

THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD®

CHILDREN'S BIBLE LESSONS



SPECIAL FEAST LESSON

LEVEL 5



THE FALL FEASTS

The Fall Festivals

Nearly everyone enjoys reading a good mystery story. Throughout the story, clues are provided for the reader to collect, and then put together like a puzzle. Each piece leads the reader closer to a solution.

In this lesson, you will investigate such a mystery. Clues will be revealed that you will then piece together. By the time you have reached the end of the lesson, and have put the final piece of the puzzle in place, you will have uncovered the answer to a mystery that has been understood by only a few chosen people throughout the 6,000 years since man's creation.

Just as any good detective has tools he uses to help solve a mystery, the tools you will need to begin your search for clues are this lesson, a Bible, some paper, and a pencil or pen.

Next, you must identify the puzzle you are seeking to solve. With this lesson, you are going to answer a question: Why does God, through the Bible, command us to keep His Feast days and what do we learn by keeping them? You will uncover the necessary pieces to solve this mystery by reading verses in your Bible. Keep a list by looking up each verse, then writing it down on your paper.

God's Seven Annual Festivals

As you begin your search to solve the mystery of God's annual festivals, you will need to make a list of them. You may find some Feasts have more than one name, so be sure to write them down since they will provide additional clues you will need later in your investigation. If you need help or feel unsure of exactly what the name of a Feast is, ask one of your parents for help.

God's seven annual festivals are listed in the book of Leviticus 23. Write the names of them on the lines below:

- 1) _____ (verse 5)
- 2) _____
_____ (verse 6)
- 3) _____ (verses 16, 21)
- 4) _____
_____ (verse 24)
- 5) _____
_____ (verse 27)
- 6) _____
_____ (verse 34)
- 7) _____
_____ (verse 36)

These festivals are observed at two different times of the year. The first three—Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost—are observed in the spring and early summer. The final four—the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day—are observed in the fall. Together these seven annual festivals picture the seven steps in God’s Master Plan. They tell us why God created human beings nearly 6,000 years ago.

As you investigate each of these festivals, you will discover the exciting future God has waiting for all mankind.

The Three Spring Festivals

Let’s begin with a brief review of the three spring festivals so you will have all the clues you need to solve this mystery.

The first clue, or step, in God’s Master Plan is pictured by Passover. It is the most solemn of all God’s festivals because it reminds us of Jesus Christ’s death and that He died so our sins can be forgiven. Through His sacrifice, Jesus paid the penalty of sins in our place. The penalty of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

The second clue or step is the Days of Unleavened Bread, which pictures our need to follow God’s Law every day as well as the need to work on putting sin out of our lives. The Bible uses leaven as an example of sin because any sin will spread through all parts of our lives, just like leaven spreads throughout dough and causes it to rise.

The Day of Pentecost gives us the third clue. This step shows us that God is now choosing and training a few people, called “firstfruits,” to understand His Plan. The firstfruits will be the first of all mankind to become spirit-born kings and priests ruling in the Kingdom of God on Earth.

The first Pentecost came 50 days after Christ was resurrected, in AD 31. This day pictures the beginning of the New Testament Church when God gave His Holy Spirit to the disciples. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, those who obey God and remove sin from their lives will receive everlasting life. At that time, they will become immortal members of God’s Family.

Details about these first three festivals are covered in the special Spring Festivals Lesson.

Now let’s study the four commanded fall festivals that are observed in the seventh month of God’s calendar. These festivals look forward to events that the Bible reveals will soon come to pass.

Blowing of Trumpets

The command to observe God’s four fall festivals begins in Leviticus 23:23. The Feast of Trumpets provides the next series of clues in solving our mystery and is the fourth step in God’s Master Plan.

You will notice the first clue is found in verse 24: This Feast is called “a memorial of blowing of trumpets.” To proceed with your investigation, you must find out why trumpets were blown in Old Testament times.

Turn in your Bible to Ezekiel 33:1-6: “Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Son of man, speak to the children of your people, and say to them: ‘When I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from their territory and make him their watchman, when he sees the sword coming upon the land, if he blows the trumpet and warns the people, then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be on his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, but did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But he who takes warning will save his life. But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman’s hand.’”

Also read Numbers 10:9: “When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be remembered before the LORD your God, and you will be saved from your enemies.”

From these verses you learn that trumpets were blown as an alarm to warn the people of coming war. The army could then prepare to defend the city. But there is more.

By reading II Kings 9:13, you can gain another valuable clue as to why trumpets were blown in ancient Israel: “Then each man hastened to take his gar-

ment and put it under him on the top of the steps; and they blew trumpets, saying, ‘Jehu is king!’” Here you see that the trumpet was blown before a special announcement was made.

However, even more information is needed if you are to clearly understand what these have to do with the meaning of the Feast of Trumpets.

You must look back into time before man was created. God assigned the archangel Lucifer to rule over the Earth with a multitude of angels. However, Lucifer decided he knew better than God, so he convinced a vast number of the angels with him to try to take over God’s throne in heaven (Isaiah 14:12-13). Because of his rebellion against God’s government and laws, Lucifer was renamed Satan the devil and was disqualified as ruler over the Earth. Then God created Adam, who was given a chance to replace Satan in ruling the Earth, but he also rebelled against God’s government and was disqualified. You can read about Adam’s rebellion in Genesis 3.

Almost 4,000 years later, one of the two members of the God Family, the Word (John 1:1, 14), came to Earth as a human and was named Jesus (Luke 1:31-32). Throughout His life, Jesus obeyed every law of God the Father and never allowed Satan to persuade Him to disobey or sin (Matthew 4:1-11).

Hebrews 4:15 states, “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” By resisting Satan, Jesus Christ qualified to rule over the Earth. But God

the Father has not yet placed Him on that throne. For now, Satan is allowed to continue to hold that office.

Now you have uncovered one of the deeper meanings of the Feast of Trumpets. This fall festival pictures a time in the near future when Christ will take vengeance and put “all enemies under His feet” (I Corinthians 15:25). At that time, God will replace Satan. As ruler over all the Earth, Christ will take His throne and direct the government of God over all nations.

I Thessalonians 4:16 reveals what will announce this event: “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.”

All God’s servants from the past who remain in the grave will be resurrected to eternal life, and will become spirit-members of God’s Family. Also, all true Christians who are alive at this time will be given eternal life: “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (I Corinthians 15:52).

God’s people throughout history have looked forward to the time when God’s Kingdom will be on Earth. Under the government of God, the world will finally learn the way to peace, happiness and success.

You have discovered important clues in solving the mystery of God’s Master Plan through His annual festival, the Feast of Trumpets. His government will

be announced with the sound of a trumpet to rule over all the Earth.

Test Your Memory

- 1) Passover pictures that Christ died to pay the death _____ in our place.
- 2) The Bible uses leaven as an example of what? _____
- 3) TRUE or FALSE: The Day of Pentecost pictures the beginning of the New Testament Church in AD 31 when God gave His Holy Spirit to the disciples.
- 4) In ancient times, trumpets were blown to signal _____

- 5) The Feast of Trumpets pictures the time when God’s servants become spirit-born _____ and priests when the Kingdom of _____ is established over all the Earth.
- 6) After he rebelled against the government of God, what was Lucifer’s name changed to? _____
- 7) Jesus Christ qualified to rule over the nations, but God the Father has not yet placed Him on that throne because _____ has been allowed to continue to hold that office.

At One with God

The next series of clues you will study cover the fifth step in God’s Master Plan, the Day of Atonement. This festival is commanded in Leviticus 23:27-32. Verse 27 says, “You shall afflict your souls.” This can also be translated

“you shall humble your body.” The clue to understanding what this means can be found in Psalm 35:13: “But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I *humbled myself with fasting*; and my prayer would return to my own heart.”

Fasting means to go without food or water for one whole day, from sunset to sunset, for 24 hours. You are probably wondering why God would tell His people to do this.

Human beings need food and water to live. If a person goes without them for a long period of time, he will die. When people fast, they become physically weak. Fasting helps God’s people realize that they are weak and helpless human beings who need God to provide everything they need to continue to live—the air they breathe, the food they eat, the water they drink! When fasting weakens a person, he cannot feel high and mighty about himself. Then, in this humble condition, he can draw closer to God and make obeying Him the main goal in his life.

We have already learned by studying the Feast of Trumpets that Christ will take over the throne of Earth’s government and that Satan disqualified himself as ruler over Earth. II Corinthians 4:4 identifies Satan as “the god of this world.”

Satan tempted Eve to disobey God in the Garden of Eden and eat of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Eve then persuaded Adam to eat it. Disobeying God’s instructions is sin. So from that time to today, Satan has been

busy persuading all people to sin and not follow God’s way of life.

The Day of Atonement pictures God placing the guilt for mankind’s sins on Satan, where it belongs. However, the only way man will be free from Satan’s rule is for God to get rid of Satan. Therefore, the Day of Atonement also pictures Satan being banished where he can no longer persuade mankind to disobey God’s laws:

“And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness” (Leviticus 16:21).

The Day of Atonement is a solemn Holy Day rich with meaning. Because God’s people go without food and water, they are reminded of the importance of relying on God. When God’s government is set up over the entire Earth, mankind will draw close to God and realize that a truly happy and peaceful life comes through relying on Him and obeying His law.

A clue to understanding this annual Sabbath is found in the name of the day: At + One + Ment. When man draws close to God, allowing himself to be ruled and led by God’s way of give, he will then be at one with God and His way of life.

At Last, Peace on Earth

Throughout this lesson, you have been gathering a lot of clues in your investiga-

tion to understand God's festivals, but there are more you need to seek out.

The sixth clue in God's Master Plan can be found in Leviticus 23:34-44. This sixth annual festival is called the Feast of Tabernacles.

God's people rejoice for seven days at the Feast of Tabernacles. The Days of Unleavened Bread is the only other annual festival that lasts for seven days.

Just as there is something special that God commands His people to do each day during the Days of Unleavened Bread, they are also commanded to do something *every day* during the Feast of Tabernacles. Verse 42 of Leviticus 23 explains what that is: "You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths." In fact, another name for the Feast of Tabernacles is "The Feast of Booths." So God commands His people to dwell in booths during the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles. This means God's people leave their homes to stay in temporary housing such as hotel or motel rooms, rented houses or trailers. But you need to search for more items that explain why God requires His people to do this.

Hebrews 11:13 refers to God's people as "strangers and pilgrims on the earth." The apostle Peter addressed the brethren in I Peter 2:11 as "sojourners and pilgrims." And Jesus said about His followers, "The world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world" (John 17:14).

In order to clearly understand what these verses mean, you must first exam-

ine the definition of the terms pilgrims, strangers and sojourners. If you live in the United States, you have probably learned in school about the pilgrims who endured a long ocean voyage and many hardships when they came from England to Plymouth, Massachusetts, to settle in what they called The New World. Along with this, you have most likely also heard the story of the first Thanksgiving in America. This story shows that pilgrims are travelers who are not citizens of the land they live in.

Next, let's take a look at the word "strangers." A stranger is someone you do not know very well and who does not come from your town or neighborhood. A stranger may have different customs and beliefs.

The last term to understand is "sojourners." A sojourner is a visitor, someone who stays in a place for a time, but then moves on. The Bible gives you an example of such a pilgrim and sojourner. His name is Abraham (Hebrews 11:8-10).

From these, you learn that God requires His people to be outsiders in today's world and society. They do not take an active part in the ways and customs of this world because their citizenship is in God's soon-coming Kingdom. However, they are obedient to the laws of the land as long as those laws do not cause them to disobey God.

Therefore, when God's people observe the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days, it reminds them that they are "strangers and pilgrims" waiting for God's Kingdom to come.

But there are other clues to be found in Leviticus 23 that tell us what else God commands His people to do during this seven-day Feast. At the end of verse 40 we read, “You shall *rejoice* before the LORD your God for seven days.” Then verse 41 reveals, “You shall keep it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall *celebrate* it in the seventh month.” Celebrations are happy times, such as weddings, the birth of a baby, and graduation. People feel great joy over these events.

You have seen that God wants His people to rejoice during all seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles. But why?

The Feast of Tabernacles pictures the time when God is ruling with the saints on Earth in His Kingdom. This is the time when all of mankind will learn to live God’s way of *give*.

There were two major harvests in the land of Israel. The early harvest came in the spring, which is pictured by the Day of Pentecost. This was the smaller harvest of firstfruits. But the larger harvest came in the fall. The Feast of Tabernacles, also called the Feast of Ingathering (Exodus 23:16), pictures the larger fall harvest of crops, which represents the greater spiritual harvest when everyone who lives during that time will have the opportunity to learn God’s Way.

In Joel 2:28 God says, “And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh.” All men will be able to understand the wonderful mysteries you are now learning through this Bible lesson. With God’s Holy

Spirit to help them, they will finally come to realize that God’s Way is the *only* way that brings right results. And *His* government is the only one that can bring peace, happiness and cooperation among all people in all nations. Then, just like all of God’s resurrected saints, they can be born into God’s Family and live forever.

What about your future? You are presently living in a world that Satan rules. His way of *get* is the exact opposite of God’s way of *give*. All around you can see the results of people thinking of themselves first, of what they want and need—how to get more and more for themselves rather than living the way of *give*. The way of *get*, practiced under Satan’s rule, causes problems such as war, suffering, crime, disease, fear and hatred. Because your parents obey God and do their best to live His way, you will live on and have a chance to be a part of this Kingdom. You will be able to teach people alive during that time how wonderful it is to live under God’s government, the way you are learning to live now.

However, some clues remain to be investigated that show a preview of how different that world to come will be during the Kingdom. Isaiah 11:6-9 reveals changes in how wild animals will behave: “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and

the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea."

Similar clues regarding how animals will behave in the world to come are given in Isaiah 65:25: "'The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,' says the LORD."

Isaiah 35:1-7 says, "The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the excellency of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are fearful-hearted, 'Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; He will come and save you.' Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of jackals, where each

lay, there shall be grass with reeds and rushes."

These verses reveal that under the Kingdom it will be a peaceful time when all human beings, and even the animals, will cooperate with each other, be healthy and happy. They will live free from danger, violence and fear!

The Feast of Tabernacles pictures a wonderful time when the entire Earth will be filled with gladness. Under God's government, everyone will learn how to love and respect each other. Everyone will treat his neighbor with honesty and fairness. All the ugliness, poverty and ignorance that ruin people's lives will be gone. All pollution in the air, water and ground will be removed.

You have gathered many pieces that explain what this Feast pictures. This will be a time of never-before experienced peace, happiness and plenty under the government of God, which will fill the Earth under the rule of God and the saints—those who were changed to immortal spirit members of God's Family.

How exciting to know that you will have the opportunity to teach and lead people in the world to come because you are now putting into practice what your parents are teaching and you are learning to live God's Way. In the world to come, all people will know and understand what you have learned in this lesson. Man will be given the opportunity to become members of God's Family and live forever. This means you too!

Billions of People Receive a Chance

The final clues that reveal the last step of God's Master Plan can be found by understanding the meaning of the seventh feast, called the Last Great Day.

The last half of verse 36 in Leviticus 23 commands, "On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it." This feast is kept immediately at the end of the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles, and the name comes from a reference made to it by Jesus in John 7:37, "On the *last* day, that *great day* of the feast."

Once you have uncovered the clues to this final festival, you will have the final piece in solving the mystery of God's Master Plan and why He commands His people to observe the seven annual festivals.

You have already learned that in the 6,000 years since God created man, He has been only working with a few individuals. You have also learned that most people have not understood God's way of *give*. They have died without hearing about or understanding the wonderful Master Plan of God and the future they can have in God's soon-coming Kingdom.

The Last Great Day pictures all people being brought back to physical life for a day of judgment (John 5:28-29). Those who go on into the Kingdom will finally have their chance to learn God's way of *give*.

In the final step of God's Master Plan, billions of people will be resurrected into a beautiful, peaceful world, and they will be taught to obey God and respect His government.

Because God is fair, He wants every person to have an opportunity to be in His Family: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

Once mankind has been given a chance to become a member of God's Family, God's Master Plan will be completed.

Mystery Solved!

Your investigation of God's four fall festivals in this lesson is nearly finished. You have gathered clues and they have shown you what these festivals are, what they mean, and why God commands His people to keep them.

Each year, God's people observe the seven annual festivals and review their meaning. By doing this, they will never forget why God created mankind and what lies ahead for each and every person who has ever lived. Throughout this lesson, you have also learned the steps that make up God's Plan, and that these steps show how to become a member of God's Family. Through this study of God's Master Plan, you now understand why *you* were born!

You have solved a mystery very few people have understood!



Test Your Memory

- 1) On the Day of Atonement, God's people fast, which means they go without _____ and _____ for 24 hours, from sunset to sunset.
- 2) II Corinthians 4:4 identifies _____ as "the _____ of this world."
- 3) The Day of Atonement pictures the time when Satan will be _____.
- 4) The Feast of _____ pictures the _____ of _____ ruling on the Earth.
- 5) TRUE or FALSE: Everyone who lives during that time will have the opportunity to learn God's Way.
- 6) Which annual festival comes immediately after the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles, and is called the eighth day of the feast? _____
- 7) This last festival pictures the time when all people will be brought back to physical life in the Kingdom of God and learn God's way of _____.

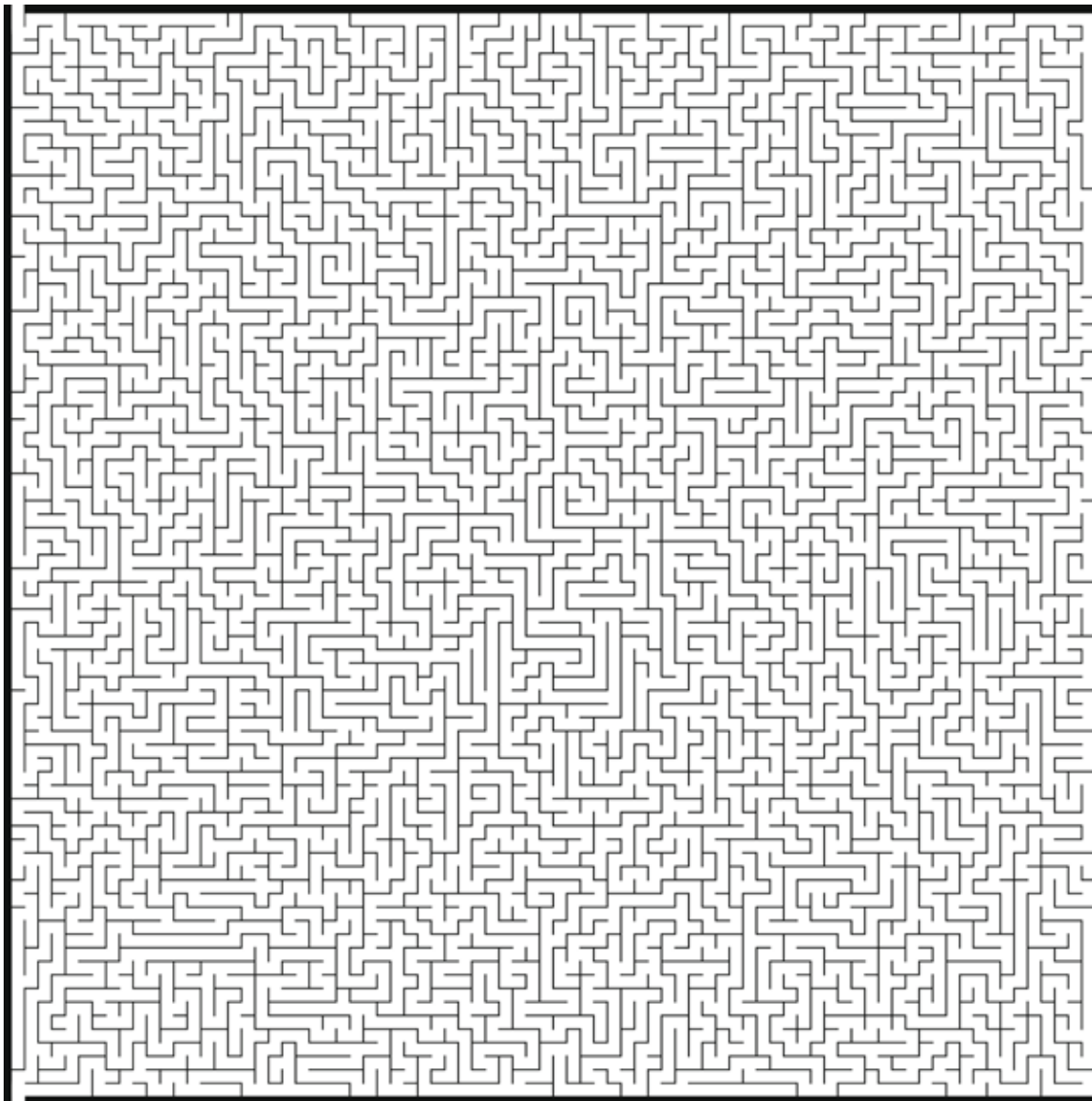


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BIBLE MEMORY: Leviticus 23:23-24, 27, 34-36



FOLLOW THE PATH TO THE FEAST



The Feast of Tabernacles!