

November 2013

Volume 24:11

# Discovery

*Scripture & Science for Kids*



# The Passover: A Time to REMEMBER

KYLE BUTT

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE

DAY OF THE YEAR? MAYBE YOU WOULD SAY CHRISTMAS. MAYBE YOU LIKE THE

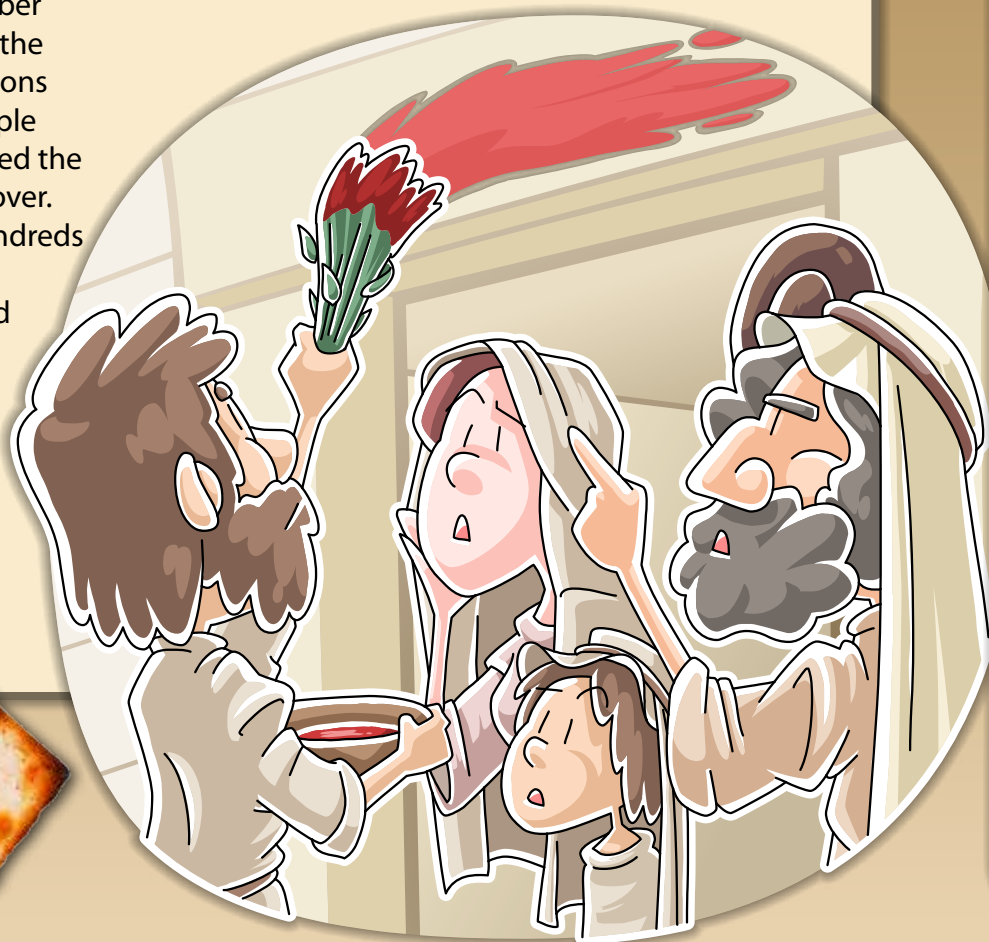
last day of the school year or the first day of a vacation. I would say my favorite day is November 20. That is my birthday. I like that day because it is a time when my family and friends think about me and they remember when I first came into the world. Often, special days like holidays and birthdays are times when we remember important events. For instance, the Fourth of July is a day to remember when our Founding Fathers signed the *Declaration of Independence* and established our free country.

In the same way, people in Bible times had some special holidays and feasts that they celebrated to remember important events. One of the most important celebrations the Jewish people held was called the feast of Passover. Each year hundreds of thousands of Jews would

gather in Jerusalem to observe the Passover. What events did the Passover celebrate? Maybe you remember in the Old Testament book of Exodus the story of the Israelites in bondage to the Egyptians. The Pharaoh in Egypt had forced the Israelites to be slaves. The Egyptians

treated the Jews terribly, beating them, and forcing them to work harder and harder. Because of their troubles, the Jewish people cried out to God to save them. God sent Moses and Aaron to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt.

When Moses and Aaron came to Egypt, Pharaoh did not want to let the Israelites go. So God worked amazing miracles through Moses and Aaron, bringing 10 horrible plagues on the land of Egypt. The last plague, the tenth one, was the death of all the firstborn in Egypt. But God gave the Israelites instructions to follow so that their firstborn children and livestock would not die. God explained that each Israelite family was to take one male lamb and kill it. They were to take a plant called hyssop and use it as a brush to put the lamb's blood on the top



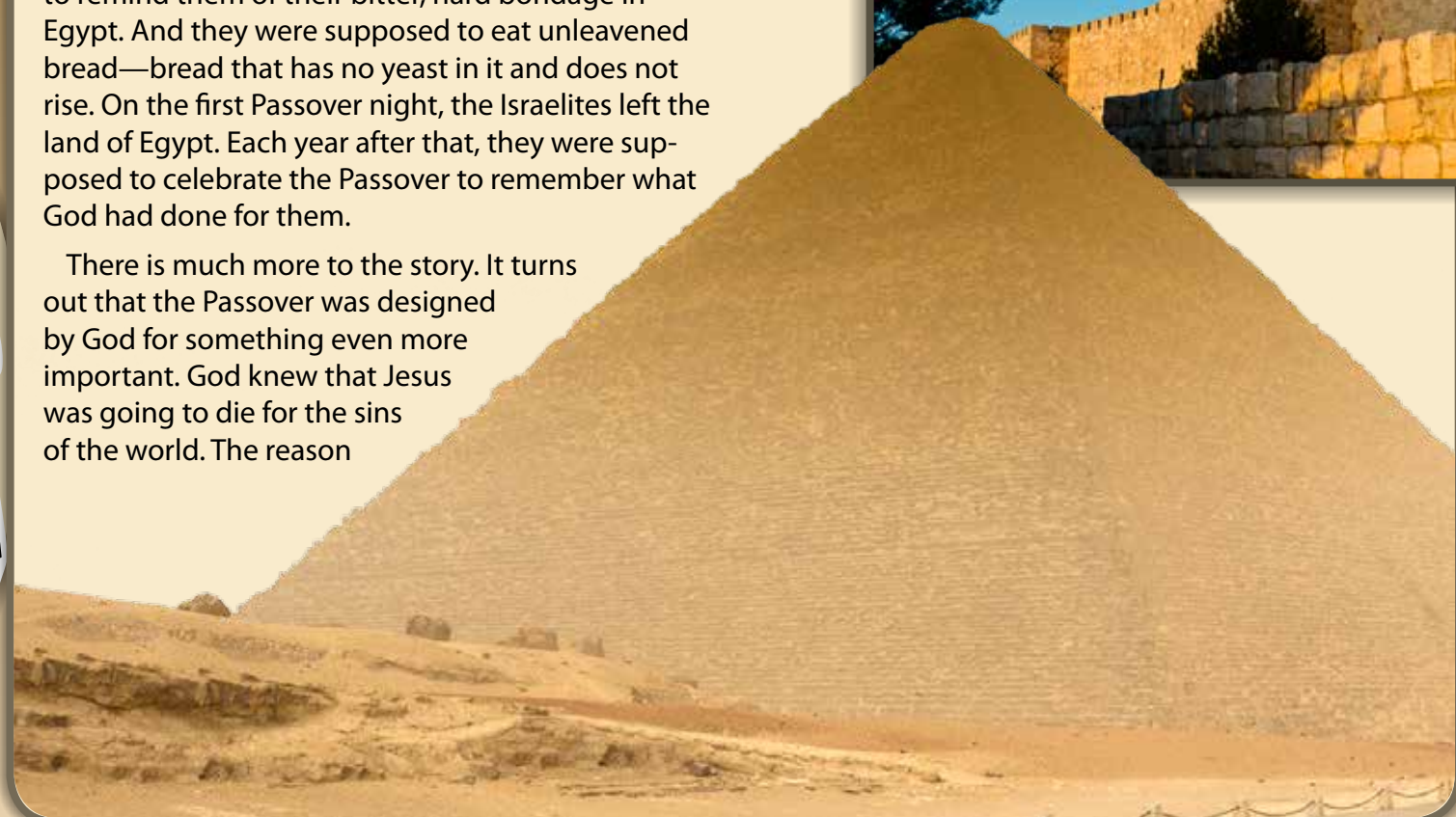
and sides of their doorposts. God explained that when He went through the land of Egypt, if He saw the blood on the doorposts, then He would **pass over** that house and not kill those inside it. The term Passover comes from the fact that God passed over the houses with the blood.

The Israelites were then supposed to roast the lamb in fire and eat it that night. It was important that they were not to break any of the lamb's bones when they ate it. They were told to eat bitter herbs to remind them of their bitter, hard bondage in Egypt. And they were supposed to eat unleavened bread—bread that has no yeast in it and does not rise. On the first Passover night, the Israelites left the land of Egypt. Each year after that, they were supposed to celebrate the Passover to remember what God had done for them.

There is much more to the story. It turns out that the Passover was designed by God for something even more important. God knew that Jesus was going to die for the sins of the world. The reason

He wanted the Jews to kill a male lamb was to point them to Jesus. The Bible explains that Christ was the Passover lamb who died for us (1 Corinthians 5:7). It is interesting that many people who were crucified had their legs broken (John 19:32). But remember that God instructed the Israelites to be very careful not to break any of the bones of the Passover lamb. That is because Jesus did not have any of His bones broken during the crucifixion (John 19:33).

God's people do not celebrate the Passover any longer, because Jesus Christ came as the ultimate sacrifice for sins. When God sees the blood of Jesus on a Christian's soul, then God passes over that soul and does not hold that person guilty for sins he has committed. Now, Christians remember the sacrifice of Christ on the first day of the week (which is also called the Lord's Day), when they eat the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). The next time you see someone eating the Lord's Supper, or are eating it yourself, remember the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, Who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29).



# Pentecost: The Feast of Weeks

DAVE MILLER

**THE FEAST OF WEEKS WAS SO NAMED BECAUSE GOD COMMANDED THE JEWS TO COUNT SEVEN FULL WEEKS** (49 days) and one day after Passover (so 50 days after Passover) to determine the event (Leviticus 23:15-16). It was a joyous time of giving thanks and presenting to God the first fruits of their spring crops. Like the other two pilgrimage feasts in the Law of Moses, all Israelite males were required to appear before the Lord in the court of the tabernacle in Jerusalem to make his offering monthly before the Lord. This celebration fell during the Hebrew month of Sivan (our May or June) and is named Pentecost in the Greek Bible.

The Jewish farmer would place in a basket the first fruits of his field or orchard. He would then join with other Jewish pilgrims (all carrying their baskets) to travel in procession to Jerusalem, singing joyful songs of praise as they went. In later Jewish history, Jews have observed this festival by lighting candles, reciting blessings, decorating their homes and synagogues with greenery (to represent the harvest), eating dairy foods, and studying the Law of Moses. Children were encouraged to memorize Scripture and then were rewarded with treats.

But it is in the New Testament that Pentecost reaches its greatest importance. It was on that day that the Holy Spirit empowered the 12 apostles in Jerusalem to preach the first Gospel sermons (Acts 2). The church of Christ was literally launched. So just as the Old Testament Passover foreshadowed Christ's work on the cross, so Pentecost looked to the arrival of Christianity and the Church.

\*The Jewish feasts were a shadow of the things to come through Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:16-17). Christians do not commemorate these Hebrew holidays. Doing so would distract one from the freedom in Christ. It would make a person obligated to follow all the Law of Moses. And it would cause one to be lost (Galatians 5:1-4). God removed the old covenant in order to establish the new covenant (Hebrews 8:13). But our knowledge and understanding of the Bible is deepened when we see how God hinted at the coming of Christ and the Church so many hundreds of years before they came.

## The Feast of Booths or Tabernacles

DAVE MILLER

### THIS SEVEN-DAY FEAST TOOK PLACE DURING THE SEVENTH MONTH OF THE JEWISH CALENDAR (OUR September to October).

This third and final feast for the year had as its purpose to remember the wilderness wandering. Also called the feast of ingathering (Exodus 23:16; 34:22), it was a time for the people to express their joy for the completion of the harvests—which included their fruit trees, grain, and grapes.

The Hebrew term *sukkah* refers to a temporary, fragile booth or shelter in which the Israelites lived when God brought them out of their slavery in Egypt (Leviticus 23:42-43). As they moved from place to place, they would build these portable mini-homes that gave them temporary shelter in the desert. After their arrival in the Promised Land, every year, God wanted the Israelites to be reminded of this fact by constructing booths in which to live for an entire week. Jews today who celebrate this feast often build a shelter in their backyard to remind them of the Israelites' Exodus from Egypt, and the traveling hardships they endured.

God also wanted the Israelites to include four special items: "And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days" (Leviticus 23:40). So today, Jews take a piece of fruit (to symbolize the fruit of the Promised Land), called an *etrog* (similar to a lemon), as well as a palm branch *lulav* that is wrapped with myrtle and willow branches. Once the Temple was built in Jerusalem, pilgrims would hold their *lulavs* and make a circular procession around the altar in the Temple courtyard. They would cry out to God the word *hoshea-na* ("Please save!"). We say "hosanna."

This fascinating feast looked forward to the day when the Son of God Himself approached Jerusalem sitting on a colt (suggesting royal honor). He was met by a crowd of excited worshippers (as a direct fulfillment of the kingly prophecy of Zechariah 9:9). Guess what they did. They waved the branches of palm trees, and some shouted: "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" What an incredible scene! In a joyous, triumphant setting similar to the Feast of Tabernacles, with palm waving and littering the pathway, a group of people offered a heartfelt cry to God to bring salvation.



LEFT: JEWISH WOMAN IN A SUKKAH  
BELOW: ETROG AND LULAV



# ACTIVITY PAGES

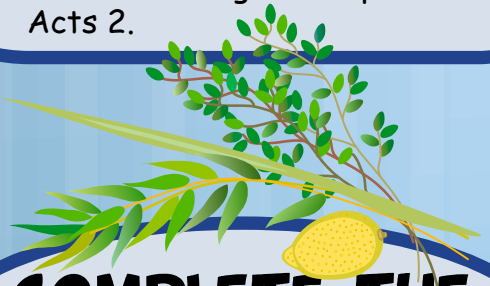


## TRUE OR FALSE

- \_\_\_ The term Passover comes from the fact that the Israelites repeated their past mistakes over and over again.
- \_\_\_ The tenth plague that God brought upon the Egyptians was turning the water to blood.
- \_\_\_ The Israelites celebrated the Feast of Passover only every seven years.
- \_\_\_ At the Feast of Passover, the Israelites ate unleavened bread.
- \_\_\_ The Jewish feasts were a shadow of the things to come through Jesus Christ.
- \_\_\_ Christians are not to celebrate the Old Testament holidays.
- \_\_\_ The Feast of Booths was the third and final feast for the year and had as its purpose to remember the wilderness wandering.
- \_\_\_ God removed the old covenant in order to establish the new covenant (Hebrews 8:13).
- \_\_\_ The number seven has little significance in Scripture.
- \_\_\_ Christians are required to celebrate the Passover meal every year.

## ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER

- List the three main Jewish feasts.
- Explain the origin of the Feast of Passover.
- Describe how the Day of Pentecost reached its highest importance in Acts 2.



## COMPLETE THE BIBLE VERSES (NKJV)

- "When the Day of \_\_\_\_\_ had fully come, they were all with \_\_\_\_\_ accord in one place" (Acts 2:1).
- "The next day John saw \_\_\_\_\_ coming toward him, and said, 'Behold! The \_\_\_\_\_ of God who takes away the sin of the world!'" (John 1:29).
- "Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: '\_\_\_\_\_ to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, 'Who is this?' So the multitudes said, 'This is \_\_\_\_\_, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee'" (Matthew 21:9-11).



## SOLVE, FIND, AND CIRCLE

- The kind of bread eaten during the Passover. \_\_\_\_\_
- The animal killed at Passover. \_\_\_\_\_
- The Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world. \_\_\_\_\_
- The number of Jesus' bones broken when He died. \_\_\_\_\_
- Another name for the Feast of Tabernacles. (Feast of) \_\_\_\_\_
- The number of days the Feast of Booths lasted. \_\_\_\_\_
- This feast began one day and seven weeks after Passover. \_\_\_\_\_
- Meaning of the Hebrew word *hoshea-na*. \_\_\_\_\_

## PASSOVER

P	E	N	T	E	C	O	S	T	L
Y	R	H	H	E	C	P	E	I	L
G	B	O	O	T	H	S	U	A	U
W	G	K	S	E	V	E	N	P	Y
T	P	J	W	D	O	T	L	I	T
X	K	B	P	K	O	C	E	O	C
P	L	E	A	S	E	S	A	V	E
D	B	Q	H	B	L	P	V	Z	C
C	R	Z	A	H	L	X	E	V	C
O	I	E	W	O	A	I	N	D	A
W	O	R	A	U	M	H	E	J	S
O	C	O	S	W	B	X	D	U	H
V	I	W	P	U	R	V	S	F	J
S	B	N	B	A	N	E	A	F	V
S	W	S	H	U	J	M	W	P	G

## Dear Digger Doug, What is the Jewish Feast of Purim?

Dear Reader,

You have learned in this month's *Discovery* that many of the feasts celebrated by the ancient Jewish nation were designed to help the people remember something. The feast of Purim was designed to help the Israelites remember a time when God saved their nation from destruction. The story is told in the Old Testament book of Esther. An evil man named Haman devised a plan to have all of the Jews killed. He did not know that the queen of his land, Esther, was a Jewess (a female Jew). She pleaded with the king of Media and Persia, Ahasuerus, to ruin Haman's plan. King Ahasuerus made a law that the Jews could fight for their freedom instead of being destroyed. On the 13<sup>th</sup> day of the Hebrew month of Adar, all the Jews throughout the land of Media and Persia fought their enemies and defeated them. The Jews in the capital city of Shushan fought on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> and defeated their enemies. Because of this great victory, Queen Esther and her advisor and cousin, Mordecai, established the feast of Purim to be celebrated on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of Adar, the days the Jews rested from fighting with their enemies. Many Jews today still celebrate this feast.





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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF "SEVEN" IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

ERIC LYONS

**THE NUMBER SEVEN WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO GOD'S PEOPLE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. GOD, OF COURSE, CREATED the seven-day week at the Creation. (He could have created a five-day or ten-day week, but He chose a seven-day week for mankind.) He also set a pattern for work and rest during the Creation that would eventually become a law for the Israelites when He led them out of Egyptian bondage and gave them the Law of Moses (Exodus 20:8-11).**

Seven was also an important number for the feasts that the Israelites celebrated. The Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Tabernacles lasted seven days, while the Feast of Weeks began seven weeks and one day after Passover. The Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the final major feast of the year—the Feast of Tabernacles—all took place in the seventh month (Numbers 29).

As with the seventh-day rest that the Lord commanded the Israelites, the seventh year was a special year for the Jews because God designated it a year of rest. "Six years you shall sow

your land and gather in its produce, but the seventh year you shall let it rest" (Exodus 23:10-11). What's more, the Israelites were not only to allow the land to rest every seven years, but every seventh seven years (year 49), the Israelites were to rest that year, plus the next—the 50<sup>th</sup> year, known as the Year of Jubilee.

It was also in the seventh month of every seventh year of rest that God commanded Israel to "gather the people together, men and women and little ones," to read the Law of Moses "before all Israel in their hearing...that they may learn to fear the Lord your God and carefully observe all the words of this law" (Deuteronomy 31:10-11).

For the Israelite, every seventh day of the week, every seventh month of the year, and every seventh year were marked by God as special occasions. Although Christians are not under these laws that God gave the Israelites, they can remind us of God's love and care for the Israelites, as well as the importance of taking time to consider and obey the Word of the Lord.



## ANSWERS

SOLVE, FIND, AND CIRCLE: 1. unleavened; 2. lamb; 3. Jesus; 4. zero; 5. Booths; 6. seven; 7. Pentecost; 8. please save.  
 FILL IN THE BIBLE VERSES: 1. Pentecost, one; 2. Jesus, Lamb; 3. Hosanna, Jesus.  
 TRUE OR FALSE: 1-F; 2-F; 3-F; 4-T; 5-T; 6-T; 7-T; 8-T; 9-F; 10-F.  
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