

THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD®

CHILDREN'S BIBLE LESSONS



SPECIAL FEAST LESSON

LEVEL 6



THE FALL FEASTS

The Fall Festivals

Of all the billions of people who are alive today, and of all who have lived and died since human beings were first created in the Garden of Eden, only a tiny number of individuals have understood the *greatest secret of all time*. God has given His people important annual feasts that represent steps to help us understand this secret. As we learn the meaning of the seven yearly festivals listed in Leviticus 23, we begin to realize that these steps reveal God's Master Plan. The meaning of the annual feasts shows us how God's Plan for mankind will be accomplished and reveals the important purpose for man.

In Leviticus 23, God begins by identifying to whom these festivals belong, "The *feasts of the LORD*, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts." Then each of the special festivals God wants us to observe is given:

Verse 5: Passover

Verse 6: Days of Unleavened Bread

Verse 16, 21: Day of Pentecost

Verse 24: Feast of Trumpets

Verse 27: Day of Atonement

Verse 34: Feast of Tabernacles

Verse 36: Last Great Day

Review of the Spring Festivals

Before we proceed to learn more about the greatest secret of all time, let's quickly review the three spring festivals.

The first of God's annual festivals is Passover, which reveals the first step in understanding God's Master Plan. Passover is the most solemn of all God's festivals because it pictures the death of Jesus Christ. Every human being, except for Jesus, has broken God's laws and has earned the death penalty. Romans 6:23 tells us that "the wages of sin is death." Even though Christ lived a perfect, sinless life as a human being, He willingly gave His life as a sacrifice to pay the death penalty for the sins of mankind.

The second step in God's Plan is revealed in the second annual festival, the Days of Unleavened Bread. Before the start of this seven-day festival, all leaven is to be removed from our homes, cars and offices. Leaven is a type of sin; just as a little bit of leaven spreads throughout dough and causes it to rise (Galatians 5:9), so does a little bit of sin spread throughout all areas of our lives, creating problems and unhappiness. Beginning with the Night to Be Much Observed and throughout the next seven days,

we are to eat unleavened bread each day. This festival pictures our need to follow God's Law as well as to work at putting sin out of our lives.

The Day of Pentecost is the third annual festival and reveals the third step in God's Master Plan. This day pictures the beginning of the New Testament Church in AD 31 when God gave His Holy Spirit to the disciples. Pentecost also pictures the first, smaller spring spiritual harvest, when God is calling just a few individuals to have the opportunity to become a part of His Family.

We are now ready to study the last four steps in God's Master Plan that are pictured by four festivals that occur in fall. When all seven steps are pieced together like a jigsaw puzzle, they clearly explain the purpose for God's creation of mankind. All of God's fall festivals occur in the seventh month of His calendar.

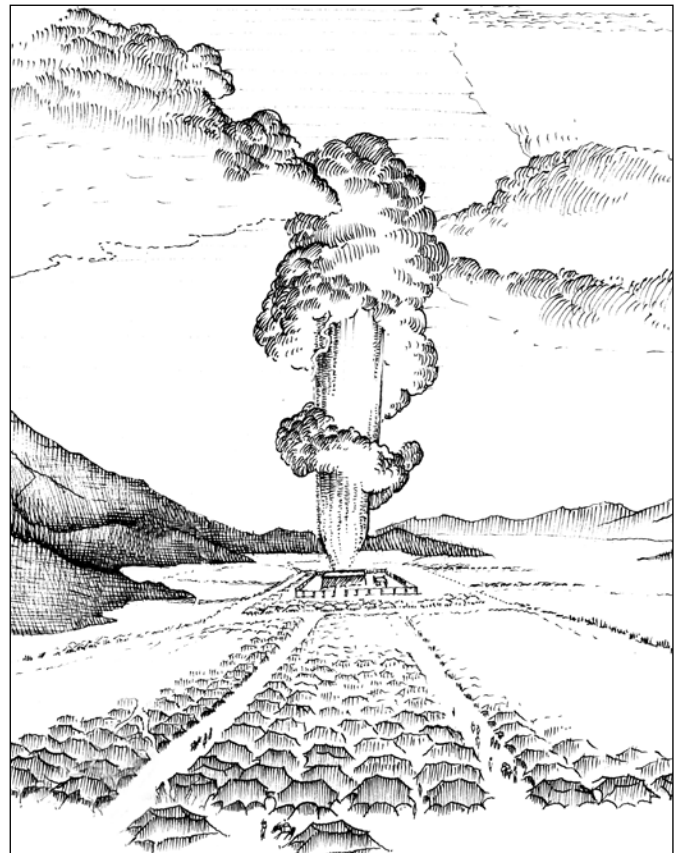


God's Fourth Annual Festival: Feast of Trumpets

If you could travel back in time to centuries ago when approximately three million Israelites left the land of Egypt, you would quickly realize they had no cellphones with which to communicate. In addition to millions of people, there were also flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and probably some horses and donkeys pulling wagons and carts. Leading this huge sea of people was Moses. He did not have a microphone with an amplified speaker system to give orders to the people.

Imagine you are standing in the midst of the camp of ancient Israel. When you look up at the sky, you see a pillar of cloud during the day, and at night you see a pillar of fire. Exodus 13:21 explains: "And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night."

Exodus 40:36-38 gives more details: "Whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle,



the children of Israel would go onward in all their journeys. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not journey till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the LORD was above the tabernacle by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys."

While you walked around through this great sea of people, you would discover various leaders giving instructions to those within their groups. Someone might even ask you to which family you belonged. In Exodus 18:25, we learn that Moses appointed leaders over groups of tens, fifties, hundreds and thousands. In this way, important instructions could be passed down among the levels of leadership and then circulated to the people in each group. Maintaining good order was necessary so that everyone was kept informed of important information, and to ensure there were no misunderstandings.

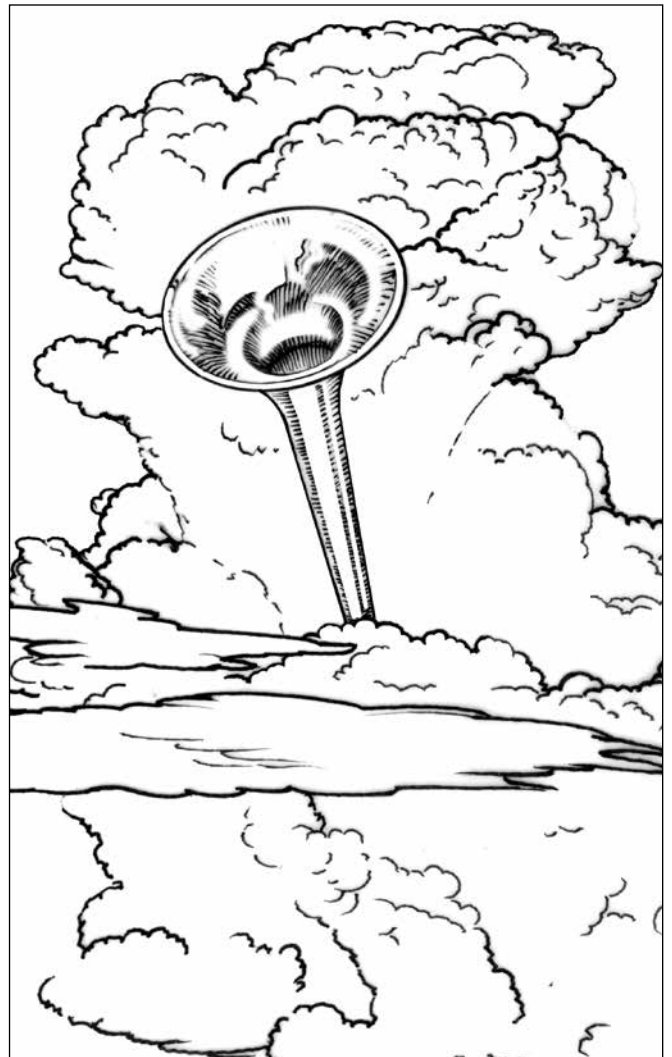
At this point during your travel back in time, you hear the loud and powerful blast of a trumpet.

As you searched for the source of this sound, you would come upon a man blowing on a long animal horn. When you asked what he was doing, he would explain, “When there is to be an assembly of the congregation, trumpets are blown to gather the people together. This type of trumpet, called a shofar (pronounced show-far), is made from a long, curling ram’s horn.” He would also tell you that trumpets were blown as an alarm of war to alert the people, or to get their attention for special announcements, or to call them to worship God. You would learn the reason that he is blowing the shofar at this time is to call the people together for God’s fourth annual festival.



The fourth step in God’s Master Plan is the Feast of Trumpets. “Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a Sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation [commanded assembly]. You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD” (Leviticus 23:23-25).

Once again you travel in time, away from ancient Israel, past today and into the future. You have now moved forward in time to when God resurrects the saints, which begins with the sound of a trumpet: “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” (I Thessalonians 4:16).



From this vantage point in the future, you witness another exciting event that all of God’s people have been looking forward to throughout history: “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). All those who are alive at this time and have obeyed God’s laws and lived His Way during their lifetimes will be given everlasting life. Those who have died will be resurrected to eternal life, and those who are alive will instantly become immortal members of God’s Family!

Sometime after this wonderful event happens, God must bring about another dramatic event in His Plan for mankind.

Since most people in the world follow Satan’s way, God will put an end to the rule of Satan on

Earth. In II Corinthians 4:4, God calls Satan the *god of this world*. This brings us to God's fifth annual festival, which pictures removing Satan from ruling the Earth.

God's Fifth Annual Festival: Day of Atonement

On the Day of Atonement, the fifth step in God's Master Plan, the people of God fast, which means going without food and water for 24 hours.

God instructs, "Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls [humble yourself by fasting], and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. For any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people... You shall do no manner of work; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your Sabbath" (Leviticus 23:27-32).

You travel back in time once again to ancient Israel, to see how they observed the Day of Atonement. "He [Aaron, the high priest] shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat [the goat of departure; adversary]... But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness" (Leviticus 16:7-10).

You notice that, as part of the observance of the Day of Atonement in ancient Israel, the high priest laid his hands upon the head of a goat chosen to represent Satan, the adversary (I Peter 5:8),

and confessed over it the sins of the people of Israel. Then the goat is led away into the wilderness.

This ceremony pictured a future time when God will put Satan away. This means that Satan will no longer be able to pressure mankind to sin.

He and his angels (demons) will be sent away, as foreshadowed later in Leviticus 16:21-22: "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: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness."

You now have a better understanding of why God's people fast on the Day of Atonement. By fasting, we humble ourselves before God and recognize our need to trust in Him to provide our daily needs, such as food and water. Fasting draws us closer to God and enables us, with God's help, to resist giving in to Satan's pressure to sin.

The Day of Atonement pictures the soon-coming time when mankind's sins will be placed on Satan where they belong, and when God will send him away to a spiritual prison where he will not be able to tempt anyone to sin.

Mankind's suffering, problems and sadness are a direct result of sin. Sin causes crime, disease, starvation and war. When Satan is sent away, the entire world will be able to draw close to God, as we do when we fast.

The Day of Atonement reveals the fifth step in understanding God's Master Plan and pictures a time when the whole world will be AT ONE with God.

A time of peace on Earth will gradually unfold, a time of great happiness and well-being that mankind has never known in all of history! The next festival in God's Master Plan pictures this time of peace, happiness and plenty.



Test Your Memory

- 1) What instrument was used to alert ancient Israel to come to worship, to listen for a special announcement, or to call them to war? _____
- 2) When a trumpet is blown, what major event occurs? Christians are _____.
- 3) On the Day of Atonement, God's people fast, which means they go without _____ and _____.
- 4) Fasting _____ us and helps us draw _____ to God.
- 5) Who is called the god of this world? _____
- 6) The Day of Atonement pictures what happening to Satan? _____
- 7) All of the fall festivals occur in what month of God's sacred calendar? _____

God's Sixth Annual Festival: Feast of Tabernacles

It is time to discover the next part of the greatest secret of all time, which reveals the sixth step in God's Master Plan. The Feast of Tabernacles lasts for seven days and looks forward to a time yet to come. This annual event is described in Leviticus 23:34, 35 and 42, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD. On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it. You shall dwell in booths for



seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths."

If you travel back in time once again, you would see that the people of ancient Israel built small, temporary stalls to live in during the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles. Today, God's people leave their homes and travel to motels, hotels or rented houses to observe the Feast.

You may wonder why God commands His people to do this. Leaving our homes and going to temporary dwelling places reminds us that we are "strangers and pilgrims" in this world (Hebrews 11:13; I Peter 2:11). Christ himself confirmed this about His followers when He said, "The world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world" (John 17:14).

Leaving the comfort of our homes and all of our familiar surroundings reminds us that we are sojourners and outsiders in today's world and society, because our citizenship is in God's soon-coming Kingdom.

The Feast of Tabernacles pictures the Kingdom of God ruling on the Earth. God's Kingdom comes at the end of about 6,000 years of Satan's rule over the Earth. It will be a time of never-before experienced peace and happiness. With the government of God ruling the Earth, the next step of God's Master Plan for mankind unfolds.

God's Plan includes two spiritual harvests, which are typified by two physical harvests. We have learned that the first smaller harvest in late spring pictures the small spiritual harvest of God's firstfruits. The larger fall harvest of crops pictures the greater spiritual harvest, when everyone who lives during that time will have the opportunity to learn God's Way. Then, just like Christians from previous times in history, they can be born into God's Family as spirit beings and live forever.

Under God's Kingdom, Earth will eventually be free of war, suffering, crime, disease, fear and hatred. Everyone will be happy because Satan will no longer be able

to tempt human beings to disobey God's laws. Everyone will learn God's way of *give*—the way that leads to happiness, cooperation and peace.

You travel forward into the future once again, and are given a glimpse into this time when even the nature of animals will be changed: "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" (Isaiah 11:6-9).

Everywhere you see smiling, happy faces. You hear laughter and singing. People are enjoying their day's work. The sky is sunny and blue. Grass, trees and bushes are thick and green from just the right amount of rain. People, crops and animals are strong and healthy. Kings and priests of the God Family answer questions and teach people how to live God's Way.

Coming back to the present, you consider all that you have learned, and you begin to wonder, "What about me? Where do I fit in God's Master Plan?" You are preparing now to become a leader

in God's Kingdom as you learn from your parents and God's Church how to obey God's laws.

During the Kingdom period, you can help rebuild the world and have a part in teaching people about God's Master Plan and how to live God's Way. Then later, you can become an immortal member of God's Family, too!

The Feast of Tabernacles reveals that the sixth step in God's Master Plan is the reign of God's Kingdom on the Earth and the ushering in of peace.

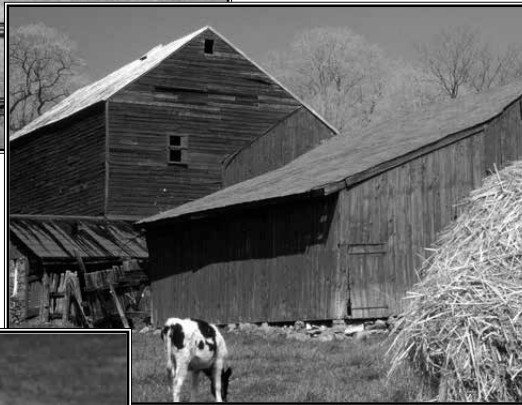
But what about all the people who have lived and died since mankind was created but never had a chance to learn God's Way? The seventh step in God's Plan, and last annual festival, pictures the time when all people will have their chance to know God.

God's Seventh Annual Festival: Last Great Day



You are now ready to put the last piece of the puzzle into place and discover the seventh step in the greatest secret of all time. You have already learned that since the creation of man, God has been working with relatively few individuals out of all the billions who have ever lived. You have come to realize that most people have not known God's way of life. They have died without knowing the wonderful Master Plan of God or how to live by God's laws.

Under the rule of God and the resurrected Christians during this part of the Kingdom period, the world will be different and people will have learned the way of peace and happiness.



At the very end of the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles, God's people observe another day, the eighth day, which is a separate festival: "For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. 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" (Leviticus 23:36).

John 7:37, calls this eighth day "the last day, that great day of the feast."

This seventh festival in God's Master Plan pictures billions of people being brought back to physical life to learn God's way of *give*.

In the seventh 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. Those people will be given a chance to become an immortal spirit being in God's Family. Also at this time, God the Father will be living on Earth, and there will be new heavens and a new Earth!

Now you know the greatest secret of all time! You have learned that God's seven annual



festivals reveal His Master Plan and purpose for mankind. You have studied the seven steps that picture how God is working out His Plan. You now understand that all people will be given an opportunity to become spirit beings who will live forever as members of God's Family.

Let's briefly review all seven steps of God's Master Plan:

Steps One through Three—Pictured by the spring festivals, a smaller spring harvest represents the few individuals God is calling to learn His way of life.

Step One: Passover—The death and resurrection of Christ makes possible the forgiveness of our sins upon baptism and repentance.

Step Two: Days of Unleavened Bread—Constantly working with God's help to remove sin from our lives and obey His laws.

Step Three: Day of Pentecost—Receiving God's Holy Spirit; this feast pictures the firstfruits, and that God is now choosing only a few people to understand His great Plan and purpose for mankind.

Steps Four through Seven—Pictured by the fall festivals, a greater fall harvest represents the opportunity for mankind to learn God's way of life.

Step Four: Feast of Trumpets—Pictures a resurrection and saints receiving eternal life.

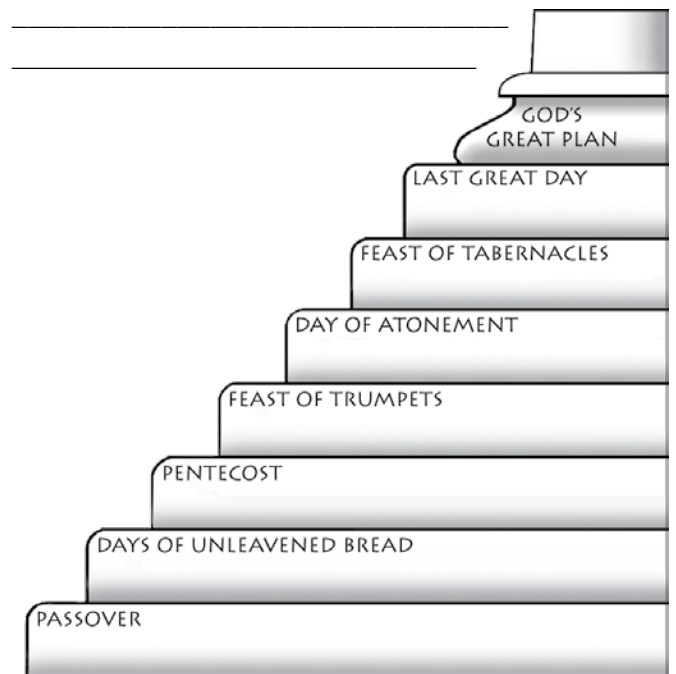
Step Five: Day of Atonement—Satan is banished.

Step Six: Feast of Tabernacles—God's Kingdom ruling on Earth.

Step Seven: Last Great Day—Billions are brought back to physical life and given their chance to learn to obey God, live His way of give, and become immortal spirit beings born into God's Family.

Test Your Memory

- 1) God's people live in _____ dwellings during the Feast of Tabernacles to represent being _____ and _____ in this world.
- 2) For how many days is the Feast of Tabernacles observed? _____
- 3) Who are the saints who rule with Christ in His Kingdom? _____
- 4) The seventh festival of God occurs immediately after the Feast of Tabernacles on the _____ day.
- 5) Billions of people will be resurrected back to physical life and taught God's Way during the period pictured by the _____.
- 6) The seven annual feasts reveal seven steps, which picture God's _____ Plan for mankind.
- 7) What is the greatest secret of all time? _____



GOD'S FEAST IN HISTORY

Read these scriptures about God's people keeping the Feast of Tabernacles. Choose one scripture below. In the space provided, write and illustrate the scripture you have chosen. (Read carefully and include as much detail as you can in your drawing.)

Solomon finishes building the Temple.

I Kings 8:2, 5, 10, 11, 14, 22, 55, 62-66

Captive Jews return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple.

Ezra 3:1-4 or Nehemiah 8:14-18

The apostles keep the Feast after Christ's death.

Acts 18:18-21

In the Kingdom, all nations will keep the Feast.

Zechariah 14:16-18

