

THE OMEGA JOY

THE GREATEST CELEBRATION,” said the teacher, “in the days of the Bible was Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles. During the festival the people of Israel would go up to Jerusalem to give thanks to God for His blessings, for the fruit of their harvests, for the produce of their fields, for His provisions, His faithfulness, and for the gift of the Promised Land itself. And so the Feast of Tabernacles was filled with celebration, praises, thanksgiving, dancing, and joy. In fact, the very command that ordained the feast states, ‘You shall be altogether joyful.’ So great was this celebration that it was simply known as the festival. Tabernacles was the feast of joy. When did it fall? In the autumn. What part of the sacred year is autumn?”

“The end,” I said.

“Yes, and Tabernacles is the last feast of the sacred year, the greatest celebration, and it comes at the end. What does that reveal?”

I had no answer.

“In the world,” he said, “the greatest things come at the beginning. Everything starts out young, and then gets older and older. In the world, the celebration comes at the beginning. Then it fades away, ultimately ending in death. But the Feast of Tabernacles reveals that in the kingdom of God, it’s the opposite. The greatest celebration comes at the end. So, if you live in God’s power, you don’t move from joy to mourning, but from mourning into joy.” “As from death to life,”

I said, “then we grow younger.”

“In the Spirit,” he said, “we are to grow younger.”

“And what about joy?” I asked. “Wouldn’t Tabernacles also reveal that the greatest joy comes at the end?”

“Yes,” said the teacher. “The joys of the world come at the beginning. They’re fleeting. They grow old and pass away. The joys of sin lead to sorrow, and the laughter of youth leads to tears of mourning. But in God, the greatest joy comes at the end. In other words, the ways of God all lead in the end to joy. Even that which seems hard for the moment, the way of sacrifice, self-control, and righteousness . . . in the long run it all leads to joy. God’s calendar ends with the Feast of Tabernacles, and those who walk in His ways end up altogether joyful. For the ways of God all lead to joy. And the best . . . He saves for last.”

The Mission: Today, look to the joy at the end of your path. And so live all the more confidently in what is good and right—to the Omega joy. Leviticus 23:33–44; Psalm 16:11; Isaiah 51:11 The Last Joy

