



A Practical Guide to keeping Sukkot

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Contents

What is Sukkot?	4
Important Dates – Fall Feasts 2026	7
Scripture Readings during Sukkot	9
Food and celebration ideas for Sukkot	10
Recipes and food	10
The Sukkah	10
The Four Species	10
Prayers prayed during Sukkot	12
Blessing for Dwelling in the Sukkah	12
Blessing for the Lulav	12
Shehecheyanu	12
Sukkot and Spirit of the Fear of ADONAI	13
Prophecy and the Feasts of the LORD	13
The Feast of Gathering	14
The Spirit of the Fear of the LORD	15
The assembly of Laodicea	17

What is Sukkot?

Sukkot is commonly known as the Feast of Tabernacles but it is also called the Festival of Shelters or Feast of Ingathering.

Sukkot and Israel in the wilderness

"Leviticus 23:33-44. Three major holy days occur in the first nineteen days of the biblical month of Tishri (September – October): Rosh HaShannah (Yom Teruah), Yom Kippur and Sukkot (Tabernacles). As with the other days, the name of this holy day tells its purpose. Essentially it is twofold, with the first being related to the fall harvest. As Leviticus 23:33-34 teaches, Sukkot was to be a time of bringing in the latter harvest. It is widely believed that the Puritan colonists who were great students of the Hebrew Scriptures, based the first American Thanksgiving on Sukkot. A secondary meaning of this holy day is found in the command to dwell in booths as a memorial of Israel's wilderness experience. To expand on the theme of this specific historical event, we might best summarize Sukkot with the word habitation. We know from the Torah that God dwelt with His people in their forty-year wilderness wanderings. With such meaningful themes, it is no wonder that Sukkot is known as the Time of Our Rejoicing (Z'man Simchatenu)."

- Quoted from the Complete Jewish Study Bible

The Sukkah and the Celebration

Psalm 118. The Torah stipulates the fifteenth of the day of the Jewish month Tishri as the time when the Jewish people are to begin dwelling in a booth (sukkah or sukkot, plural) and celebrating God's provision. This holy day is so joyful that traditional Jews don't even wait for the fifteenth of Tishri to construct their sukkot. Many begin their construction five days early, immediately after the close of Yom Kippur.

The construction of the sukkah can be both challenging and fun for the whole family. The Bible gives a rather general commandment to build the sukkah. Essentially, it is a temporary hut in which one is to live instead of one's permanent house. It must have at least three walls, which may be of any material (brick, wood or tarp). If the booth is constructed next to a house, it may incorporate one or more walls of the house as its own. The most important part of the sukkah construction, the roof (called skhach) can be anything that grows from the ground, such as branches, wooden two-by-fours, and bushes.

To emphasize its temporary status, the roof is arranged so the stars can be seen through it on a clear night. Once the main construction of the sukkah is completed, the children contribute their part with artwork, fruit tied with a string or any other creative ideas they have. The sukkah is to be big enough to house at least one person, but preferably it should be able to hold a table for meals. If the climate is mild enough, then people sleep overnight in the hut.

Once the sukkah is built, and the holy day has arrived, there are other customs incorporated into the celebration. Each evening of the eight-day festival, special blessings are said over the palm branch, and citron, a fruit from Israel called etrog. These two items, along with the myrtle (hadas) and willow (arava), form what is called "The Four Species" They are wrapped together so the people can wave them in every direction, symbolizing the harvest and God's omnipresence.

Many synagogues build a community sukkah to enable all worshippers to experience this greatest symbol of Sukkot. Special holy day services are held on the first and the eighth days as required by the Torah. Because Sukkot is a time of joy, there are various processions in which the congregants march around the aisle, waving palm branches and singing from Psalm 118, Ana Adonai Hoshiana (Save us Lord). Thus, with thanksgiving, the Jewish community seeks to remember the theme of this holy day: God dwells with His people.

- Quoted from the Complete Jewish Study Bible

Sukkot in the New Testament

John 1:4 relates the special background of the Messiah, openly declaring the divine nature of Yeshua. The Word not only was with God in the beginning, but this Word is the very manifestation of God Himself (John 1:1). This Word, as Yochanan (John) calls him, was manifested to the world in a practical and tangible way: "The Word became a human being and lived with us, and we saw his Shekinah, the Shekinah of the Fathers' only Son, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). Yeshua of Nazareth is more than just the good rabbi or an intriguing philosopher. According to the Bible, He is the visible manifestation of the invisible God of creation! To describe this incarnation, Yochanan employs the Word "dwelt" among His people. As Yochanan sought to describe Messiah's first coming to his people, the most obvious picture was Sukkot, the holy day that celebrates the dwelling of God!

The Talmud tells of a custom that developed in the Second Temple period. At that time during this holy day, a priest would take a water pitcher down to the Pool of Shiloach (Siloam), dip it in the water, and carry it back to the Temple. Crowds of people would then form a huge processional behind the priest, dancing, singing and chanting the Hallel Psalms (113-118) as they entered the Temple mount. For each of the first six days of Sukkot, the processional would circle the Temple altar one time, and on the seventh day there would be seven processions to magnify the joy. The highlight of the ceremony came when the priest dramatically poured the water on the altar of the Temple. The response of the multitudes was so immense that the Talmud says whoever has not been to Jerusalem for this ceremony has not experienced real joy. Hence, it became known as Rejoicing of the House of Drawing Water (Hoshanna Rabbah).

Why all the rejoicing at this water pouring ceremony? Obviously, it had to be more than the rejoicing in the hope of future winter rains for Israel, as important as that might be. Talmudic rabbis speak of deeper truths from Isaiah 12:3 in regard to the ceremony: "Then you will joyfully draw water from the springs of salvation" (salvation in Hebrew is Yeshua, that name of the Messiah). More than the outpouring of temporal water in Israel, the Rejoicing of the House of Drawing Water was to prophetically illustrate the days of messianic redemption when the water of the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon all Israel. God will ultimately build His habitation with His people when the kingdom is established under the Messiah's rule. John 7:39-39 explains the next connection to Sukkot in the New Testament:

³⁷ Now on the last day of the festival, Hoshana Rabbah, Yeshua stood and cried out, "If anyone is thirsty, let him keep coming to me and drinking!" ³⁸ Whoever puts his trust in me, as the Scripture says, rivers of living water will flow from his inmost being!" ³⁹ (Now he said this about the Spirit, whom those who trusted in him were to receive later — the Spirit had not yet been given, because Yeshua had not yet been glorified.)

Imagine the setting: Sukkot was in full swing, and the joy of the first six days was exuberant. On the great final day (Hoshana Rabbah), the crowds were filled with expectation of the Messiah and the Holy Spirit He would bring. At the very time of the water-drawing ceremony, Yeshua made a bold proclamation: "do you truly want the living waters of the Holy Spirit? Does anyone understand the true significance of this ceremony? IF anyone desires what the Be Ha-Sha-Evah symbolizes, let him believe in Me. I am the Messiah, who will pour out the Holy Spirit on Israel.

- Quoted from the Complete Jewish Study Bible

Important Dates – Fall Feasts 2026

There are different calendars that are followed, the Bible commands us to use the sighting of the New Moon or the harvesting cycles to know when many of these feasts start. But this is related specifically to the land of Israel, and since we are not in Israel, we cannot use these physical signs to know exactly when to honour the feasts of the LORD. Since the authority was given to Judah (this tribe would later become the Jewish Nation), we align ourselves with the Jews as the leading authority today and as a sign of coalition we keep the feasts based on the Hillel calendar, which they also follow.

Hillel was a Jewish scholar and religious leader who lived in Jerusalem during the 1st century BCE. He is known for his contributions to Jewish law and his role in establishing the Jewish calendar.

Prior to Hillel's time, the Jewish calendar was determined based on observations of the moon and the harvest seasons. However, this method was not always accurate, and it led to confusion and disputes about when to celebrate important festivals.

Hillel proposed a new system for calculating the calendar based on mathematical calculations and astronomical observations. He established a 19-year cycle that included seven leap years in which an additional month was added to the calendar. This helped to align the lunar and solar cycles and ensure that the festivals fell at the appropriate times of the year.

Hillel's calendar became widely accepted by the Jewish community and is still used today to determine the dates of major Biblical feast days such as Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot.

The below dates are based on the Hillel calendar. It is important to note that these are not set dates for the feasts, and they change yearly.

ROSH HASHANAH (YOM TERUAH)

Start: Friday 11 September 2026 at sunset

End: Sunday 12 September 2026 at nightfall

Sabbath during Yom Teruah:

Starts Friday 11 September at sunset

Ends Saturday 12 September at nightfall

YOM KIPPUR (DAY OF ATONEMENT)

Start: Sunday 20 September 2026 at sunset

End: Monday 21 September 2026 at nightfall

Sabbath during Yom Kippur:

Starts Friday 20 September at sunset

Ends Saturday 21 September at nightfall

SUKKOT (FEAST OF TABERNACLES)

Start: Friday 25 September 2026 at sunset

End: Friday 2 October 2026 at nightfall

Sabbath during Sukkot:

Starts Friday 25 September at sunset

Ends Saturday 26 September at nightfall

Starts Thursday 1 October at sunset

Ends Friday 2 October at nightfall

Scripture Readings during Sukkot

- Leviticus 22:26-23
- Leviticus 22: 44
- Numbers 29:12-16
- Numbers 29
- Zechariah 14:1-21
- 1 Kings 8:2-21
- Ezekiel 38:18-39
- John 7

Food and celebration ideas for Sukkot

Recipes and food

The Sukkot meal inspiration come from the harvest origin of the holiday, and meals can include fresh fruits and vegetables, or other harvest-related ingredients. Challah, chicken soup, and kugels are traditional Jewish foods that can be served on Sukkot.

[Click on this hyperlink for Sukkot Recipes](#)

The Sukkah

Most people go camping during this time of year, the idea is to leave your permanent home, so camping is a great way to celebrate Sukkot.

Some people will build a Sukkah in their own backyard and have their meals there for the duration of the 7 day feast.

Pinterest has some amazing boards with inspiring ideas to build your Sukkah!

The Four Species

In Leviticus we are commanded to take four specific types of plants, hold them in our hand or hands, and then celebrate before the LORD.

Leviticus 23:40

Complete Jewish Bible

⁴⁰ On the first day you are to take choice fruit, palm fronds, thick branches and river-willows, and celebrate in the presence of Adonai your God for seven days.

Traditionally the below plants are used for this:

- A Citron (or a Lemon if you cannot source a Citron)
- A Myrtle Branch
- A Palm Frond (or a palm branch that you tie together so it looks like a sword)
- A willow branch

Each of these have multiple layers of meaning, and I encourage you to do some self-study into this!

Prayers prayed during Sukkot

Blessing for Dwelling in the Sukkah

It is a mitzvah to celebrate in the sukkah. While the Torah instructs us to live in the sukkah for seven days, many choose to only eat meals in the sukkah. When eating or reciting *kiddush* in the sukkah, recite this blessing:

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam,
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu leishev basukkah.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all Who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to dwell in the sukkah.

Blessing for the Lulav

The lulav is what we call the Four Species. It is held up in the right hand, and the etrog (Citron or Lemon) is held pointy side down in the left hand. Facing east, recite the blessing. Then turn the etrog up and shake the entire bundle three times in each of six directions: straight ahead, right, back, left, up, and down.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al
n'tilat lulav.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, Who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to take up the lulav.

Shehecheyanu

The first time you wave the lulav each year, recite the blessing marking a special occasion:

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, shehecheyanu, v'kiy'manu, v'higiyahu
laz'man hazeh.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, Who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

Sukkot and Spirit of the Fear of ADONAI

Prophecy and the Feasts of the LORD

The seven feasts of the LORD tell the prophetic story of Messiah. They speak of Who our God is, our journey with Him, and His plans for the future.

Spring Feasts: The Suffering Servant	Holy Spirit	Fall Feasts: The Conquering King
Passover – Calvary	Shavuot – the Holy Spirit ties the Spring Feasts to the Fall Feasts	Yom Teruah – Trumpet announcing the return of the King
Unleavened Bread – Cleansing of Sin		Yom Kippur – Final Judgement
First Fruits – Resurrection		Sukkot – God and man living together, like a newly-wed couple

At each one of these feasts, you are sealed by the Spirit of God, until we reach the final feast of the year, Sukkot. This is the final seal, when we tabernacle with God and rest in the complete work of deliverance, provision, and fruitfulness of the past year. It is the time of the latter harvest.

Leviticus 23:42-43

Complete Jewish Bible

42 You are to live in sukkot for seven days; every citizen of Isra'el is to live in a sukkah, 43 so that generation after generation of you will know that I made the people of Isra'el live in sukkot when I brought them out of the land of Egypt; I am Adonai your God."

The building of Sukkah reminds us that even though the wilderness journey was intense and temporary, it proved to be a special time where we forged an intimate relationship with God, where we relied on His guidance, protection, and provision.

We know from the Torah that God dwelled with His children in the wilderness, how meaningful then that we ourselves put this time aside to dwell in booths as a prophetic act of the Messianic Age to come, when we will dwell again with our Messiah. No wonder that Sukkot is known as “our time of rejoicing”!

The Feast of Gathering

Sukkot is one of the three pilgrim festivals where the Jewish males are required to journey to Jerusalem to recall God’s provision toward Israel during their forty years in the wilderness. This was done when the Temple was in service and will be required of us again when Temple service is re-established during the Millennial Reign of Messiah. It is also prophetically connected to the Gentiles and to the Messianic Age in Zech. 14:16-19.

Zechariah 14:16-19

Complete Jewish Bible

¹⁶ Finally, everyone remaining from all the nations that came to attack Yerushalayim will go up every year to worship the King, Adonai-Tzva’ot, and to keep the festival of Sukkot. ¹⁷ If any of the families of the earth does not go up to Yerushalayim to worship the King, Adonai-Tzva’ot, no rain will fall on them. ¹⁸ If the family of Egypt doesn’t go up, if they refuse to come, they will have no [annual] overflow [from the Nile]; moreover, there will be the plague with which Adonai will strike the nations that don’t go up to keep the festival of Sukkot. ¹⁹ This will be Egypt’s punishment and the punishment of all the nations that don’t go up to keep the festival of Sukkot.

We see from this passage that Sukkot, like the other feasts and the Sabbaths of God, will last forever, into the Messianic Age. There are also curses even *then* if you do not keep the feast of Sukkot:

- No rain = draught = famine
- No overflow = famine
- The Plague = judgement

This is not just a physical famine and judgement that the Word speaks of, but also a spiritual famine and judgement. What does water represent? The Spirit of ADONAI, the Living Waters that is Yeshua, the Word of ADONAI. Spiritually there will be a famine of these elements in a person’s life should you transgress and do not keep this commanded

feast of the LORD. Remember: Bible prophecy cyclical, which means that this passage in Zechariah is fulfilled over and over again. So even now for us today, this is a warning of the judgements to come should we not keep the Father's Sukkot.

The Spirit of the Fear of the LORD

There is a direct link to the 7th day of Creation, which was the very first Sabbath, and the 7th feast of the LORD, which is Sukkot. On the 7th day we rest in the work that God has already done. During Sukkot we rest in the completion of the cycle of redemption depicted by the 7 feasts of the LORD.

When we keep the Sukkot Feast, and the High Sabbath associated with it, we are sealed by the Spirit of The Fear of the LORD. The Spirit of Fear speaks to a deep respect and awe for ADONAI, the opposite of course being afraid of men or circumstances. Fear is worship, and whoever is receiving your fear is also receiving your worship.

Let us have a look at what happens when we confuse the Fear of ADONAI with fear for other gods (and in our lives other gods could be represented as fear of men, circumstances, finances, knowledge, ministry, uncertainty, addictions, etc.). I encourage you to do a study of 2 Kings 17, we will be quoting some of the passages from this chapter below:

2 Kings 17:7-9

Complete Jewish Bible

⁷ This came about because the people of Isra'el had sinned against Adonai their God, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, out from under the domination of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They feared other gods ⁸ and lived by the customs of the nations that Adonai had expelled ahead of the people of Isra'el and by those of the kings of Isra'el. ⁹ The people of Isra'el secretly did things that were not right, according to Adonai their God.

2 Kings 17:14

Complete Jewish Bible

¹⁴ Nevertheless, they refused to listen but made themselves as stubborn as their ancestors, who did not put their trust in Adonai their God. ¹⁵ Thus they rejected His laws; His

covenant, which He had made with their ancestors; and the solemn warnings He had given them. Instead they pursued worthless things and became worthless themselves, imitating the nations around them, whom Adonai had ordered them not to emulate.

2 Kings 17:20

Complete Jewish Bible

²⁰ Yes, Adonai came to despise all the descendants of Isra'el. He caused them trouble and handed them over to plunderers, until finally He threw them out of His sight.

2 Kings 17:25

Complete Jewish Bible

²⁵ When they first came to live there, they did not fear Adonai. Therefore Adonai sent lions among them, which killed some of them.

2 Kings 17:25

Complete Jewish Bible

³² So they feared Adonai, while at the same time they appointed for themselves priests from among themselves to preside at the high places, and they would sacrifice for them in the temples on the high places. ³³ They both feared Adonai and served their own gods in the manner customary among the nations from which they had been taken away.

2 Kings 17:35-39

Complete Jewish Bible

"Do not fear other gods or bow down to them, serve them or sacrifice to them. ³⁶ On the contrary, you are to fear Adonai, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt with great power and an outstretched arm. Worship Him, and sacrifice to Him. ³⁷ You are to observe forever the laws, rulings, Torah and mitzvah which He wrote for you. You are not to fear other gods, ³⁸ and you are not to forget the covenant I made with you. No, you must not fear other gods ³⁹ but must fear Adonai your God; then He will rescue you from the power of all your enemies."

What do we learn from these verses?

- We are only to fear ADONAI as the covenant we have with Him dictates

- We should not mix our fear of ADONAI with a fear for other gods
- When we do not fear ADONAI, He will remove us from His presence and from before His sight
- We lose our promised land; He sends kings to carry us away into captivity
- He releases judgement in the form of lions that devour

A key to the Fear of ADONAI is gratitude and humility. We need to know our place in the universe and in relation to our Creator and King. When Adam and Eve desired wisdom and knowledge to be equals with God, they lost their sense of reverence. The Spirit of the Fear of the LORD was replaced by the spirit of fear, and that is why they hid from Him in the garden after they had sinned. I want to challenge you to do some introspection, are you being moved by the Spirit of the Fear of the LORD, or just a spirit of fear?

One of the toughest commandments for humans to keep is to go into the Sabbath rest. The Spirit of Fear is the Spirit of the Sabbath. Instead of taking things into our own hands, and creating our own wealth, and being busy little bees, we need to take that one day a week (weekly Sabbath) and those Sabbaths that form part of the Holy Days, and rest in the work that He has already done. And that proves very hard for many people to do. Because we are driven by a different spirit of fear. The Spirit of the Fear of ADONAI represents the completion of the seven Spirits of ADONAI. The final seal of the King.

The assembly of Laodicea

The Menorah also gives us a pattern for the seven letters written to the seven assemblies in Revelation, the assembly that corresponds with Sukkot is the assembly of Laodicea. Even in the warning and exhortation to this assembly, we see the consequences of the lack of the Spirit of Fear.

Revelation 3:14-22

Complete Jewish Bible

¹⁴ "To the angel of the Messianic Community in Laodicea, write: 'Here is the message from the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the Ruler of God's creation: ¹⁵ "I know what you are doing: you are neither cold nor hot. How I wish you were either one or the other! ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth! ¹⁷ For you keep saying, 'I am rich, I have gotten rich, I don't need a thing!' You don't know that you are the one who is wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked! ¹⁸ My advice to you is to buy from Me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich; and white

clothing, so that you may be dressed and not have to be ashamed of your nakedness; and eye salve to rub on your eyes, so that you may see. ¹⁹As for Me, I rebuke and discipline everyone I love; so exert yourselves, and turn from your sins! ²⁰Here, I'm standing at the door, knocking. If someone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he will eat with Me. ²¹I will let him who wins the victory sit with Me on My throne, just as I Myself also won the victory and sat down with My Father on His throne. ²²Those who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit is saying to the Messianic communities. ""

The Feast of Sukkot requires that the first fruit fullness of the produce of the land be eaten before ADONAI. We see examples of wine vats, threshing floors, oil, fruits, goodly trees. This is the time that we bring a first fruit of everything that is not Barley or Wheat. We are commanded to share this with the Levites, our family, the strangers, widows, and the orphans. It is a dining experience, and that is what Yeshua is also referring to in Revelation 3:20. Not only is He showing up every Sabbath at your home, but also every Sukkot. And if we open the door and allow Him in, He will share this covenant meal with us.

The Messiah is also warning that we are blind. The Word says:

Proverbs 20:27

Complete Jewish Bible

*²⁷ The human spirit is a lamp of Adonai;
it searches one's inmost being.*

Without light we are blind, the Light of the Spirit is omnipresent, it is the very substance that creation sprang forth from.

John 1:5

Complete Jewish Bible

*⁵ The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not suppressed it.*

The blindness we sometimes experience in our lives, is not a lack of light, but a spiritual blindness that have come over us due to sin, deception, disobedience, due to a lack of the Spirit of Fear in our lives!

And it is this spiritual blindness that causes us to be lukewarm, neither hot, nor cold. We are in the world and the Babylonian system with one foot, and the Torah with the other. It is like we cannot make up our minds. It is the mixing of Fear of the LORD with fear for other gods. And this will cause Yeshua to vomit us out. Heavy words! But there is hope because He says to buy from Him:

- **Gold refined by fire** – that is our suffering of trials and tribulations, only through a process of purification can gold be separated from the impurities. It is the rebuke and discipline of the Father for those He loves, are you allowing it in your life to bring forth gold refined by the Fire of the Holy Spirit?
- **White clothing** – the priests are commanded to wear white clothing on Yom Kippur, the day of atonement. Yeshua paid the full price, but we must clothe ourselves in the robe of righteous and walk in faithfulness to His Torah.
- **Eye salve** – our eyes are the windows to our soul. So, either you are focussed on soulish desires and soulish things, or you are focussed on “it is written”. You will also worship what you behold, are you beholding the things of the flesh, or are you focussing on what is the truth of the Word of the LORD?

I pray that you will be sealed this year with the Spirit of the Fear of ADONAI. He is coming back for a bride without spot or wrinkle. Allow Him to rebuke and discipline, our time is running out. Every year we keep this feast it is a prophetic act of the age to come. Do not be caught off-guard, blind and naked! Allow the LORD to work in your life now, so that you may experience the promise of Revelation 21:3.

Revelation 21:3

Amplified Bible

³ and then I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “See! The tabernacle of God is among men, and He will live among them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them [as their God,]

I would like to end with this beautiful prophetic passage in Isaiah 54. It speaks of the Messiah coming back to marry Israel (suggestion: watch the YouTube series called “Identity Crisis” by Jim Staley). It speaks of the return of the King, and a time of final restoration.

Isaiah 54:1-10

Complete Jewish Bible

*54 "Sing, barren woman who has never had a child!
Burst into song, shout for joy,
you who have never been in labor!
For the deserted wife will have more children
than the woman who is living with her husband," says Adonai.
2 Enlarge the space for your tent,
extend the curtains of your dwelling;
do not hold back, lengthen your cords,
make your tent pegs firm.
3 For you will spread out to the right and the left,
your descendants will possess the nations
and inhabit the desolated cities.
4 Don't be afraid, for you won't be ashamed;
don't be discouraged, for you won't be disgraced.
You will forget the shame of your youth,
no longer remember the dishonor of being widowed.
5 For your husband is your Maker,
Adonai-Tzva'ot is His name.
The Holy One of Isra'el is your Redeemer.
He will be called the God of all the earth.
6 For Adonai has called you back
like a wife abandoned and grief-stricken;
"A wife married in her youth
cannot be rejected," says your God.
7 "Briefly I abandoned you,
but with great compassion I am taking you back.
8 I was angry for a moment
and hid My face from you;
but with everlasting grace
I will have compassion on you,"
says Adonai your Redeemer.
9 "For Me this is like Noach's flood.
Just as I swore that no flood like Noach's
would ever again cover the earth,
so now I swear that never again
will I be angry with you or rebuke you.
10 For the mountains may leave and the hills be removed,
but My grace will never leave you,*

*and My covenant of peace will not be removed,"
says Adonai, who has compassion on you.*