



Imperial Academy Bible Lessons



Special Spring Festivals Lesson

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All over the world, people in God's Church are looking forward to the spring holy day season. These upcoming days are full of deep meaning about your future. The purpose of these days is to show us how God is carrying out His plan to have a family!

God wants every human being who has ever lived to be a part of His Family, including *YOU!* That is why He created you! If you learn to obey God, you can become a **spirit being** born into His Family.

How can you learn to obey God and become born into His Family? To show you, God took seven days of the year and made them special. These **festivals** show you the seven steps of God's plan.

The first three steps show God's plan to bring people in His **Church** into His Family. He shows us these three steps through the three festivals that occur in springtime. The last four steps show God's plan to bring all the people who were never part of His Church into His Family. He shows us these four steps through

the four **holy days** that occur in the fall.

Put all seven festivals together, and you learn the complete **God Family plan**. In this lesson of the *Imperial Academy Bible Lessons*, you will learn about the *meaning* of the first three steps, pictured by the three spring festivals: the **Passover**, the **Days of Unleavened Bread** and **Pentecost!**

PASSOVER

The first step in God's plan is **Passover**. Passover is not a holy day, but a special **memorial**. Thousands of years ago, the cruel king of Egypt made the Israelites his **slaves**. This evil king was known as Pharaoh, and he made the Israelites miserable.

God saw this. He had made a promise that He would deliver the Israelites out of slavery. When the time was right, He chose a man named **Moses** to lead the Israelites out of Egypt.

God commanded Moses to tell Pharaoh: *Let the Israelites go*. Moses told Pharaoh 10 times, but Pharaoh

refused. Every time Pharaoh refused to free the Israelites, God sent a terrible **plague** on Egypt.

The last plague on Egypt was the death of the firstborn. This 10th plague happened during the Passover (Exodus 11 and 12).

God protected the Israelites from most of the first nine plagues. To be protected from the 10th plague, the Israelites had to follow special instructions from God. They had to pick a male lamb that was less than one year old and had no markings or bruises. They had to kill the lamb and eat it on the Passover with their families, along with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. They had to put the blood of the lamb around the doors of their homes, and they had to stay inside all night. And they had to be ready to leave Egypt the next day!

God commanded His people to keep the Passover every year forever from that night! Why? Because this lamb represented **Jesus Christ**. In the New Testament, Christ is called the “Lamb of God” (John 1:29) and “our passover” (1 Corinthians 5:7). He came to Earth and let Himself be beaten and killed so He could save human beings from their sins and bring them into God’s Family.

When God’s death angel came to kill the firstborn in Egypt, it **passed over** every house that had a lamb’s blood on the doorposts. The angel did not kill any firstborn inside.

In the homes of the Egyptians, and of anyone else who didn’t follow these instructions, the death angel killed everyone who had been born first in their families. Even Pharaoh’s firstborn son was killed. After this terrible night, Pharaoh finally let the Israelites go.

Thousands of years later, Jesus Christ came to Earth as a human being. He kept the Passover, but He changed the way we keep it. We don’t sacrifice a lamb on Passover anymore. Today, the baptized adults in God’s Church attend a special Passover service led by one of God’s ministers. They wash each other’s feet; this represents a humble and serving **attitude**. They also eat a broken piece of unleavened bread; this represents the **body** of Jesus Christ, which was horribly beaten so we can be healed when we are sick or injured. The adults also drink a small glass of wine; this represents the **blood** that poured out of Jesus Christ’s body when He was killed. Because of His sacrifice, God can save us from our sins when we **repent**. All this was pictured by how God saved the Israelites in Egypt who obeyed!

DAYS OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

The second step in God’s plan is a seven-day feast called **the Days of Unleavened Bread**.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread starts with a special dinner on the

Night to Be Much Observed. We eat this dinner to remember the night when, under the light of a full moon, the ancient Israelites began their journey out of slavery. This great event happened the night after the Passover. It is called the **Exodus**.

The seven days of Unleavened Bread start and end with a holy day. During these days, God tells us not to eat anything with **leaven** in it and not to have any leaven in our houses or at work. Before the Night to Be Much Observed, we clean out every piece of bread, cracker, cookie or crumb that has leavening in it.

Bread that is baked with leaven **puffs up** with air, just like we puff up with **vanity** when we sin. A tiny bit of leaven can also spread through a whole loaf of bread, just like a little sin can spread through your whole life. Even a small lie will lead to other lies. That is why God commands us to put leavened bread out of our houses for seven days: It represents putting sin out of our lives!

Just as we must work hard to get leavening out of our homes before the Days of Unleavened Bread, we must also work hard to get sin out of our lives. We should be putting sin out throughout the year, but the seven days of Unleavened Bread are a *special* time to remind us how important it is to get sin out.

During this week, we also make sure to eat **unleavened bread**. This symbolizes living God's way and

keeping His commandments. This is the humble way of life that Jesus Christ lived, and this attitude is necessary for God to bring you into His Family!

PENTECOST

The third holy day in God's plan is **Pentecost**. The word *Pentecost* means "count 50." During the Days of Unleavened Bread, there is a weekly Sabbath. Beginning on the day after the Sabbath, we count **50 days** to get to Pentecost.

The first Pentecost came 50 days after the Israelites escaped from the evil of Egypt. On this first Pentecost, God came down to a mountain with thunder and lightning and gave the Israelites His **Ten Commandments**.

Hundreds of years later, Jesus Christ died on Passover. He was dead for three days and three nights, and then He was **resurrected**. He went to heaven to appear before God the Father. It was 50 days after this, on the day of Pentecost, that God the Father gave His **Holy Spirit** to people in His Church.

Without the Holy Spirit, human beings only have the human spirit. The human spirit is what gives you the power to think. It gives you the power to talk and makes you think much differently from animals.

But to be born into God's Family, you need more than the human spirit. You need God's Holy Spirit!

God gives His Holy Spirit to adults

He has called into His Church once they repent of their sins and have been baptized. The Holy Spirit gives them the spiritual help to understand God's truth and to get sin out of their lives. If one or both of your parents are baptized, you have the Holy Spirit working *with* you. This is what helps you understand the Bible and the *Imperial Academy Bible Lessons*. When you become an adult and repent and become baptized, you can have the Holy Spirit not just *with* you, but *in* you.

Pentecost is also called the "feast of firstfruits."

Moses and Jesus Christ both lived in a part of the world that has two harvest seasons each year. The first harvest season is in the spring, when farmers bring in a small crop of grain. The second harvest season is in the fall, when the farmers reap a large fall harvest with many kinds of crops.

God is like a farmer. People who have had God's Holy Spirit are like the "fruits" that He harvests first. The rest of His fruits are all the many people who have ever lived and have never had God's Holy Spirit. God will harvest them later and bring them into His Family too.

God will bring the "firstfruits" into His Family first. In the same way that a bride marries a husband, this

group of people will marry Jesus Christ. Then Jesus Christ and His Bride will help bring everyone else into God's Family.

GOD'S FAMILY PLAN

The observance of Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost teaches us the first three steps in God's plan for mankind. Passover reminds us that Jesus Christ died to pay for the sins of human beings. The Feast of Unleavened Bread reminds us that people in God's Church must repent of their sins and leave this evil world behind them. Pentecost reminds us that we need God's Holy Spirit to keep His law, build His character, and prepare to one day help Jesus Christ teach all the rest of the people in the world how to come into His Family. These are the first three steps of God's plan.

The last four steps are the four fall holy days. These steps show how God will bring into His Family billions and billions of people who were never a part of His Church. Seven is God's number of completion, and all four fall holy days come in the seventh month of God's calendar. These days picture the completion of the God Family plan. In the fall holy day lesson, you will learn the meaning of the last four steps of God's plan.



Israelite fathers prepare a lamb for Passover. They smear its blood on their doorposts so the death angel will pass over their homes.



These are the three symbols that baptized members of God's Church use on Passover to remember the life and death of Jesus Christ.

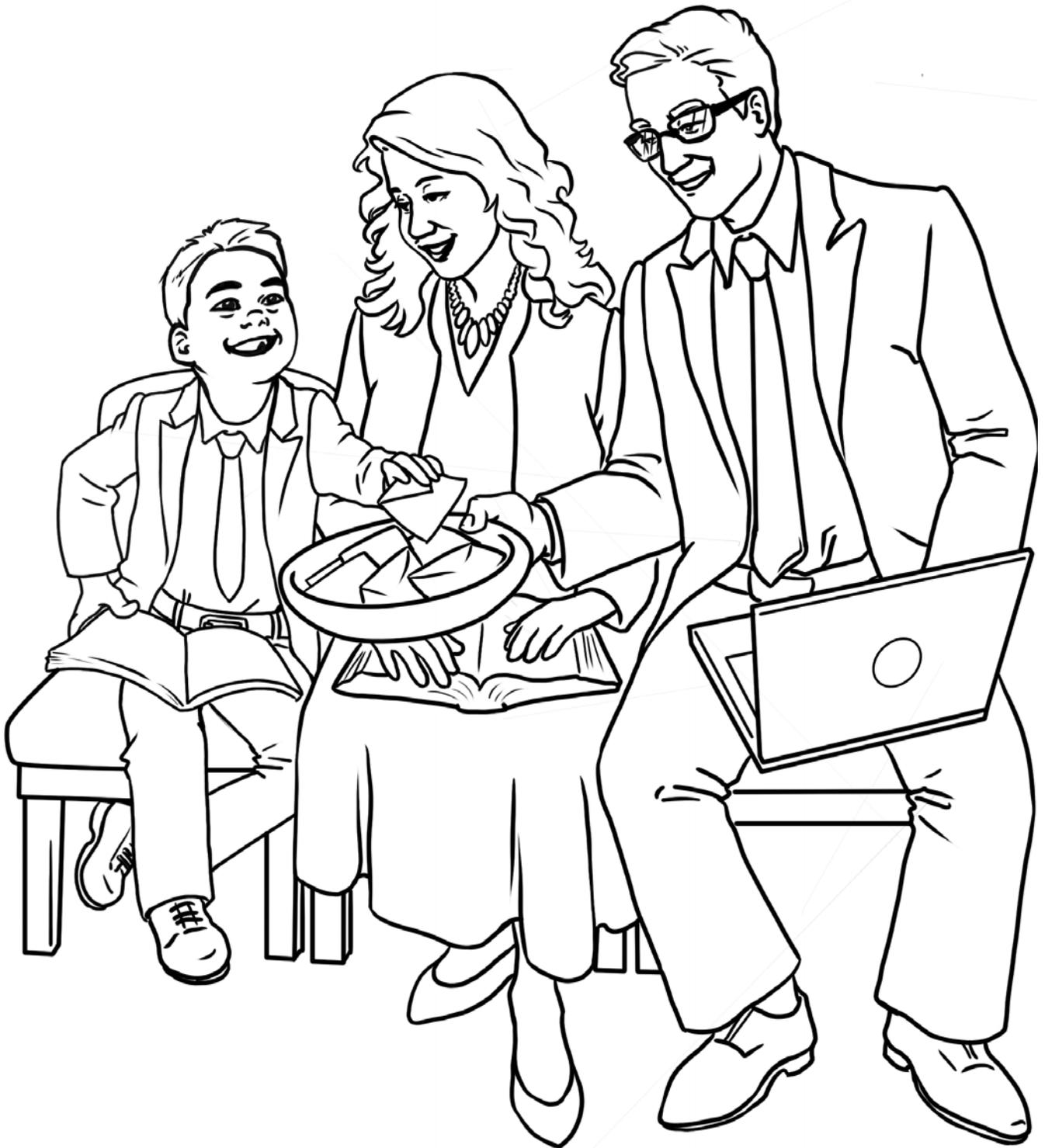


Before the Days of Unleavened Bread begin, people in God's Church clean all leaven out of their homes, including crackers, cookies and crumbs.



Israelites rejoice as God delivers them from slavery in Egypt! The night the Israelites left Egypt is called the Night to Be Much Observed.

God's people celebrate the first evening of the Feast of Unleavened Bread with a special dinner. This evening is called the Night to Be Much Observed. Make your own Night to Be Much Observed scrapbook page! Paste photos from the Night to Be Much Observed above.



The day of Pentecost focuses on the first people God is calling into His Family: people in His Church.

Hidden Message

Cross out the letters with the odd numbers. Use the remaining letters to fill in the spaces below to learn how the children of Israel left Egypt on the evening of the first day of Unleavened Bread—the Night to Be Much Observed (Exodus 14:8).

³ Y	²² T	¹⁷ E	¹⁰ H	² E	⁷ J	⁵¹ L	¹⁸ C	²⁰ H	²¹ A	⁹ Q	⁴ I
³² L	¹¹ K	¹⁶ D	¹³ W	⁴⁵ H	⁵⁶ R	⁹ O	²⁴ E	²³ X	⁴¹ C	³⁶ N	¹⁷ Z
²⁸ O	² F	⁷ B	¹⁵ M	³¹ V	⁸ I	¹⁹ H	⁴⁴ S	³¹ T	⁶⁵ O	³⁴ R	²⁰ A
³³ P	⁵⁴ E	²⁷ Y	³⁶ L	⁷³ R	⁶¹ K	⁴⁰ W	⁷ U	³¹ N	⁶² E	¹⁵ B	⁵⁵ C
⁶¹ W	⁵⁴ N	¹³ X	⁴ T	²¹ H	²⁷ Q	⁴¹ U	³⁵ D	⁷¹ Z	³⁷ R	⁴⁸ O	¹³ S
⁶⁹ C	²⁷ V	⁷² U	⁵¹ A	⁶⁷ N	³² T	⁶¹ X	⁶⁵ L	⁷³ M	⁵⁷ I	⁵ N	¹⁹ R
³¹ O	²² W	¹³ F	²⁵ S	¹⁶ I	⁴⁷ Y	⁷ E	¹³ T	⁴⁹ B	⁷⁷ R	²² T	³⁷ L
⁵⁷ G	⁸ H	¹ N	⁴³ Z	⁴⁴ A	⁵⁹ J	⁷⁵ S	⁵¹ N	⁷³ H	¹¹ O	³³ D	⁴⁹ M
⁶ N	²⁹ R	⁷⁵ U	⁶¹ K	³⁰ H	⁵⁷ G	⁹ W	⁷³ P	²⁷ E	⁶⁶ I	³⁷ S	¹⁷ F
⁴⁷ Y	¹² G	⁵¹ I	³³ W	¹⁹ T	² H	⁵³ U	⁶⁷ A	²¹ X	⁴⁹ B	²⁵ N	⁶⁷ D
⁴⁰ H	¹⁹ N	⁷ O	²⁷ R	⁵² A	⁶¹ T	²⁹ Z	⁶⁹ F	⁵² N	⁶⁸ D	²¹ H	⁷⁷ E
