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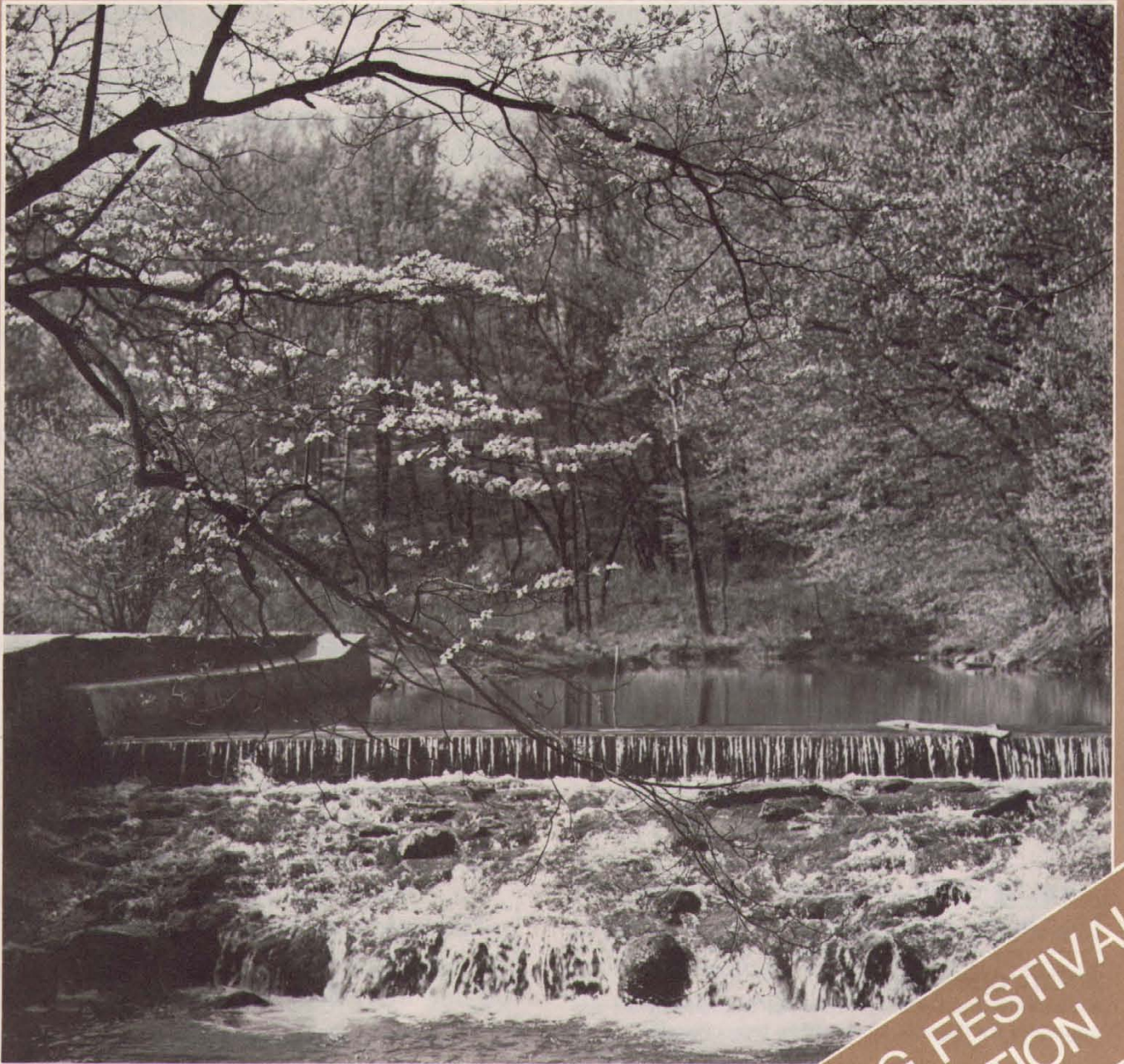
LEVEL 6

BIBLE

LESSONS



SPECIAL FEAST
LESSON



The Spring Feasts

SPRING FESTIVAL
EDITION

THE SPRING FEASTS

Have you ever noticed how wonderful springtime is? The sky looks bluer. The puffy white clouds loom high on the horizon. The grass is greener, and many plants begin to bloom, adding vivid color to the landscape!

If you're like most people, you enjoy being outside admiring God's wonderful creation during this time of the year.

Springtime and the ability to enjoy it are wonderful gifts from God. But God has an even more special and precious *gift* for His children—the opportunity to live forever as spirit-born members of His Family. This is God's purpose for creating human beings. Those who keep God's annual festivals each year understand God's wonderful plan for accomplishing His great purpose for mankind.

In this lesson you will learn about the first three steps in God's plan as pictured by the spring festivals. These include the Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost.

THE NEW YEAR

In Palestine and other parts of the Northern Hemisphere, God's festival

ABOUT OUR COVER . . .

Springtime, when the first three of God's festivals are observed by the members of His true Church.

H. Armstrong Roberts

season begins in the spring. Winter is past! Spring buds forth, showing much new life!

The first three of God's festivals occur in the spring months of God's calendar. Many countries use the Roman calendar in which the new year begins in the middle of winter. But God's calendar is more sensible—the new year begins in the spring! This first month of the year is called Abib in the Hebrew language.

SPRING—A TIME FOR CLEANING

Many of you may help your parents clean house each spring to get ready for the Days of Unleavened Bread, one of the spring festivals.

You dust and clean. You wash windows and clean out closets, pockets and purses. Remember what you search

GREEN EARS

After the frosts of winter are past
The first of spring appears at last.
The little ears of green appear
On trees and bushes far and near.
They grow to hear the spring bird's
song
That was silent the winter long.

for as you clean? With determined effort you and your family seek out the target—leavening and all foods containing leavening! All bread crumbs are suspect—cookies, cakes and sandwiches. All bread which is leavened or puffed up must go! Then, for seven days you eat unleavened bread.

Have you ever wondered why we go through so much effort to clean so carefully? What does getting rid of bread containing leaven have to do with God's plan? Why do we eat unleavened bread for seven days? Are you puzzled?

A GIANT "JIG-SAW PUZZLE"

For nearly 6,000 years, practically no one has understood God's plan. During these years, God has shown a part of His plan to some of His servants. To others of His servants He has shown another part.

God began revealing His plan many, many years ago, but He has done it slowly—*very* slowly.

Think of God's plan as a beautiful and wonderful picture which God has cut into an intricate "jig-saw puzzle" with many individual pieces.

God gave a piece of the puzzle to ancient Israel long ago when they were freed from slavery in Egypt. Although the Israelites had a large piece of the puzzle, they did not know or understand where it fit in God's plan.

Israel did not have the Bible as we do today. Christ through the Bible reveals to His Church the pieces of the "jig-saw puzzle." Through the years God has



Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, God's Apostle, continues to explain more of God's master plan.

Y.E.S. Photo

shown His servants, such as Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, how the pieces of the puzzle fit together. The more a person obeys God and keeps His commandments, the more God reveals to him and the more he understands God's plan.

Use your Bible to help you fit the pieces of the puzzle together as you study this lesson.

THE ISRAELITES IN EGYPT

For hundreds of years the children of _____ (Exodus 1:1) lived in Egypt. They descended from Jacob and his family, who came to Egypt because of a great famine. Jacob and his family were welcomed into Egypt by Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Pharaoh had placed Joseph, one of Jacob's sons, second in command under him.

The family grew and multiplied as the years went by, until there were several million Israelites living in Egypt. During these years several Pharaohs lived and died. In time, a Pharaoh who did not

know of Joseph made slaves of the children of Israel. The Egyptians were very harsh and cruel to the Israelite slaves. They suffered terribly at the hands of the Egyptians. The Israelites were in great affliction and bondage.

God decided to free them from slavery. He remembered His promise to Israel (Jacob) that He would one day bring His people out of Egypt. "I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also _____ . . ." (Genesis 46:4).

In time, God prepared His servant Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. God sent ten terrible plagues on the land of Egypt before Pharaoh finally freed the Israelites from slavery. List the ten plagues on the following lines in the order in which they occurred. You can find them in the book of Exodus, chapters 7 through 11.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

THE FIRST PASSOVER

Nearly 3,500 years ago in the month of Abib, God gave the Israelites the first large piece of the puzzle. That piece was the Passover, the first festival of the year. It pictures the very first step in God's plan.

God told the people to take a young _____ without blemish (Exodus 12:2-5) on the tenth day of the first month and pen it up until the _____ day (verse 6) and then to _____ it in the evening (verse 6).

He told them to cook it and eat it. They were to strike the _____ on the doorposts of their houses (verse 7).

A death angel then went throughout the land of Egypt to kill the firstborn. This was the tenth and final plague before Pharaoh freed the Israelites.

God spared only the families who obeyed His command to put the blood of the lamb on their doorposts. The death angel *passed over* the houses where blood was applied.

ISRAELITES OBSERVE THE DAYS OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

The next day, the Israelites packed up their belongings and got ready to leave. That night, the night of the fifteenth, the children of Israel quickly left Egypt. God showed them the way to go by a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. He commanded the Israelites to remember that first night of freedom from slavery. God called it a "_____ unto the Lord" (Exodus 12:42).

But it was not until the Israelites crossed the Red Sea seven days later that they were completely free from Egypt. This event occurred on the last day of the Days of Unleavened Bread.

In Exodus 13:6-10, we find out more

HOLY DAY CHART

NISAN (ABIB)

SEVEN DAYS OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
		PASSOVER	ANNUAL SABBATH						ANNUAL SABBATH	
NIGHT	DAY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Passover lamb eaten. 2. Israelites receive gold and jewels of Egyptians (Ex. 12:35-36). 3. Israel leaves Egypt by night (Deut. 16:1). 4. After celebrating the Feast they arrived at Succoth (Ex. 12:37). 5. Pharaoh hears the people have fled (Ex. 14:5). | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Israel leaves all civilization and enters Egyptian wilderness (Ex. 13:18, 20). 7. Pharaoh's army overtakes Israel encamped at Pi-hahiroth (Ex. 14:9). 8. God leads Israelites through Red Sea to safety before daylight. 9. Songs of Moses and Miriam. Great celebration on final day of Unleavened Bread. |
|--|--|

about this particular piece of the puzzle. God commanded, "Seven days thou shalt eat _____ . . ." (verse 6). Why were the children of Israel commanded to eat unleavened bread for seven days? Read verses 6-10 and write the answer below.

Did you notice the word *memorial*? Look up the word in a dictionary and then write out the meaning below. _____

THE KEY PUZZLE PIECE

We find other pieces of the puzzle in the pages of the New Testament. It is here that the *key* puzzle piece is found.

Over 1,900 years ago, God sent someone very special into the world. We call Him Jesus Christ. He is special for several reasons.

First, Jesus is also God. The Bible calls Him by other names in the Old Testament. He is the Being who said, "Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3). He is one of the two Beings who said, "Let *us* make man in *our* image" (Genesis 1:26). Since He created all things by speaking, He is also called the Word, or *Spokesman* (John 1:1-3).

Genesis 1:26 and John 1:1-3 show us that there are *two* Beings, or members who belong to the God Family. *God* is the family name. Some people have Smith for their family name; some people belong to the Anderson family. What is your family name?

The greatest secret of all time deals with this particular piece of the puzzle. Your parents may have already told you about it. The secret is that one day you will have the opportunity to become like these two Beings! As a member of the God Family, you will have the power to

create as God does, and you will live forever!

JESUS—THE LAMB OF GOD

Jesus was special for another reason. He never told a lie. Do you know anyone who has never told a lie? Jesus never stole anything nor dishonored his parents. He never said a bad word and He always kept the Sabbath. Jesus never sinned!

John the Baptist, one of God's true servants, called Jesus "The _____ of _____ . . ." (John 1:29). The name *Jesus* means Savior. God sent Jesus to take away the sins of the world. He was the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for the world.

Do you know what will happen to



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The unblemished lamb represented Jesus Christ, who was called the "Lamb of God."

anyone who sins? Write out the answer you find in Ezekiel 18:4. _____

However, you don't have to die because Jesus paid the death penalty in your stead.

God symbolically takes the blood of Christ and covers our sins so we don't have to die. Christ did not have to die for His own sins, rather, He died for ours.

Jesus is our Passover lamb. Remember that the death angel went to the houses in Egypt to kill the firstborn. He passed over those houses where he saw the blood. In the same way, God will pass over us and save us from eternal death if we have accepted the blood of Christ to cover our sins.

Sin is a terrible thing. It is like the bondage and slavery of Egypt. God wants to free us from our slavery to sin.

NEW PASSOVER SYMBOLS

God's people today do not sacrifice a lamb and smear blood on their doorposts as the ancient Israelites were commanded to do.

Each year during the evening of the fourteenth of Abib, members of God's Church meet together in a Passover service. They first wash one another's feet. Then they eat a small piece of unleavened bread and drink a small amount of wine.

Maybe these things seem difficult to understand now, but these actions have great symbolic meaning.

People who understand these symbols



People are commanded to put leavened bread from their homes, symbolizing the putting away of sin from their lives.

know where Jesus, “*key puzzle piece*,” fits into God’s overall plan. And God will show *you* where this piece fits, as you grow older and try harder to please Him.

Remember, the more you obey God, the more you will understand.

THE MEANING OF THE DAYS OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

One of the ways you can please God is by keeping His annual festivals.

Only baptized members of the Church observe Passover today. *You*, however, can please God by keeping the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Because we want to please God, we must try hard to rid our lives of all the sinful things we do.

We put leavened bread out of our houses to symbolize putting sin out of our lives. Leaven itself is not sin. God merely uses it to symbolize sin during the Days of Unleavened Bread. For

seven days we eat unleavened bread, showing God we want to obey Him, and that we want to stop sinning.

Use the space below to make a list of the places you find leavened bread this year as you clean around the house. You will discover how hard it is to get all of the leavening out. _____

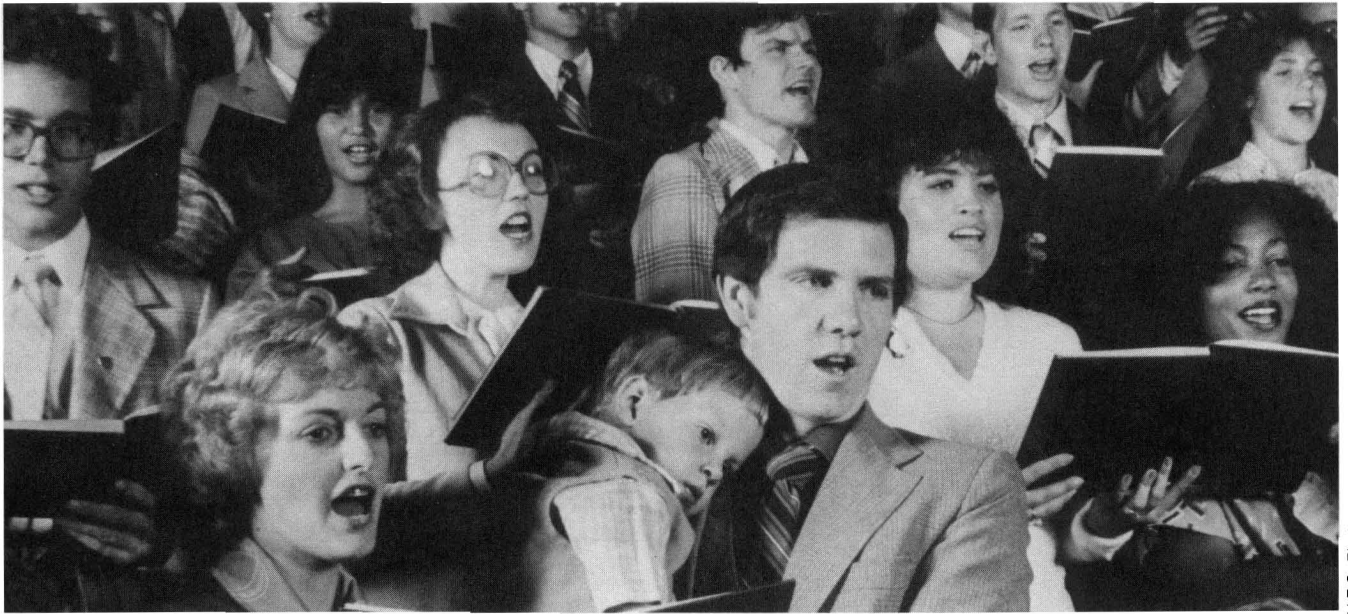
PENTECOST

Pentecost is the festival following the Days of Unleavened Bread. It pictures the third step in God’s plan.

The word *pentecost* means “fiftieth (day).” It specifically refers to counting fifty days beginning with the Sunday following the weekly Sabbath which usually falls during the Days of Unleavened Bread. With Sunday as day number one, Pentecost always ends up on a Sunday fifty days later.

In the Old Testament, God commanded the Israelites to keep the Feast of Firstfruits. Pentecost and the Feast of Firstfruits are two names for the *same* festival.

Israel observed the Day of Pentecost by special sacrifices. This feast day is another wonderful piece of the puzzle. However, just as the Israelites did not understand the true meaning of Passover and Unleavened Bread, so they also did not understand where Pentecost fit into God’s plan.



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Members of God's Church sing hymns of praise on God's annual Sabbaths.

The Israelites observed Pentecost as a day in which they gave thanks to God for their abundant spring grain harvest.

The Feast of Firstfruits pictures a spring or early harvest. But it also pictures a great deal more.

Pentecost symbolizes God's Church. Did you know that God is like a farmer? He is harvesting fruit from among men. People in God's Church are called His "firstfruits" (James 1:18). They will be the *first* to become spirit-born members of God's Family when Christ returns to earth. They are small in number compared to the billions who will be born into God's Family later.

God's special purpose for His Church is to train us and cause us to *grow*.

His law shows us how to grow. God also gives us His Holy Spirit (after we have repented of our sins and been baptized) which helps us to keep God's laws.

REMAINING PIECES OF THE PUZZLE

Soon God will be ready to "harvest" the firstfruits into His Family.

Do you know when He plans to do that? The answer to this question will be found in the special Fall Festival Lesson.

In this lesson you have learned about three of the festivals picturing the first three steps in God's plan for mankind. But there are seven annual festivals in all. The last four are in the fall. List all seven annual festivals in the spaces below. You can find them mentioned in Leviticus 23.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

You now have several very large

pieces of God's giant "jig-saw puzzle." To understand the meaning of the remaining puzzle pieces, be sure to study the special Fall Festival Lesson.

God wants you to see and understand the overall picture. He will show His complete and wonderful plan to those who obey Him and keep His commandments. You will understand more about God's plan each year as you keep each of His feast days, joyfully obeying Him. So have a happy Feast!

MATCHING

Match up the festivals by drawing lines from each festival (hand) to the words or phrases in the balloons that pertain to each festival.

How Much Do You Remember?

Fill in the top half of the puzzle first. Then write the numbered letters in the correct spaces at the bottom of the page to reveal a message.

- The first month of God's calendar.

_ 5 _ 19 _

- What kind of bread symbolizes Christ's body?

_ 11 17 25 _ _ _ _ _ 6 _ 3

- What man did God use to deliver Israel from Egypt?

_ 23 13 8 _

- What the Israelites smeared on their doorposts.

_ 14 _ 2 10 _

- Place God completely freed Israel from Egypt.

_ _ _ _ _ 22

- Name means Savior.

_ _ _ 20 _ _ _

- Where Israelites worked as slaves.

_ 15 1 9 _ 7

			W							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
T				I			H			
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20		
F			I	Y						
21	22	23	24	25	26					

GOD'S GREAT PLAN

If you follow the directions correctly, you will find the answer to the question, "What does God give us to reveal His great plan for man?" When you have found the answer, write a few short paragraphs on a separate piece of paper to further explain the meaning of the subject.



First, color all X's green, Q's red and Z's blue. Then, as you find the words listed below in the diagram above, color them using the color at the top of the column in which the word is listed.

GREEN

FIRST
ANGEL
SLAVE
COUNT

RED

EGYPT
RIGHT
GREEN
BREAD

YELLOW

SEVEN YES
SIN GOD
EAT

BLUE

SEA DIE
TEN EAR
LAW RED
DAY