

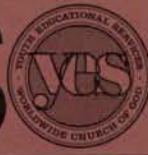
YOUTH



LEVEL 8

BIBLE

LESSONS



SPECIAL FEAST LESSON



God's Festivals Do Make a Difference!

FALL FESTIVAL
EDITION

GOD'S FESTIVALS DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

What do you think of when someone is described as being "different"? Do you imagine a person who is odd or peculiar? One who is a social misfit? The kind of person you definitely would not want to be associated with? When talking about people, unfortunately the derogatory or bad meaning of *different* is most commonly used. Yet, there is another important meaning of the word.

Do you know that God expects His people to be "different"? Not different in the sense of being strange in one's personal habits, but different in the sense of being special. Read what God says about His people in Titus 2:14 and fill in the missing words: "[Jesus Christ] Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a _____ people, zealous of _____." *Peculiar* here means beyond the usual; out of the ordinary; special.

God wants His people to be different by being eager (zealous) to obey Him and do good. He

says of mankind in general that "there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:12). Also, that the natural human with his carnal mind — a mind which thinks only in physical terms of getting for the self — "is enmity against God" and cannot obey God's laws (Rom. 8:7). We, God's people, become a special pleasure to God when we obey His laws. It is our obedience to the law of God that makes us different from the rest of humanity.

Of all God's laws, it is our keeping of the Sabbath that makes us most noticeably different. God gave us His weekly Sabbaths and annual Sabbaths (feast days) to be special signs that would make us obviously different from the rest of the world. Notice the account of the special Sabbath covenant God made with Israel in Exodus 31:12-13. "And the _____ spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily _____ ye shall _____. for it is a _____ between me and you



YES Photo

The Feast of Tabernacles is a joyous time when God's people gather together in great numbers.



YES Photo

God's people are dedicated to a set of values different than those of the world.

throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth _____ [sanctify means to set apart or designate as different or special] you.”

The weekly and annual Sabbaths remain today as special signs that set apart God's people as different from the rest of mankind.

God does not require us to keep His festivals just to live differently for difference sake. God wants us to live by His way of life — which includes keeping the feast days — because it's part of the *only* way of life that leads to peace, happiness and eternal life as a member of the God family!

God wants what is best for us. Read Deuteronomy 28:1-14 and see what God promised Israel He would give them if they kept all His laws: prosperity, health, protection,

peace, good weather and leadership over all nations on earth! God wanted Israel to live His different way — His happy way of life — so that their lives would be shining examples to the other nations who would then seek to imitate Israel.

Similarly, God wants His Church today to keep His laws, including His festivals, so that we may receive the same blessings and more! Our lives can also become examples others will desire to imitate. And when are those examples more noticeable than when our brethren gather in large numbers at the various Feast of Tabernacles sites around the world?

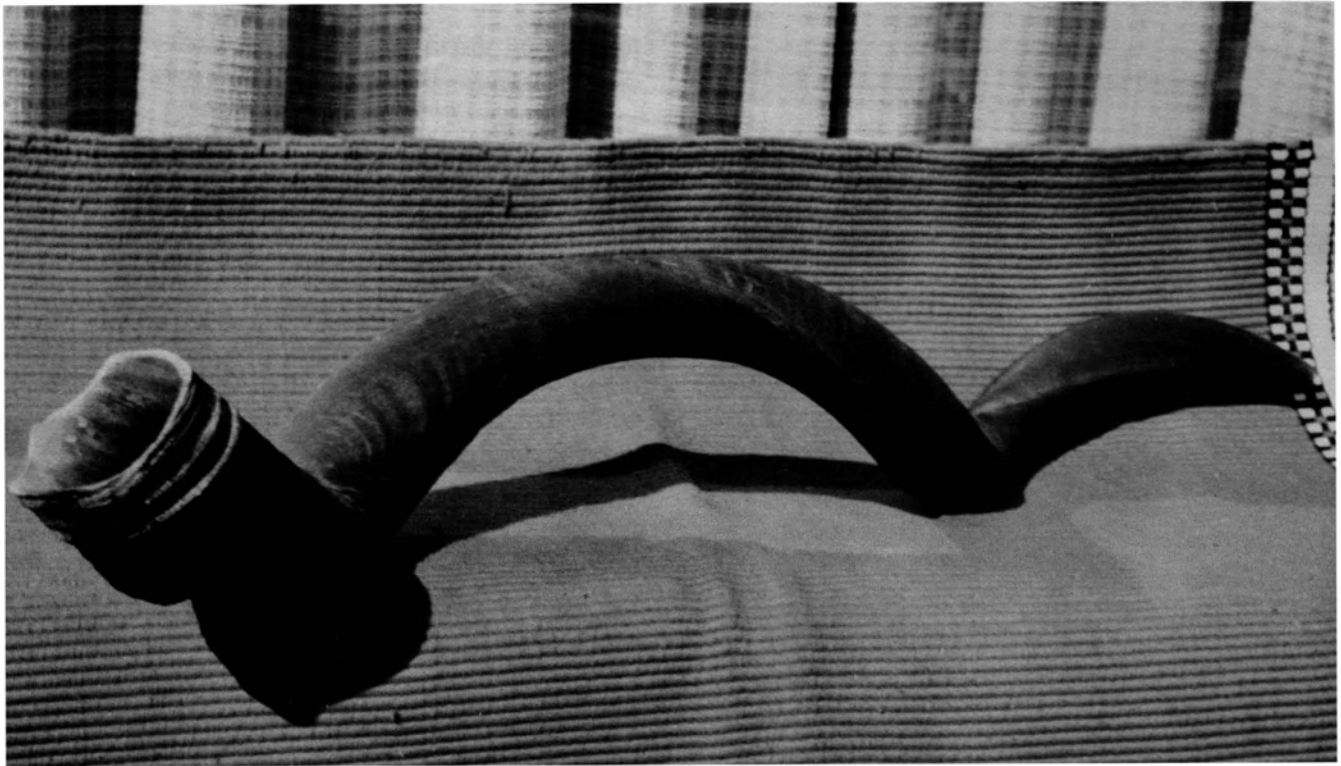
God commands the observance of His festivals for many reasons. One is to show the world through the lives of God's people that His is a much better way of life. The observance of the feast days also unifies the Church through extra fellowship. It provides intensive instruction in how to better live the way of life God wants us to live. Another very important reason is that God's festivals constantly remind us of His plan and how we and the rest of the world fit into that plan.

Each festival explains an important step in God's plan to bring human beings into His family. Understanding the meaning of each feast is vital to knowing where and how *you* fit into God's purpose of making you part of His family some day. This special Fall Festival lesson will concentrate on explaining the meanings of the fall festivals: the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day.

THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS

The Feast of Trumpets is found in the list of God's feasts given in Leviticus 23. Read verses 23-25. Notice that the Feast of Trumpets always falls on the first day of the seventh month of God's sacred calendar. This means it will fall sometime in the month of September or early October according to man's calendar.

God describes this feast as “a memorial of blowing of trumpets.” The kind of trumpet the Israelites used was a shofar, or a ram's horn, not the kind of trumpet commonly used by musicians today. The ram's horn gives a piercing blast



YES Photo

This shofar, like the ones used by the Israelites, gives a piercing blast when blown.

when blown. It was used to warn of impending warfare just as sirens today warn us of military attack.

So what meaning does the blowing of trumpets have on this day?

The event pictured by the Feast of Trumpets is the return of Jesus Christ! He will come "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump[et] of God" (I Thess. 4:16). Christ's return is going to come during a time of worldwide war such as the world has never seen. When asked by His disciples what the world would be like before His return, Jesus replied that there would be many wars, and that world conditions would be so bad that no human would be left alive if He did not intervene. (Read Matthew 24:3-22.)

The Feast of Trumpets is a reminder to us that the return of Jesus Christ is man's only hope for survival. It is also a warning to us that we should seek His protection. God wants us to never forget that man's way of doing things leads only to death and destruction. (Read Pro. 14:12.)

Let's look at another important event pictured

by the Feast of Trumpets. This Holy Day also pictures the resurrection of the saints to immortal life at the return of Jesus Christ to the earth. The saints are those whom God has called and have been willing to obey Him. Notice what God said through the apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:51-52: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the _____: for the _____ shall _____, and the _____ shall be _____ incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

The above words describe your parents who are spirit begotten members of God's Church at Christ's return. They and all of those who will repent of their sins and who receive the Holy Spirit of God prior to Christ's return, together with all of those who have died while being in the Church, will be made immortal when He comes.

The Feast of Trumpets comes once a year to remind us of the glorious return of Jesus Christ, and the resurrection of the dead — the time when the sons of God will be born into God's

family to live forever! No wonder God commands us to meet together (have a "convocation," Lev. 23:24) on this day each year to review these wonderful future events.

How Well Do You Remember?

Answer the following questions by circling the best answer.

1. The Feast of Trumpets pictures
 - A. the resurrection of the saints to eternal life.
 - B. the return of Jesus Christ to the earth.
 - C. the restoration of God's government on earth.
 - D. All of the above.
 - E. None of the above.
2. Jesus Christ will return to a world
 - A. that is at peace.
 - B. that is full of war.
 - C. that is obedient to God's laws.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

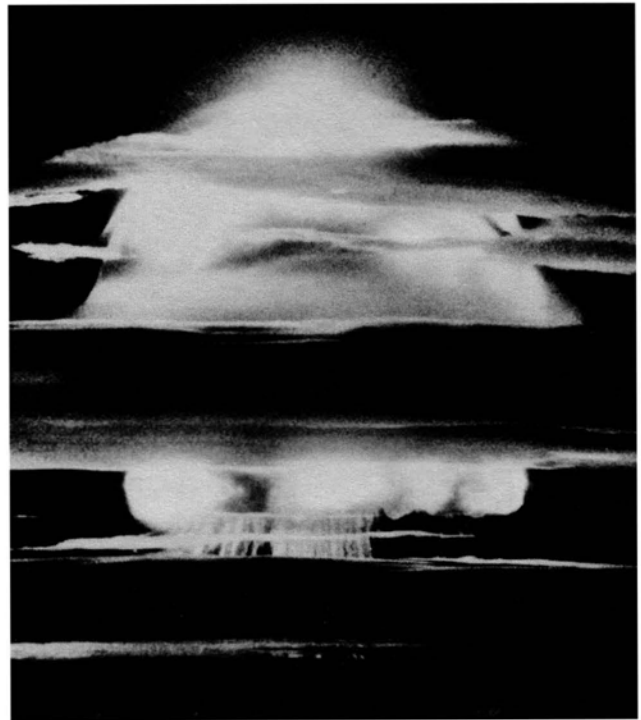
On the tenth day of the seventh month of God's calendar is another feast day, the Day of Atonement. God instructs us about this feast day in Leviticus 23:26-32. Notice verse 27: "Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a _____: it shall be an holy _____ unto you; and ye shall _____."

The Day of Atonement is the Holy Day on which we fast — eat no food and drink no liquids. "Afflict your soul" means to humble yourself by fasting. In Psalm 35:13 David said, "I humbled my soul with fasting." "Afflict" in Leviticus 23 and "humbled" in Psalm 35 are translations from the same Hebrew word. So we afflict ourselves by fasting.

But why does God want us to fast?

Satan has deceived man for nearly 6,000 years now. He has led man to think that he doesn't need God. Man thinks he can get along just fine on his own.

But look where man has gotten on his own. The world is *full* of trouble! When Christ returns, mankind will be on the verge of self-annihilation!



Courtesy of U.S. Air Force

Man's way has led to the development of awesome weapons of destruction. Jesus Christ will step in to prevent man from annihilating himself.

Man *needs* God to teach him the right way to live, the way that brings every good thing.

God wants us to fast on the Day of Atonement to remind us that we need to be humble and teachable — that we need to be willing to obey Him and let Him work through us. If we learn to be humble and teachable now, we won't have to learn the hard way later like the rest of the world will.

When Jesus Christ returns in power and glory, He is going to have to bring prideful humanity to its knees. Satan will have deceived mankind into thinking that Christ and His angels are enemies of man. They will actually *fight against* Jesus Christ! When Christ defeats them, mankind will finally be humbled. Mankind will finally begin to understand that his ways only lead to all manner of suffering and sorrow. Only then will man be willing to turn to God and learn His way.

The Day of Atonement pictures the whole world becoming "at one" with God, reconciled to Him and living by God's way of life. To make that possible God will have to restrain Satan from deceiving man and influencing him to commit sin. Only then will mankind begin to be "at one" with



YES Photo

On the Day of Atonement, we take in spiritual food instead of physical food.

God, living in accordance with His will. The account of how God is going to restrain Satan is found in Revelation 20:1-3. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the _____, and _____, and _____ him a _____ years, and _____ him _____ the bottomless _____, and _____ him _____, and set a seal upon him, that he should _____ the _____ _____, till the thousand years should be fulfilled."

Ancient Israel held a ceremony on the Day of Atonement that symbolized Satan being restrained. You can read the account of this in Leviticus 16. The high priest cast lots over two goats. The goat on which the Eternal's lot fell was killed for a sin offering, just as Jesus Christ was killed for our sins many centuries later. (Christ's death makes our "at-one-ment" — our reconciliation — with God the Father possible.) Then the high priest laid his hands on the head of

the other goat (which pictured Satan) and confessed the sins of Israel, figuratively putting those sins onto the goat. That goat was then taken to the wilderness and released. Since Satan is the real author of sin (John 8:44), this part of the ceremony pictures the time just after Christ returns when He will place upon Satan the sins of mankind and cast him into the "bottomless pit." Then all mankind will finally be able to become "at-one" with God the Father through Jesus Christ's sacrifice, and begin living God's wonderful way of life.

The Day of Atonement and all that it pictures is the world's guarantee that a new age of universal peace, harmony and cooperation with our Creator is coming — the Golden Age of Christ's rule on this earth pictured by the next festival.

How Well Do You Remember?

Answer the following questions by circling the best answer.

- God commands us to fast on the Day of Atonement so that we
 - will draw closer to God.
 - will realize how much we need God.
 - will be humble and teachable.
 - All of the above.
 - None of the above.
- When Jesus Christ returns mankind will
 - welcome Him.
 - ignore Him.
 - fight against Him!

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

The Feast of Tabernacles is probably the most joyous time of the year for God's people. Because God has wisely commanded us to save a second tithe (10th) of our incomes throughout the year, we are able to go to one of His various Feast sites throughout the world and there receive inspiration and instruction, as well as partake of many of the good physical things of life. Read God's command to keep the Feast of Tabernacles in Leviticus 23:33-36 and 39-43.

God commands us to keep the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days. The first day is a special Sabbath or Holy Day. During these seven

days God tells us to live in “booths” or temporary dwellings. That is why we stay in motels, campers or tents during the Feast of Tabernacles. God wants us to remember that this life in this world is only *temporary*. We should be constantly looking forward to eternal life in God’s family. That way we will not become bogged down in pursuing the temporary physical things of this life to the point we forget about God and the eternal life He can give us.

The Feast of Tabernacles pictures what the world will be like after Christ has returned to earth and established His government over all nations. There will be worldwide peace and people will convert their weapons of war into farming tools. (Read Isaiah 2:4.) It will be a time of peace that will extend even to the animal world. Notice Isaiah 11:6-9. “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking

child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.”

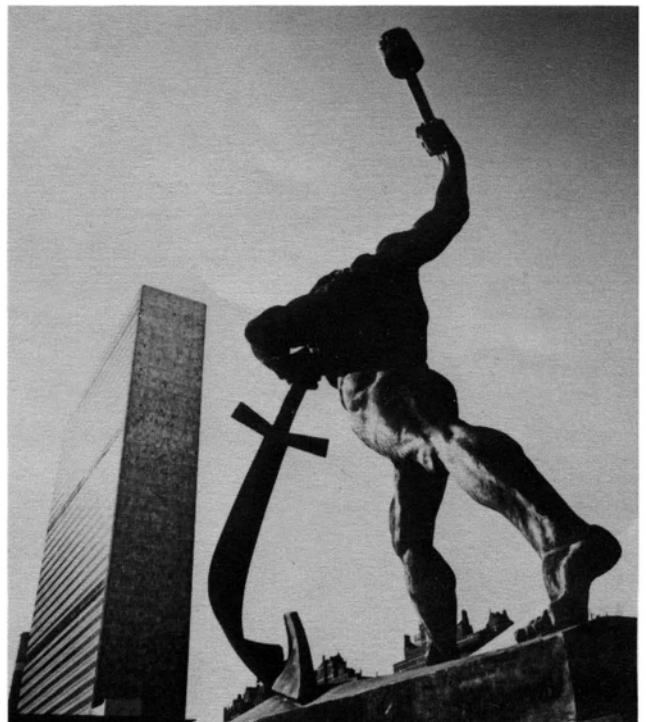
It will be a time of great prosperity and abundance to the extent that the harvest will not be all gathered in before it is time to plant again! (Read Amos 9:13.) It will be a time when everyone knows God’s way and is living it! (Read Isaiah 11:9 and Micah 4:1-5.) The world will no longer consider it strange to keep the Feast of Tabernacles because God says through Zechariah that *everyone* will keep the Feast! (Read Zechariah 14:16-19.)

Can you imagine such a world? No more discrimination against anyone because of their religion! No more bad grades in school as punishment for going to the Feast! No more uncertainty over whether world war will come, destroying families and everything they have worked for! No more will parents spend all their time struggling just to make enough money for the needs of their family! Rather, they will have more time to spend with their families in



YES Photo

A Feast “booth,” such as this tent, gives one the chance to experience a truly temporary dwelling place.



YES Photo

The World Tomorrow will be a time when men will really turn their weapons of war into implements of peace.

constructive spiritual, educational, cultural and recreational activities! There will be plenty of educational opportunities for everyone to reach his full potential! How unlike this present world. And how much like those seven joyful days of God's Feast of Tabernacles!

As we observe the Feast of Tabernacles each year, we experience a preview of the peace and prosperity the whole world will enjoy during the Millennium, the thousand years of Christ's rule on this earth. During the Feast we enjoy meals we can't afford at any other time of the year. Because of God's protection we have peace. More time is available to learn God's way — which brings all these good things — through daily services, special Bible studies and extra prayer because we are not busy working at the things that consume so much of our time the

other 51 weeks of the year. More time is also available to spend on recreational activities that bring us closer together with our families and brethren. We have time to enjoy cultural activities that teach us to appreciate the fruits of diligent effort in developing one's talents.

God never intended man to have to work all day just to be able to survive. Genesis 3:17-19 tells us that because of Adam's sin, God cursed the ground so that man would have to work extra hard fighting thorns and thistles (weeds) to get the land to produce crops for his food. God did this to help man realize that the way of obedience to God is better than man's way of rebellion. But originally, God gave Adam an abundant garden where he didn't have to struggle to produce food. God wants people to have time each day to



European Community Photo

God's blessing in the World Tomorrow will result in abundant crops.

spend developing their potentials and talents.

For seven days each year at the Feast of Tabernacles, God gives us that extra time. These days are a *foretaste* of the Millennium in which mankind will have time for those activities that enrich one's life, and help him to build the very character of God.

How Well Do You Remember?

Answer the following questions by circling the best answer.

1. The Feast of Tabernacles pictures
 - A. the Millennium.
 - B. the 1,000-year reign of Christ on the earth.
 - C. a time of peace, prosperity and happiness.
 - D. All of the above.
 - E. None of the above.
2. We live in temporary houses ("booths") during the Feast of Tabernacles because
 - A. the Millennium will last only 1,000 years.
 - B. God wants us to learn that this life in this world is only temporary.
 - C. God wants us to learn to live beyond our means.

THE LAST GREAT DAY

God's festivals picture His plan to give mankind eternal life and sonship in His family. That plan cannot be completed until all people who have ever lived have been given their chance to receive eternal life. The Last Great Day pictures this final phase of God's plan.

The Last Great Day occurs immediately after the Feast of Tabernacles. It is mentioned in Leviticus 23:36 as the "eighth day," and in John 7:37 you will read of the seventh and eighth days of the Feast of Tabernacles.

All of you have friends and relatives you love and enjoy very much, but who are not in the Church. You probably have friends at school who are not in the Church with whom you enjoy playing various sports and doing many other things. To spend eternity with that friend would certainly add to your enjoyment of eternal life because you share so much together now. The

Last Great Day is your hope that your friends and relatives will share eternal life with you, for it pictures the time when God will call everyone He hasn't called during this and past ages. He will give them His Spirit after they repent of their sins and accept Christ's sacrifice. He will allow them time to live the Christian way of life as we do today and then make them His sons. Then you will be able to enjoy being God's son *together* with your loved ones!

Revelation 20:11-13 speaks of this time after the Millennium as the "great white throne" judgment when the "books" of the Bible will be opened to their understanding so they can live by what is written in them. It is their time of salvation. And the Bible indicates that the majority of people who have ever lived will accept and live God's way and become His sons (Rom. 11:26).

How Well Do You Remember?

Answer the following question by circling the best answer.

1. The Last Great Day pictures
 - A. the second resurrection.
 - B. the great white throne judgment period.
 - C. a time of salvation for all those who died not knowing God's way of life.
 - D. All of the above.
 - E. None of the above.

A FUTURE FOR YOU

What an exciting and wonderful future God's fall festivals picture for you and all mankind! A promise of Satan being bound so that the whole world can live peacefully and happily without his influence! A promise of physical abundance and prosperity never before experienced by mankind! A promise of universal knowledge of God's ways and right education so that all have equal opportunity to develop their talents and potentials!

Man could not ask for a better future, and God would not give us any less. As you keep God's fall festivals this year, think on their meanings and realize how truly blessed you are to have such an exciting future ahead of you! Have an inspiring and happy festival season!

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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:

EDITOR IN CHIEF: **Herbert W. Armstrong**

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Feast Friends

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