

the fatherless, and the widow in your midst, at the place where the LORD your God will choose to establish His name. ¹²Bear in mind that you were slaves in Egypt, and take care to obey these laws.

¹³After the ingathering from your threshing floor and your vat, you shall hold the Feast of Booths for seven days. ¹⁴You shall rejoice in your festival, with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow in your communities. ¹⁵You shall hold a festival for the LORD your God seven days, in the place that the LORD will choose; for the LORD your God will bless all your crops and all your undertakings, and you shall have nothing but joy.

¹⁶Three times a year—on the Feast of Unleavened Bread, on the Feast of Weeks, and on the Feast of Booths—all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place that He will choose. They shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed, ¹⁷but each with his own gift, according to the blessing that the LORD your God has bestowed upon you.

12. The memory of slavery is invoked to motivate extending this prescription to the servants and the poor mentioned in verse 11.

The Feast of Booths (vv. 13–15)

The third feast, at the end of the summer, celebrates the gathering of grain and new wine into storage for the coming year, the goal of all the preceding agricultural activities. This is the most exuberant of the festivals and has come to be called “the time of our rejoicing” (*z'man simhateinu*).

13. After the ingathering from your threshing floor and from the vat That is, after the processed grain and the unfermented grape juice are put in containers and stored away in advance of the autumn rains.

Feast of Booths According to Lev. 23:42, the name is derived from the practice of dwelling in booths, or bowers, during the seven-day festival.

14. The harvest season and festivals were proverbial times for celebration.

אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעֲרֶיךָ וְהַגֵּר וְהַיִּתּוֹם וְהָאֵלְמָנָה
אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשָׁכֵן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם: ¹² וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי-עֶבֶד
הָיִיתָ בְּמִצְרַיִם וְשִׁמְרַתָּ וַעֲשִׂיתָ אֶת-
הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה: פ

¹³ חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת תַּעֲשֶׂה לָּךְ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים
בְּאַסְפֹּךָ מִגֵּרְנְךָ וּמִיִּקְבְּךָ: ¹⁴ וְשִׂמַּחְתָּ בְּחֻגְךָ
אֹתָהּ וּבְנֶךָ וּבִתְּךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וְאִמָּתְךָ וְהַלְוִי
וְהַגֵּר וְהַיִּתּוֹם וְהָאֵלְמָנָה אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעֲרֶיךָ:
¹⁵ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תַּחֲגֹל לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר יְהוָה כִּי יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל תְּבוּאָתְךָ וּבְכָל מַעֲשֶׂה יָדֶיךָ
וְהָיִיתָ אֶךְ שִׂמְחָה:

¹⁶ שְׁלוֹשׁ פְּעָמִים | בַּשָּׁנָה יֵרָאֶה כָּל-זָכוֹרְךָ
אֶת-פָּנָי | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר
בְּחַג הַמִּצּוֹת וּבְחַג הַשִּׁבְעוֹת וּבְחַג
הַסֻּכּוֹת וְלֹא יֵרָאֶה אֶת-פָּנָי יְהוָה רִיקָם:
¹⁷ אִישׁ כַּמֶּתְנֵת יָדוֹ בְּבִרְכַּת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
אֲשֶׁר נָתַן-לָךְ: ס

15. all your crops . . . all your undertakings . . . nothing but joy The soaring extent of the blessing explains why the celebrating is to last a full seven days.

16. Feast of Unleavened Bread Here, the term must refer to the night of the *pesah* sacrifice (and not the following seven days), because that is the only time (according to v. 7) when worshipers are required to be at the chosen place.

males Only the adult males are obligated to appear, probably because pregnant and nursing women and young children could not reasonably be required to make long trips. Nevertheless, women and children frequently did take part, as is clear from verses 11 and 14.

appear before the LORD To pay Him homage at His sanctuary. This resembles the practice of homage to human sovereigns as reflected in treaties.

17. each with his own gift Literally, “each according to his means” (as in v. 10).

HALAKHAH L'MA'ASEH

16:14. rejoice Prohibitions on transferring fire and carrying are less restrictive for the biblical festivals than for *Shabbat*. This is in order to add joy to the festivals (MT Festivals 1:4–6).