the effect that the Feast should be celebrated on the 15th day of the seventh month of the Jewish year, and it was to last eight days. The law of God is that it should be celebrated for eight days. This was the case at the time of Moses, at the time when Solomon dedicated the Temple, at the time of Nehemiah and of Jesus Christ., who addressed the people on the Last and Great Day. – Leviticus 23:33-43; 2Chronicles 7:8-11; Nehemiah 8:14-18; John 7:1-37

2. **Question:** Why are you not celebrating other Feasts such as the Feast of Passover, Unleavened Bread, Harvest?

Answer: Unlike the other major Jewish festivals such as the Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread and Harvest, the Feast of Tabernacles is still relevant in the Christian era,.- 1 Corinthians 5:7,8; Luke 10:1,2; Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43.

3. **Question:** Why should we celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles when we are not Jews?

Answer:

a. The Bible shows clearly that Christians are spiritual Jews and therefore are required to keep the instructions God gave the Jews which were not amended or cancelled by Jesus Christ. What many people do not know is the fact that there are spiritual Jews as there are natural Jews. The natural Jews are those who are Abraham's children in the flesh -that is, by the circumstance of birth. On the other hand, the spiritual

Jews are those who become the children of Abraham by faith, notwithstanding their place of birth or origin. In this Christian Era, it is the spiritual Jews-not those in the flesh-that are acknowledged as the "Israel of God" or the children of God. - Romans 9: 6-8; Galatians 6: 12-16.

Said St. Paul: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Romans 2: 28, 29) He further said: "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." - Galatians 3: 7-9.

b. Also, the founder of Christianity - Jesus Christ – celebrated the Feast as an example to his disciples: he in fact played a very prominent role by teaching a large crowd of celebrants openly. (John 7:1-14, 37,38) It is clearly stated in the Bible that Jesus Christ, "the greater and more perfect tabernacle" of God would be among those who worship Him in truth at the end of the world in which we are now living. – Ezekiel 37:27; Hebrews 9:11; Revelation 21: 3-7; and

There is a definite prophetic instruction that in this age of the last days the Feast should be celebrated by all peoples irrespective of race or tribe to the glory of God and for their own blessings. – Zechariah 14:16-19; Deuteronomy 6:24,25.

4. Question:What is the Essence of the Feast? What is its significance:

Answer: The most important feature of the Christian Feast of Tabernacles is the preaching or expounding of the truth that enables worshippers to learn the fear of God and practise His righteousness. (Deuteronomy 31:10-13; John 7:14-16) The observance of the Feast of Tabernacles reminds us that we are sojourners under God's providential protection and care in this evil world and in our spiritual march to the anti-typical land of Canaan – the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, which is the only hope of mankind. And that in this Kingdom age, Jesus Christ, the spiritual Tabernacle of God is present in spirit among men to bless all families of the earth who understand and do his will. It is a time to show appreciation to God for His goodness on us throughout the year and to pray for more of His blessings. Moreover, God takes pleasure in His people gathering to praise Him. In the multitude of the people is the KING'S honour. - Proverbs 14:28; Psalm 100:3; 95:6,7; Isaiah 43:21.

5. **Question:** Do you make sacrifices as the Jews of old did during the Feast as required by the Mosaic law?

Answer: No. Jesus Christ has fulfilled the type and thus put an end to that law. (John 1:17, 29; Galatians 3:24,25) He was sacrificed for the sins of all who believe in him and worship God in spirit and in truth. "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered ONE SACRIFICE FOR SINS FOR EVER, sat down on the right hand of God" – Hebrews 10:11,12.

6. **Question:** What of other aspects of the celebrations such as celebrating it in the seventh month?

Answer: Christians are not bound to keep the letters of the law but to observe the spirit of it as exemplified by Christ the Lord and as stated by his apostles. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17; 2 Corinthians 3:6,17) In celebrating the Feast therefore, the children of God must do so within the context of the grace brought by Jesus Christ. We are not bound to observe the Feast in the seventh month or to alternate the venues as stipulated in the law. We are also not to make sacrifices any more because Jesus Christ has been sacrificed for us once and for all. (Hebrews 10:10-12; John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7) St. Paul declared: "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." – 2 Corinthians 3:17

7. **Question:** What are the highlights of the Feast of Tabernacles? What are some of the sermons to be preached during the eight-day celebrations?

ANSWER: The highlights are the sermons to be delivered for the enlightenment and comfort of the children of God and as witness to the nations. There is the address of the Chairman of the Executive Board. Apart from that address, 15 other lectures are to be delivered in the course of the eight-day event. The open air lectures give people the opportunity to ask questions which are answered with quotations from the Bible.

Processions: One of the attractions of the Feast is the street procession by celebrants through the major streets of Warri. There would be processions on the first day of the Feast, (December 16, 2012) from four points in Warri to Salem City. There would also be the Christian Women Procession on Saturday and the last and Great Day Procession on Sunday on the last day of the Feast. During the processions, gaily but decently dressed members and friends of the Church sing and dance through the main streets of Warri to Salem City, the Church headquarters through the media of their cultures such as Urhobo, Itsekiri, Edo, Kalabari, Igbo, Ijaw, Itsekiri, Efik, Hausa and so on. The banners and sign boards and floats conveying musical instruments and singers identify most of the Branches participating in the procession, which are no fewer than 80 – 100 by the grace of God,

Thanksgiving: After the processions, groups and individual members of the Church make donations to the Lord's Ministry of GKS, they also do offerings and Special Thanksgiving to thank God for his goodness and to facilitate the work of spreading the gospel.

Assemblies: Apart from the Christian Women Assembly, and the Children's Assembly, there is also an assembly for members of the Church who are 70 and above. This is coordinated or organised by CONFAM , (Concern for Aged Members), a charity group in the Church. They are given tips on healthy living, strengthened with exhortations and generally made to refresh and relax themselves.

Musical Performances: No fewer than 40 choral groups entertain during the Christian Music Festival, where the members use their indigenous cultures to magnify the name of God. Significantly, as should be expected of true Christians, all the ethnic groups sing and dance as members of one family, by the grace of God. The groups include the the Suile Aghogho Choral Group, Warri, Aladja Choral group, the Kingdomite Orchestra Aba, the Shogunlethe Itsekiri Group Warri, Yoruba group Warri, Owerri Urban Orchestra, Boma Nume Orchestra Port Harcourt, Ekiti Cultural Group Ado-Ekiti and Chidi Ebere Orchestra, Warri

8. Question: What benefit does one derive or get from celebrating the Feast?

Answer: Proper understanding of the will of God enables one to work in harmony with Him so as to be blessed by Him. (John 9:31; 8:29; 1 Peter 3:10-13)The Bible says:"And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our

good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD OUR God, as He hath commanded us.” - Deuteronomy 6: 24,25; Matthew 5:17-20.

God said He would bless the celebrants with “rain” which symbolizes His blessings in various ways, and protect them from year to year. (Deuteronomy 16:13-17; Zechariah 14: 16-19. The Church has been blessed spiritually and materially over the years for observing the injunction regarding the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles by His grace..