

YOUTH



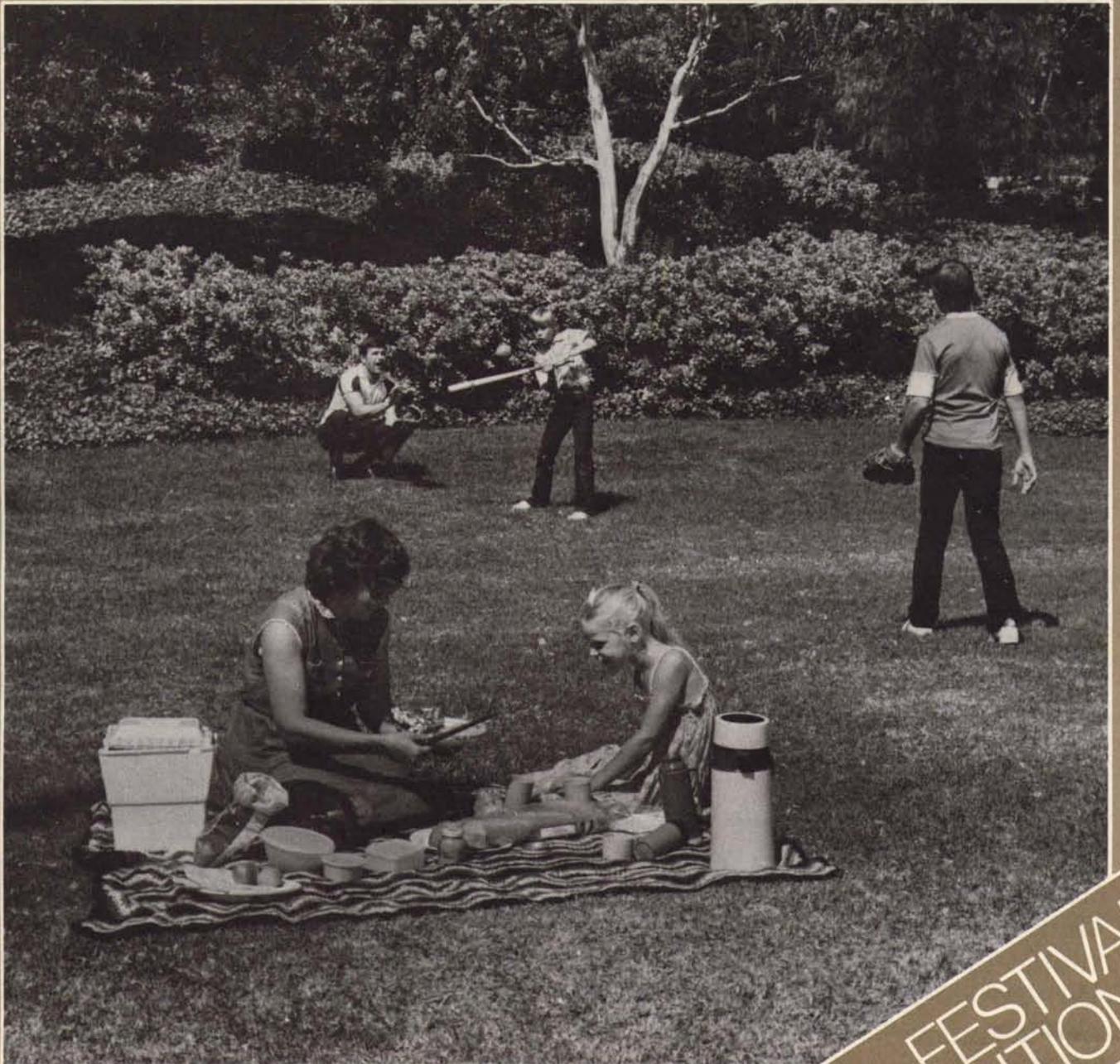
LEVEL 6

BIBLE

LESSONS



SPECIAL FEAST
LESSON



The Festival Mystery

FALL FESTIVAL
EDITION

THE FESTIVAL MYSTERY

Do you enjoy reading a good mystery? Have you ever dreamed of being a detective searching for clues to solve an exciting and mysterious case?

In this special lesson you will solve just such a mystery. By the end of the lesson you will better understand something that has been hidden from most people's understanding for nearly 6,000 years! A mystery understood by very few in past history and by only a small number of people living today!

Here is your assignment — the mystery you are to solve: *Why* does God command us to keep His feast days? And *what* does He want us to learn by keeping them?

Only a *very few* people on earth today know the correct answers to these questions. Most do not even know what God's festivals are. *You* are one of the select few who are blessed to be able to solve this mystery!

The tools you will need for solving this case are your Bible, a pencil or pen and this special lesson. If you have all these tools with you now, you are ready to start the search. Be certain to read all the Bible verses given along the way to find important clues.

GOD'S ANNUAL FEASTS

A good detective knows clearly what he is searching for before he starts looking for clues. Before you start searching for the "whys" and "hows" of God's festivals, be sure you know their names. On the following lines list the names of the seven annual feasts of God. For clues, turn to the 23rd chapter of Leviticus.

Some of God's festivals have more than one name. If you uncover another name, put it down beside the first one. This will help you later as you search for more clues about these festivals. All of God's yearly feasts are discussed in this chapter, but not all of them are clearly named. If you are not sure of a name, ask your father or mother for help.

1. _____ (Verse 5)
2. _____ (Verse 6)
3. _____ (Verses 16, 21)
4. _____ (Verse 24)
5. _____ (Verse 27)
6. _____ (Verse 34)
7. _____ (Verse 36)

These seven feasts of God can be divided into two groups. The first group is composed of the Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost. These

come in the spring and early summer of each year. The second group of festivals comes in the fall. They are the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day.

Each feast pictures a different step in God's great master plan for mankind. When you put together the meanings of all of God's feast days, they form a picture that shows *why* God created human beings.

THE SPRING FEASTS

Let's briefly review the meanings of the spring festivals before we begin our search for clues to the meanings of the fall festivals.

The Passover pictures the first step in God's plan. It reminds us that Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty of our sins, which is eternal death.



God's festivals are like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle forming a picture of His plan. When all the pieces are put together, the picture becomes clear.



We are to eat unleavened products during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

The Days of Unleavened Bread remind us that we must put sin out of our lives and keep it out, just as we put leavening (a symbol for sin in the Bible) and all leavened products out of our homes before these days, and avoid eating them for seven days. This Feast is step two in God's plan for mankind.

Pentecost, the third step, pictures the "firstfruits" — the very *few* God has called and is now training to be kings and priests in His coming government on earth. On Pentecost, fifty days after the resurrection of Christ, His disciples and other repentant believers received God's Holy Spirit. This marked the official beginning of the New Testament Church of God. The Holy Spirit helps

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one to understand God's spiritual law — His way of life. It also gives the strength to resist Satan's temptations to do evil. And it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that God will give us eternal life.

These three feasts will be explored fully next year in the special Spring Festival lesson.

THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS A Worldwide Announcement

Now let's begin the search for clues to the meanings of the last four of God's annual festivals. Start by rereading God's instructions in Leviticus 23, verses 23 through 25. These verses speak of the first of the fall festivals, the Feast of Trumpets. This day pictures the *very next* step in God's master plan for mankind.

Why is this festival called "a memorial of blowing of trumpets"? What does the blowing of trumpets have to do with God's plan for mankind? Check the following scriptures for clues: *Ezekiel 33:1-6*. Explain in your own words why the watchman was to blow a trumpet.

_____. *Numbers 10:9*. According to this verse, in ancient Israel trumpets were blown to sound an _____ to warn the people of coming warfare.

Trumpets have been used down through history to alert people of various things. They signaled warnings of coming danger, such as approaching armies. They signaled armies to prepare for battle. They were also blown to prepare the people to hear special

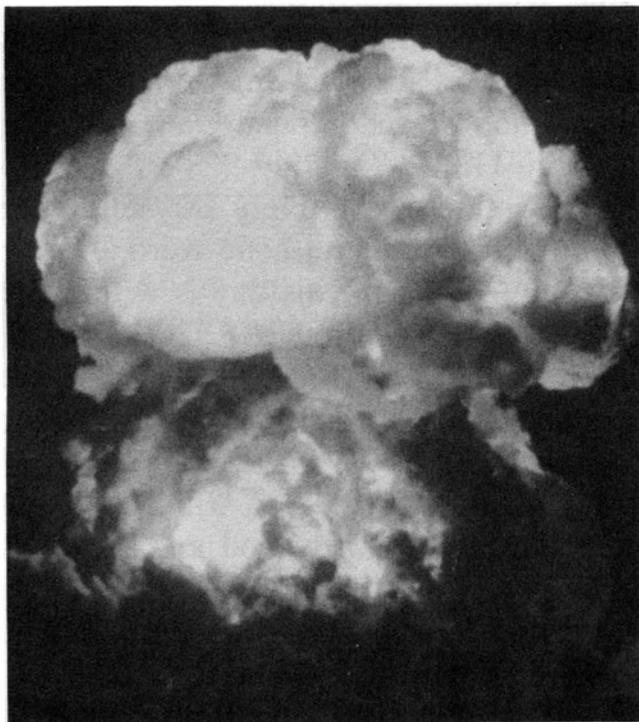


The shofar alerted ancient Israel to various things such as approaching armies. A mighty trumpet blast will announce Jesus Christ's return.

Associated Press Photo

announcements (II Kings 9:13). Let's see what the blowing of trumpets has to do with the meaning of the Feast of Trumpets today.

Recall that God placed the great archangel Lucifer on the throne of this earth to rule over millions of angels. But Lucifer rebelled against God's government, thereby disqualifying himself from being the ruler over the earth. Adam was then given a chance to qualify to replace Lucifer (now called Satan the devil). But *he also* chose the way of rebellion against God's Law. Then, about 4,000 years later, the second member of the God Family came to earth as the human Jesus Christ to qualify to replace Satan as world ruler. He did this by obeying God instead of obeying Satan's orders (Matt. 4:1-11).



U.S. Air Force

Before Jesus Christ returns, there will be a terrible time of war such as the world has never seen.

Jesus lived a life of perfect obedience to God and His Laws (Heb. 4:15). By turning to John 1:1, 14, you will discover the name of this member of the God Family *before* He came to earth as the human Jesus. What was that name?

_____.

Although Jesus qualified to take over the throne of the earth by overcoming Satan, He hasn't yet been placed on that throne by God the Father. God has allowed Satan to keep this high office. This is where the meaning of the Feast of Trumpets comes in.

The Feast of Trumpets pictures a time in the very near future when Jesus Christ will return as "*King of kings and Lord of lords*" (Rev. 19:11-16). It is then He will *replace* Satan and sit upon the throne of the earth to begin His rule over all nations.

Now notice what will *announce* Christ's return to earth. I Thessalonians 4:16 says He will "descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the _____."

I Corinthians 15:52 is a clue which tells you that true Christians who are alive when Christ returns will be changed from flesh and blood to spirit beings at the sound of the last _____. And true Christians who have died will be raised from the dead and be given immortal spirit bodies when this _____ sounds.

The Feast of Trumpets is a day on which to be happy because Jesus Christ is coming **SOON** to rule all nations with God's Law. He is coming to set up His

government that will bring peace, joy and plenty to all mankind. And when He comes it will be with the sound of the mighty *trumpet* of God!

Do You Remember?

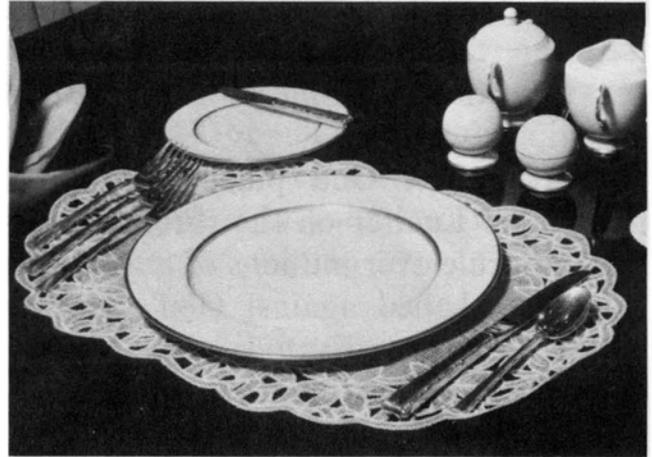
1. Who was the first ruler God placed on the throne of the earth?
_____.
2. Who was *first* given the chance to replace this rebellious ruler?
_____.
3. Who qualified to replace this wicked ruler? _____.
4. What will announce Christ's return as "King of kings and Lord of lords?" _____.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT At One With God

You may have noticed from the clues you've found so far that God does everything in order. The fifth festival represents the fifth step in God's master plan for mankind. Turn to Leviticus 23 once more. This time read verses 27 through 32.

What does the Bible mean by "ye shall afflict your souls" (verses 27 and 32)? The word *afflict* often means "humble." Notice this in Psalms 35:13. David humbled or afflicted his "soul" (his body) with _____.

Look up the word *fast* in a dictionary. It has other meanings besides "swift" or "speedy." It also means to go without _____. This is what the Bible means when it says we must "afflict" our bodies on the Day of Atonement. We are to go without food and water



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On the Day of Atonement we do not eat any food or drink any water.

from sunset to sunset — one full, 24-hour day.

But why? What does not eating teach you?

If you go without food and water for very many days, what will happen to you? Right, you will die! Fasting teaches us how weak and helpless we really are without food. It is meant to help us see how much we really need God and to be close to Him!

The name of this Holy Day might be compared to a secret code word. A clue to the meaning of this day is within the letters of the word itself! The meaning deals with the fact that man needs to be close to God. God is going to make human beings **AT ONE** with Himself after Jesus returns. Men will become in total agreement with God and His way of life. This will be the first time of true **AT + ONE + MENT = _____** between God and His human creation!

But how will God do this? The only way God and man can be at one is to get rid of Satan. And that is exactly what



Wide World Photo

Satan is the main cause of all the troubles and evils in the world today.

this day pictures in God's plan! The first thing God will do when Christ returns is *dethrone* the present king of the earth — Satan (II Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:1-3). There cannot be two different kings ruling over the same territory. The Day of Atonement tells us that Satan will be *removed* from his position of rulership over the earth when Christ returns.

Since the creation of Adam and Eve, Satan has been the main cause of all sin. He tempted and deceived Eve into disobeying God's instructions. Satan also led Adam, through Eve, to sin in the same way. And he has been behind the sins of all mankind since that time. This Holy Day also pictures the time when God will place all the guilt of mankind's sins upon the head of Satan where it belongs!

This is the important meaning of the Day of Atonement. It is a solemn feast since you go without food or water. It is to remind us of how much we need God to live happy, useful lives of peace and joy. It looks forward to the time when

God will make the world *at one* with Him because Satan won't be around to tempt people to sin anymore.

Do You Remember?

1. What will God do to make it possible for mankind to become *at one* with Him? _____
_____.
2. Who has been the real culprit behind all sin from the time of Adam and Eve until now?
_____.
3. What are the three parts of the secret code word we have discussed?
____ + ____ + ____ =
_____.

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES A Time of Great Rejoicing

You are now ready to investigate the sixth step in God's plan for His human creation. This step is revealed in the sixth of God's annual festivals — the _____ (Lev. 23:34).

Like the Days of Unleavened Bread, this feast lasts seven days. The *first* of these seven days is a Holy Day or Sabbath. But God commands us to do some special things on *all seven* days. Read the 42nd verse of Leviticus 23, then write on the following lines one thing we are commanded to do *during* all seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles: _____
_____.

Because of this command from God this feast is also called the "Feast of

Booths.” It is a time when God commands us to live in “booths,” or temporary dwelling places such as tents, motels or hotel rooms today. You will discover why as you continue this lesson.

The last part of verse 40 in Leviticus 23 tells of something else we are to do for the entire seven days of this feast. Read this verse and write down this other command from God: _____

Why should we rejoice?

Because this feast pictures the Millennium — a 1,000-year period in the very near future when all people on earth will be taught God’s wonderful way of life. It pictures a time when you will be safe among strangers. A time when robbery, murder and violence will no longer fill the earth. The Millennium will be a time of *peace, happiness and prosperity* for all mankind!

The meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles is pictured by the great fall agricultural harvest in the land of Palestine where Jesus lived. It pictures the *great* harvest of human beings into God’s spirit family. God is calling only a few “firstfruits” into His Church now (pictured by Pentecost). But after Satan is imprisoned, God, through His Holy Spirit, will bring all mankind to an understanding of His Law and His wonderful way of living. God says, “_____ pour out _____ upon _____” (Joel 2:28).

During the Millennium (millennium means 1,000 years) the government of God will rule the earth. The world will

learn that His way is the *only way* that *causes* the good results men have always wanted. Human governments have tried for 6,000 years to provide peace, happiness and abundance, but without success.

But why do we live in “booths” (temporary dwellings) during the Feast? Because God wants us to remember that we are now like strangers or visitors in a foreign country. Those in God’s Church today are actually citizens of the coming Kingdom of God. They are looking forward to the time when the government of God will be set up on earth. The *Wonderful World Tomorrow* booklet tells more about this time. Ask your parents to read this booklet with you.

You have the chance to live on into this wonderful world as a human being. You will experience the blessings of



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The Feast of Tabernacles pictures the peace, happiness and prosperity of the World Tomorrow.

God's rule! After living part of your life in a world ruled by Satan, you will be able to tell future generations how wonderful God's rule is by comparison!

Let's read a few scriptures that give clues as to what the world will be like during the Millennium.

A picture of peace and harmony even among wild animals is shown in Isaiah 11:6-9. Fill in the blanks with the names of the animals: "The _____ also shall dwell with the _____, and the _____ shall lie down with the _____; and the _____ and the young _____ and the _____ together; and a little child shall lead them. And the _____ and the _____ shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the _____ shall eat straw like the _____. And the sucking child shall

play on the hole of the _____, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the _____ den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain. . . ." (See also Isaiah 65:25.)

This is the time pictured by the YOU/YES symbol on the front cover of each of these lessons. A wonderful time of peace, harmony and safety!

Read Isaiah chapter 35, verses 1-7. On the lines below, write in your own words what these verses say. You may use extra paper if you need to. _____

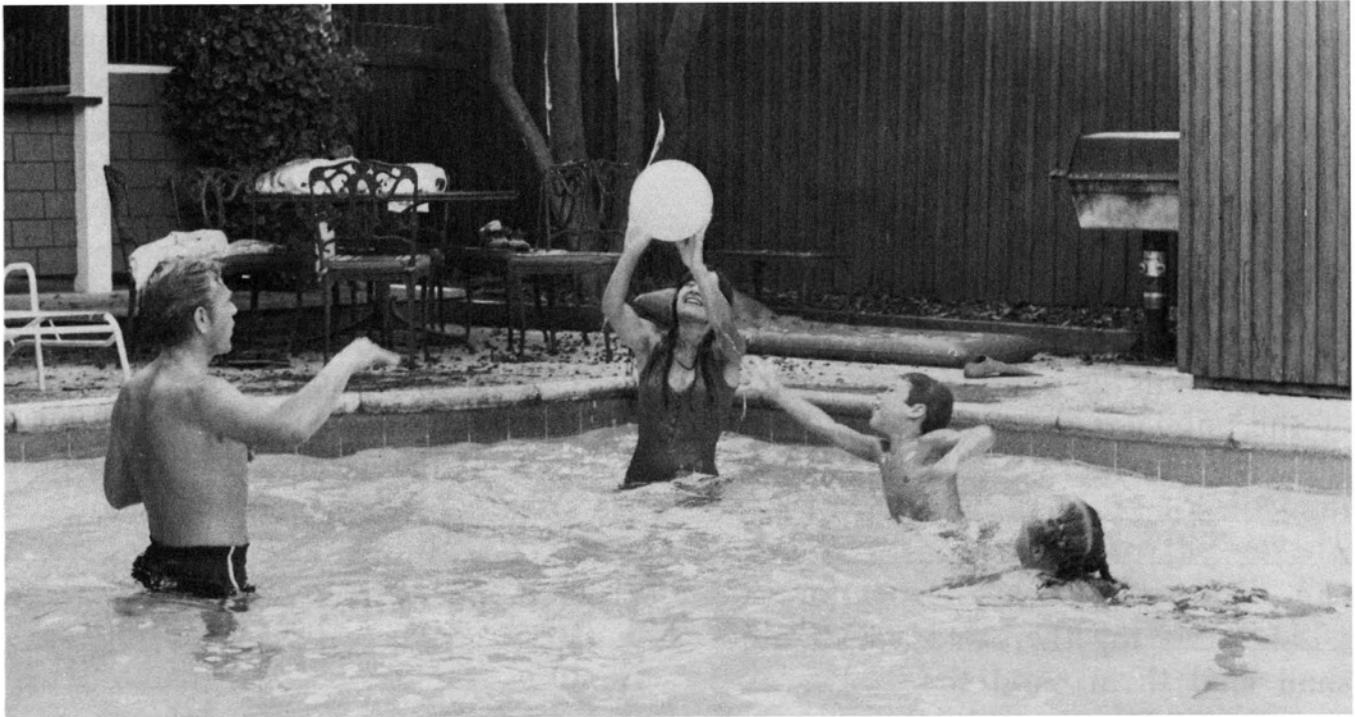
No wonder God *commands* us to be happy during the Feast of Tabernacles!



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The Feast of Tabernacles is a time for families to rejoice together.

It pictures the soon-coming Millennium! And God will be able to use you as a leader in the World Tomorrow because you have wanted to live God's way as your parents have taught you.

Yes, *YOU* can have a part in one of the most exciting times of all human history — the time when God restores His government of love and justice to this earth! Crime, sickness, disease, pain and suffering will be gone. *Poverty* and *ignorance* done away. Wild animals tame. Air pollution, water pollution, soil pollution corrected. The world will be filled with happy people, guided, helped, protected and ruled by former humans then made immortal spirit beings! And all people will know that *they, also*, may inherit everlasting, spirit life in God's growing family!

You should rejoice in the Feast of

Tabernacles along with your parents. Rejoice in knowing what it pictures in God's wonderful master plan *for you* and the rest of mankind!

Do You Remember?

1. What does the word "millennium" mean?
_____.
2. Why do we live in temporary homes during the Feast of Tabernacles? _____

_____.
3. Circle all of the words that have to do with the Feast of tabernacles.

thousand	sickness	motels	booths
starvation	sadness	war	friends
death	happiness	pets	rebuild

THE LAST GREAT DAY A Time of Judgment

But this is not all! There is yet one more annual festival picturing the *final step* in God's master plan.

Notice verses 34 and 36 in Leviticus 23: "The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the Lord. . . . On the _____ shall be an _____ unto you . . . it is a day of solemn assembly; and ye shall do _____ therein."

This "eighth day" is actually a separate festival. It comes immediately *after* the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles. In the New Testament it is called "the *last day*, that *great day* of the feast" (John 7:37). You will usually hear it called "The Last Great Day" or "The Great White Throne Judgment Day." But its meaning is more important than its name.

What is left to be completed in God's great plan? With God's government ruling this earth in perfect peace and happiness, what could possibly be left undone? We must solve the final part of our festival mystery.

After the Millennium there will still be the billions of people who died before the Millennium began and never had an opportunity to know and follow God's ways. Almost all the people who have lived and died during the 6,000 years of human history have been blinded to God's ways and His plan for them. Billions of people have *not yet* had their chance to become members of God's

Family. In fact, they have never even heard of God's plan!

This final annual feast day pictures the time *after* the Millennium when all these billions of people will be resurrected (brought back to human, physical life) and given a chance to see and understand God's way for a period of 100 years (Rev. 20:5, 11-13; Ezek. 37:1-14; Isa. 65:20). This is the *last* time of "judgment" (opportunity to live God's way — I Peter 4:17) for human beings. These are the last remaining people to be given *their* chance for salvation.

Before God's great master plan for His human creation is finished, every human being will be given a chance to understand and live *God's way*. God wants *everyone* to qualify and have their opportunity to be in His Family (II Peter 3:9).

Only after *every single human being* has had his or her chance to know and accept God's way of life will God's plan for mankind be completed. All will have had an opportunity to receive salvation because God is absolutely fair!

You have finished your study of the hidden meaning in the annual feast days of God. You now know **WHY** He commands you to observe these days and keep them holy. He wants you to know and remember and never forget *why* He has made you and where your life is leading. He wants to remind you each year **WHY** you were born!

What a wonderful privilege it is to understand this marvelous mystery from God!

Have a great Feast!

SERMON NOTES

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FEAST HIGHLIGHTS

DAY 1

MORNING:

AFTERNOON:

EVENING:

DAY 2

MORNING:

AFTERNOON:

EVENING:

DAY 5

MORNING:

AFTERNOON:

EVENING:

DAY 6

MORNING:

AFTERNOON:

EVENING:

Keep the memories of this Feast of Tabernacles for years to come.
Describe the activities and experiences that made each day special.

DAY 3

MORNING:

AFTERNOON:

EVENING:

DAY 4

MORNING:

AFTERNOON:

EVENING:

DAY 7

MORNING:

AFTERNOON:

EVENING:

DAY 8

MORNING:

AFTERNOON:

EVENING:

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Feast Friends

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