

God's Plan Shown by the Holy Days

A Study of Trumpets, Atonement,
Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day

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The Making God Real series covers the doctrines of God and the Fundamental Beliefs of United Church of God with the purpose of addressing the essential questions of life.

These Family Study Guides are created to help parents review and better understand the basics of God's doctrines—then have family discussions on those topics.

Use the portions of the guides that are the most helpful and meaningful to your family.

Introduction

Please note that the term “Fall Holy Days” is based upon the harvest seasons in and around the nation of Israel. As stated in the UCG booklet God's Holy Day Plan, “The biblical festivals, and the Holy Days within them, fall during three seasons of the year—the early spring harvest, the late spring harvest and the late summer to early autumn harvest in the land of biblical Israel. The themes these days portray God's spiritual harvest of mankind to eternal life spoken of by Jesus Christ (John 4:35-38).

These harvest seasons correlate to the seven steps to God's plan of Salvation, as briefly outlined here:

1. The first step of God's salvation plan deals with the meaning of the Passover and what conversion is all about.
2. The second step is concerned with the Days of Unleavened Bread and the concept of separation or coming out from sin and the false values of the world.
3. The third step has to do with Pentecost and the receiving of the Holy Spirit.
4. The fourth step dealing with the Feast of Trumpets and the second coming of Christ.
5. The fifth step represented by the Day of Atonement and the binding of Satan for 1,000 years.
6. The sixth step entails the Feast of Tabernacles and Jesus Christ establishing the Kingdom of God on earth for a thousand years.
7. The seventh step covers the period of the Great White Throne Judgment, called the Eighth Day or Last Great Day, which deals with the time when the great majority of the earth's dead will be resurrected and will come to know God for the first time.

This Family Study Guide will address parts four through seven, beginning with the Feast of Trumpets.

Memory Verse:

Leviticus 23:2 “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts.’”

Feast of Trumpets



The Fourth Step in God's Plan of Salvation

“Then the LORD said 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. You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.”’ (Leviticus 23:23-25)

Trumpets were used in ancient Israel to alert the people. Depending on how it was blown, it alerted the people that there was danger from an approaching army or enemy coming. The ancient Israelites used a shofar, or horn of a ram, as a trumpet. Numbers 10:1 says that God had the Israelites to make two silver trumpets for calling the people to assemble a special meeting or announcement. The kind of trumpet and the way the trumpet was blown would signal the people for many different things. It was one way the Israelites communicated.



Ancient Israel used melodic silver trumpets that could be heard great distances to communicate important messages, such as announcing each feast and calling God's people to assemble. A ram's horn trumpet called a shofar, was loud and harsh and was used to sound a warning of danger and warfare. Both the silver trumpets and the shofar were blown on this Holy Day, the Feast of Trumpets.

The Feast of Trumpets is also a reference to the trumpets that will be used when Christ returns to earth. He will put an end to the wars and suffering of mankind under Satan's rule and establish the Kingdom of God! Christ will replace Satan at this time. (Satan has been ruling the earth since the time of Adam and Eve.) The Feast of Trumpets is a day of great happiness because it is the day that pictures the beginning of true peace, happiness and abundance for everyone.

At Christ's return those chosen by God, both living and dead, will be given eternal life. This is the first Resurrection. This fourth step represents the beginning of a new era. It will be the ending of this present evil age of mankind and the beginning of a time when Christ will play a more direct part in world events. The time in history that these four last steps represent has not yet occurred.



What does the Feast of Trumpets picture? *Read Numbers 10:9.*

The Feast of Trumpets is a day for rejoicing because it pictures two important events.

1. It pictures the return of Jesus Christ to the earth, when true Christians who have God's Holy Spirit will be changed into spirit beings. Those Christians that have already died will be raised from the dead and also be changed into spirit beings (1 Corinthians 15:52). The Bible often refers to the children of God as saints.

2. It pictures Christ's return to replace Satan's evil government. Christ's government will be one of love, peace, joy and prosperity. Christ will rule as

“King of kings and Lord of lords” (Revelation 19:11-16) and sit on His throne ruling over the earth. The great blast of a trumpet will announce to the whole world that Jesus is coming (1 Thessalonians 4:16 and Revelation 11:15). This event is in the future—but may occur in our lifetimes.

Day of Atonement

The fifth step in God's plan of salvation.

“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘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, and offer an offering by fire made 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’” (*Leviticus 23:26-28*).

God gave certain instructions to ancient Israel on how to observe His Holy Days in order to provide a deeper understanding of His plan for saving mankind from the destruction brought on by Satan. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest was to offer a sin offering for himself and his family so that he could represent Christ, our High Priest. Then he was to select two goats and present them before God. Lots were then cast to ask God to identify the two goats. These two goats were to represent Christ and Azazel (Satan). The goat that God selected by lot to represent Christ was to be slain—just as Christ was slain (crucified). The other goat representing Azazel (Satan) was to be driven alive into an uninhabited wilderness just as Satan will be driven away from the presence of God (Leviticus 16).



The first goat representing Christ was slain as a sin offering for the people. After the high priest finished the ceremony of reconciliation, Azazel, the goat representing Satan, was brought in. The high priest laid both hands upon the goat and confessed over him all the sins of the children of Israel, symbolically putting them upon the head of Azazel (Satan). Satan, after all, is the originator of all sin. When this was done the Azazel goat was led away by a qualified man into the wilderness. Afterward, he washed his clothes and bathed before returning to camp. The ancient Israelites also fasted on this day.

This fifth step of God's plan symbolically pictures deposing—removing from office—Satan the devil from his present position as world ruler, to a place completely apart and away from mankind. He will be bound for 1,000 years, no longer able to deceive mankind.

What happened to the goat that represented Christ? What happened to the goat, Azazel, that represented Satan?

God will make it possible for humans to be AT ONE with Him after Jesus returns. This is the meaning of the word atonement (AT+ONE+MENT). God will allow us to be AT ONE with Him by getting rid of Satan and his evil influence.

Satan is the chief cause of all of mankind's sins since the days of Adam and Eve. When Christ returns, He will remove Satan from the throne of this world, and Satan will be bound in a dark pit for 1000 years (Revelation 20:1-3).

This festival day is a solemn feast day and God tells us to fast on this day (Leviticus 23:27-32). The word or phrase “afflict your soul” can also mean to fast. David afflicted his soul or humbled himself by fasting (Psalm 35: 13). To fast on this Holy Day means to go without food or water from sunset to sunset. Additionally this day also teaches an important lesson of how much we depend on God for our lives. If God didn't provide us with food or water, we would die.

Feast of Tabernacles

The sixth step in God's plan of salvation.

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to the children of Israel, saying, ‘The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the LORD’S 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’” (Leviticus 23:33-35).

The word “tabernacles” means temporary dwelling places. And God tells us to live in temporary dwelling places—motels, tents, campers, condominiums, etc.—during the Feast. We are to stay in temporary dwellings to remind us of the ancient Israelites who lived in tents after they were brought out from slavery in Egypt by God. He guided and protected them during the 40 years in the wilderness and gave them the land of Canaan, a land of bountiful harvests.

God commands us to rejoice (Leviticus 23:40) for seven days during this feast. But why should we rejoice? This feast pictures the 1000-year reign of Christ on earth—the Millennium. There will be great prosperity and peace on the earth during the Millennium. The blind will see, the deaf will hear and the crippled will walk. The animals will all be tame. Lions will eat straw, snakes won’t bite and a little child will lead them (Isaiah 11:6-9).

The Feast of Tabernacles is a great time of rejoicing for the whole family. God tells us to keep this festival by leaving our homes and living in temporary dwellings or “booths” (Leviticus 23:42). Today, we attend feast sites chosen by God’s Church and we can stay at a motel, hotel, rented house or campground.

This sixth step of God’s plan of salvation pictures a time when the earth will be restored to the way it was when God first created Adam and Eve. This festival lasts seven days and pictures the 1,000 years when Jesus Christ will reign on earth. This period is also called the Millennium. This is a time when all people will learn God’s way and the land will again produce a bountiful harvest. People will live in peace and harmony because Jesus Christ will be ruling instead of Satan. Even the nature of the wild animals will be peaceful. They, too, will not fight and kill but will be tame and make wonderful pets. During the Millennium, those who are alive at Christ’s return, as well as their descendants, will be offered the opportunity for salvation.

God has created a plan to help us rejoice at the Feast. God tells us to save one tenth, or tithe, of our money so we can attend and enjoy the Feast. Every time we earn money, a tenth should be set aside for the Feast of Tabernacles. If we earn ten dollars, then we would set aside one dollar for the Feast.

During the Millennium, the government of God will rule on the earth. We will have the opportunity to rule with God on earth during this time. Everyone will have a job to do in the Kingdom of God. God can use us as His leaders during the Millennium because we wanted to live God’s way of life.



Ask: Would you like to live during the 1,000 years when Christ will rule? Why?

Eighth Day/Last Great Day

The seventh step in God's plan of salvation.

“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).

The Eight Day, or Last Great Day, is the last of God's festivals. It is the Eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles, but is actually a separate Holy Day. The seventh and last step in God's master plan of salvation depicts the Great White Throne Judgment.

It follows right after the Millennium when billions of people will be resurrected (brought back to human, physical life) and given a chance to learn God's way for possibly a period of 100 years. Most of the people who have lived throughout history have not understood God's Plan. Many have not even heard about God or Jesus Christ. People have been blinded throughout history by Satan the devil (2 Corinthians 4:4). God is completely fair to all humans and wants them all to have the opportunity to be in His Kingdom (2 Peter 3:9).

God, will give everyone the opportunity to be born into His family and receive eternal life. Those who are training now to be in God's family will be able to help teach all those billions who have lived and died without learning His truth. They will then have to decide whether to live His way or not. God wants everyone to be in His family.

Only after every single human being has had his or her chance to understand and accept God's way of life will God's plan for mankind be completed. If they choose to obey God, they then may eat of the tree of life (Revelation 22:14).

The Last Great Day pictures the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). This judgment period, perhaps 100 years (Isaiah 65:20), will give humans who are at this time resurrected (brought back to physical life) their first chance to really know and live God's way of life. Jesus, along with His saints, will teach them the true way of life from God's Word, the Bible. The Last Great Day pictures the judgment period for most of mankind.

Read John 7:37. Jesus spoke about the Last Great Day to a crowd at Jerusalem.

You have this opportunity today to understand God's plan and enter His Kingdom. God's Holy Days lead you down the road to that wonderful coming Kingdom that is God's Plan for all humans!

Family or Class Activities

- As a family read together Leviticus 23. After reading the chapter, distinguish between the earlier spring holy days and the fall holy days.
 - Talk about why we need Jesus Christ to return.
 - Talk about why we need Satan to be removed.
 - Talk about why these days give hope and joy.
- Class activity for younger children: If class is in an area where noise is not a problem, have students make trumpets by rolling up a piece of paper (store-bought party horns will also work). Have each student blow his or her horn and then read Revelation 11:15. Be sure to talk about why they are blowing the horn and what it has to do with the Feast of Trumpets.
- Choose a favorite Bible verse that is important to explaining one of these days. Then create a visual Bible journal entry with drawings, key words, and personal connections related to the verse.
- Create a playlist of hymns or other songs that would be especially meaningful during the Feast days. Which songs would you hope to sing or hear during these days and how do they help us to focus on God's plan? Is there any one song in particular that helps you to rejoice or picture God's plan for you and for the world? Which one and why?
- You and your family/team get to organize a Feast of Tabernacles in the Millennium. Where would it be? What would be important to include during this Feast and why? Create a plan and share it with another family or team.
- Create a list of Feast "interview" questions. Talk to or "interview" several people during the Feast of Tabernacles. You can find someone who is keeping their very first Feast, someone who has kept the Feast for a long time, people who serve in different ways during the Feast, and people who are of different ages or come from different places. What are some of the similarities and differences about their Feast experience and what makes this time special for them?
- Teach your child how to plan by letting him help in planning for the Feast of Tabernacles. Start by making an overall plan for the Feast—a master plan. Then break it down into sub-plans. Give your child the responsibility of making an organized list for one of the sub-plans. Perhaps he/she could make an organized list of the items he/she will need to take to the Feast or plan his/her travel time (homework, reading, games, etc.) to and from the Feast. Then oversee the gathering of the needed items and let him/her pack them. The planning list should answer the questions: WHAT do I need for the Feast? WHERE can I buy it (if it is something that needs to be bought)? WHEN can I go to buy it?
- Discuss together where your favorite Feast site is and why.
- Have the students identify some people who will be in the Great Last Day. (historical figures, great grandparents)

- Make a family or personal Holy Day scrapbook. Children love to share their experiences with others. The scrapbook can consist of photos (if available), drawings, artifacts, key Bible verses, the site and year of attendance, and some favorite activities at the site. Let the student put his or her own ideas into the scrapbook. Have them share with others when they return. Update it or add a new one each year.

- Create a visual timeline or model of God’s plan of salvation using the Holy Days. This could be in a family, in teams, or individual. Use as few words as possible and focus on picturing God’s plan. Then, add some words as needed to label the Holy Days and provide short explanations. Discuss: Why do you think God set these days in this particular order?

- Additional activities and booklets that can be downloaded:

2020 UCG Festival Youth Instruction

<https://www.ucg.org/members/news/2020-festival-youth-instruction>

UCG Youth Festival Activity Booklets

<https://www.ucg.org/members/news/youth-festival-activity-booklets-available>

Additional resources for your family studies

There are three harvest seasons in the land of Israel. Each of these seasons is accompanied by special festivals God instituted that outline His plan for “harvesting” human beings for salvation in His family (see Exodus 23:14-17; Deuteronomy 16:16).

With the early spring barley season comes the Passover and the weeklong Feast of Unleavened Bread. With the later spring wheat season comes the Feast of Harvest or Firstfruits, also known as the Day of Pentecost. And with the late summer and fall ingathering season come four festivals—the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles, and the Eighth Day, also referred to as the Last Great Day.

The three harvest seasons of the year show the major framework of the periods in which God intends to save mankind. And contrary to what many believe, today is not the only day of salvation. God’s annual festivals or feasts, and the Holy Days of rest and worship among them, are listed in Leviticus 23. In stepwise progression, each builds on preceding ones, making the sum greater than the individual parts. Understand what these feasts portray and you will understand God’s master plan of salvation.

- **Article:** *Why Seven Holy Days Offerings in Three Seasons*

<https://www.ucg.org/members/united-news/holy-day-offerings-deuteronomy-1616>

- **Article:** *God’s Harvest Feasts: His Assurance of Hope for Mankind*

<https://www.ucg.org/the-good-news/gods-harvest-feasts-his-assurance-of-hope-for-mankind>

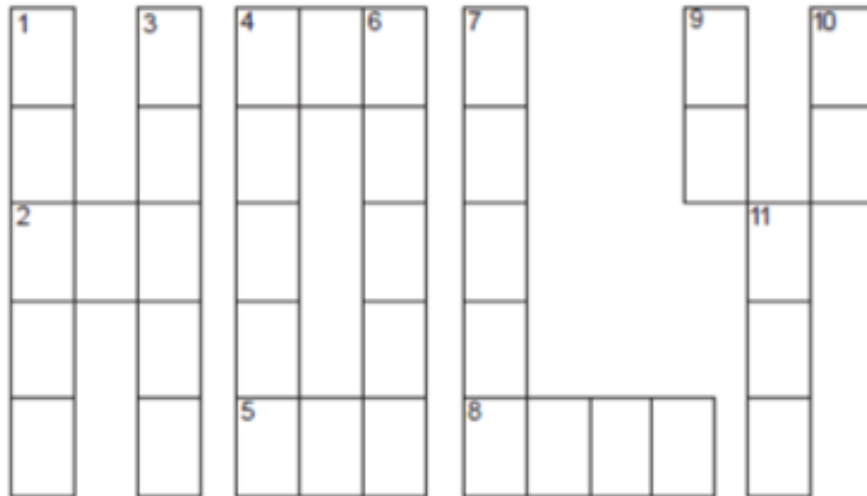
- **Article:** *The Biblical Festivals That Reveal God’s Plan of Salvation*

<https://www.ucg.org/the-good-news/the-biblical-festivals-that-reveal-gods-plan-of-salvation>

MATCH

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Feast of Trumpets | A. Money given on a Holy Day |
| 2. Day of Atonement | B. Created the Holy Days |
| 3. Feast of Tabernacles | C. Ten percent |
| 4. Last Great Day | D. Shofar |
| 5. Tithe | E. Booths |
| 6. Jesus | F. Fast |
| 7. Offering | G. Judgment for most of mankind |

CROSSWORD



DOWN

- The _____ of Tabernacles
- The Last _____ Day
- Our Lord and Savior
- Jesus will return with the _____ of a great trumpet
- Child of God—true Christian
- Day _____ Atonement
- Feast _____ Tabernacles
- The Father and Jesus (family name)

ACROSS

- He _____ a lot of food at the Feast
- We will all have a _____ to do in God's Kingdom
- Jesus will _____ on His throne
- Animals will be _____ in the Millennium