



What is Pentecost?—Part 1

A Study Guide for Parents Teaching their Children God's Way

God wanted a family, and from the beginning He made a plan for His children. Do you remember Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? God worked with each of these men, and because they obeyed him, he decided to work out His plan through them to have a family. The children of Jacob (whose name you might remember God changed to “Israel”) would become the example children for the rest of the world. God wants all people to be His children, but He had to start with a few people first to be an example for everyone else. So God was working out His plan for all people on earth through the example of the Children of Israel!

So what does this have to do with Pentecost? *Just wait and see!*

This Study Guide is written for the purpose of helping parents teach their children vital Biblical topics in a focused, easy-to-follow format. Each section is not meant to be taught in one lesson, rather the topics are organized so parents can choose specific areas of focus and gear lessons toward the learning styles and ages of their children. Each topic is presented in a straightforward manner with accompanying verses for study. The main study should always come from the Scripture itself, while these lessons can act as a guide for reading passages from the Bible. Each Lesson packet includes memory verses, questions for meaningful discussion, and activities (added at the end of the packet). Also, though some things may be labeled as Level 1, 2, or 3, the activities, questions, and scriptures for memorizing can be used to fit the needs and learning levels for children of all ages. Enjoy!

Pentecost in the Old Testament:

So the Children of Israel were in bondage. That means they were in slavery, doing a lot of hard work for others without getting anything in return. They did not have freedom to do what they wanted, or pursue their own goals and dreams. But God still cared about His children, and was about to work out some amazing miracles which would show the Israelites, and the rest of the world, just how much He does care for His children. He had a plan to set them free! But how?

Find out just what God did to set them free in your Bible!

Exodus 1-14

**Note to parents: To consider this section of scripture more in depth, check out our set of lessons about Passover (available on our website)*



Something to ponder:

If you were going to rescue someone, do you think you would decide to use frogs?

So what about Pentecost?

The Children of Israel made it safely out of Egypt, through the Red Sea and were headed across the desert. But where were they going? God was leading them to His mountain. Why would he do that? It's because He was preparing to give them something. Something that would ultimately give them true freedom. What do you think it was?

Read **Exodus 19-20** to find out!

Reflect:

Why did God tell Moses to tell the children to wash their clothes before standing before Him? We get dressed up when we go to church. How is this similar?



God was giving His children the Ten Commandments! Why? So they would know how to live in peace and harmony with Him and their neighbor. True freedom only comes when there is peace and safety, so keeping God's law would give His children true freedom! Was God's law only for the Children of Israel? Of course not! Remember, Israel was supposed to be an example to everyone else of what it is like to be God's children. God gave His children the Ten Commandments, giving them the keys to true freedom.

So...Pentecost? We're getting there!

When God gave His children His perfect laws, the way to true peace and freedom, He was sanctifying them (setting them apart from everyone else). While God had a plan from the beginning to give His law to every nation, Israel was the first. What ties this all together is that (according to tradition) God gave His Law to His children on the Feast of Pentecost! So is Pentecost all about the Ten Commandments? Not exactly...there is so much more!

**Check out the end of the packet for activities, discussion questions, and memory verses relating to the Ten Commandments!*

Pentecost in Leviticus

To show His people how His plan for having a family was going to work, God created the Holy Days. The seven special Holy Days represent His seven part (seven step) plan for His children. When He taught the Children of Israel about these Holy Days he gave them some details about how He wanted them to be kept at that time.

An outline of the Holy Days can be found at the center of the third book in the Bible. Pentecost is included in the outline. It might be called the "Feast of Weeks" in your Bible, and there is a reason for that which we will talk about a bit later. For now read the section on Pentecost, and see what God told the Israelites to do on this very special day!

Read **Leviticus 23:15-22**



Consider:

What is the difference between the bread used for Passover, and the bread God told the Israelites to use for Pentecost?

Count Fifty

The word "Pentecost" comes from the Greek word 'pentekostos' which means "fiftieth" or "fiftieth day". As is says in Leviticus, God expects us to count fifty days (from the day after the Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread) in order to know when we should keep it. This means that from the Sabbath during Unleavened Bread to Pentecost there are seven Sabbaths! Have you ever taken the time to count them?

Feast of Firstfruits

In **Leviticus 23:17** you will find the word "firstfruits". What is a firstfruit? The term firstfruit has to do with harvesting. When farmers grow things like fruits, vegetables, and grains, every kind of plant has a different "growing season" which means different types of things are harvested at different times. So if we are talking about the "firstfruits", we are talking about one of the first harvests during the year.

What is amazing is that God planned the timing of His Holy Days around different growing seasons and harvests in the land of Israel. The first harvest of grain (the barley harvest) is the small spring harvest which happens around the time of Passover. Next comes the larger wheat harvest in the early summer which is gathered around the time of Pentecost. While very important, these two harvests are much smaller than the big, main harvest of many types of fruits and vegetables during the fall. The main harvest happens around the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. So why did God relate these Feasts to harvests? There is a very important lesson that God wants us to think about.

Remember that God wants a family? He knew when He made His plan it would work best if He didn't bring everyone into His family all at once (Just like in your family, or in your friends' families, parents don't generally have all their children at once). So God decided to gather (or harvest) His children at different times. Pentecost, as mentioned before, represents the harvest of the firstfruits. It represents the first children that God is calling into His family—so His first children are called His "firstfruits". So what makes this Feast of Firstfruits so important to us? We are part of this first "harvest" - we have the potential to be His first children! We are God's firstfruits!

What about the loaves?

Leviticus 23:17 what does it describe as "firstfruits"? It's talking about two loaves of bread! What? Why bread?

Here are some things to think about - What is bread usually made out of? Flour! What is flour usually made out of? Wheat! What harvest is happening at the time of Pentecost again? The harvest of wheat! So, we know that wheat represents the firstfruits. Also, remember that we are God's firstfruits—then really, the wheat represents us!

Now, let's think back to the Feast of Unleavened Bread for a minute. What does it say in **Leviticus 23:6**? So, what kind of bread are we to eat during those days? UNleavened! So it is supposed to be bread with *no leavening*.

Read about what leavening symbolizes in **1 Corinthians 5:6-8**.

So, if leavening represents sin, why are the loaves of bread used on Pentecost supposed to have leavening in them? Remember, the loaves represent us. Even though God doesn't want us to have sin (or leavening) in us, do we sometimes still sin? Of course! Read **Romans 3:23** and **1 John 1:10**.

Think about this:

What was the priest supposed to do with the two leavened loaves of bread? Why do you think this was part of Pentecost?



**Note to parents: To consider this section of scripture more in depth, consider using the article "Pentecost - Lessons from the Old Testament Church" by Mr. John Ogwyn as a resource. <https://www.lcg.org/lcn/1999/may-june/pentecost-lessons-old-testament-church>*

In Part 2 we'll have a look at what another part of the Bible says about the Feast of Pentecost .

Memory Verses

Level 1

Leviticus 23:16 “Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Lord”

Level 2

Leviticus 23:19-21 “Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats as a sin offering, and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a peace offering. The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the Lord, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the Lord for the priest. And you shall proclaim on the same day that it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.”

Level 3

Exodus 20:1-17 The Ten Commandments*

*You may choose to learn the Ten Commandments in either its short form or long form

Questions for Meaningful Discussion

Level 1

1. Get out a calendar, determine when the wave sheaf offering would occur and start counting the fifty days. Did you get to the correct date for Pentecost? Try it again by counting seven Sabbaths from the weekly Sabbath within DUB and looking to the next day. Were you correct?
2. Why were the people afraid when God came down to Mount Sinai to deliver the Ten Commandments? Do we ever need to feel afraid of God?
3. What were the priests supposed to do with the two loaves of leavened bread on the day of Pentecost? (If you can't remember, go back to Leviticus 23:20 to find out)

Level 2

1. Pick one of the commandments. What would change in the world if everyone always kept that commandment? How different would things be?
2. To figure out when to keep Pentecost we have to count 50 days from the Sabbath during the days of Unleavened Bread. What other times in the Bible does God use the number 50?
3. Based on what we know about the firstfruits, why do you think God had the priest “wave” the loaves of bread before God?

Level 3

1. Why is God calling a only a few now? Is it just so they can live forever and ever? What are the firstfruits to be doing now? What will be their job(s) in the future?
2. How does keeping God's law give us true freedom? How does sin take away freedom?
3. How does the Feast of Pentecost relate to Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread?

Activities

Count-50 Chain

Help your child learn about the concept of counting 50 days to Pentecost with this fun and versatile activity.

Related Verses: Leviticus 23:15-16

Supplies Needed:

- Two colors of construction paper
- Scissors
- Stapler (or tape)
- Markers

Directions:

1. Read the verses about counting fifty days to Pentecost
2. Using scissors, carefully cut construction paper into strips (2" wide, 8 ½" long). You will need 42 strips of one color, and 8 strips of the other color.
3. Next, begin numbering the strips of paper. The pattern should be 6 of the first color, and the 7th the other color. (The other color represents the Sabbath days, while the first color represents the regular days of the week). Since Pentecost is a High Sabbath, the 50th will also be represented by the "sabbath" color.
4. Using the stapler (or tape), begin putting together your paper chain. Staple the paper numbered as "1" into a ring, overlapping one end of the strip of paper to the other end. Try to make sure the number you wrote is visible. Take the strip numbered "2" and attach it to the first ring by looping the strip through the circle and then stapling the ends together to form a second ring. Continue attaching the strips of paper together in a similar manner to create a paper chain.
5. Once the chain is finished, count along the chain together. Are there seven Sabbaths? What day is it before Pentecost for you? If you want, you can disconnect the rings from the chain that have already passed and keep a count-down for Pentecost by removing one ring each day until the Holy day!

Variations for counting 50:

Instead of creating a paper chain, you may want to count something else. Try counting popsicle sticks, Pencils and pens, Sticky notes, or even some kind of food item (maybe Popcorn?). Be creative with it! But remember to reinforce the important point that we know when the Day of Pentecost is supposed to be only when we count it properly as God instructed!

Imagine and Draw!

Help your child reproduce the scene of God's giving of the Ten Commandments to the Israelites. This activity is open for lots of creative license, so don't be shy! Draw what you imagine in your mind's eye!

Related Verses: Exodus 19

Supplies:

- Paper
- Pencils, crayons, pens, markers...basically anything that can be used to draw something!

Directions:

1. Ask your child to draw a picture of what they think Mt. Sinai looked like when God descended on it. (keep in mind - we are not to draw images or pictures of God Himself, but we may draw the rest of the scene.) Don't forget the lightning! Do you think the people saw the trumpet?
2. Take some time to look at the pictures together and discuss its elements. Is there anything missing that is described in the Biblical account. What things are added from a creative imagination? How does the Bible describe the how the people felt when God came to Mount Sinai to deliver His commandments?

The Tablets of the Ten Commandments

In this activity, your child will design their own set of Ten Commandments on clay tablets. Did you remember that God designed the tablets to be written on both sides?

Related Verses: Exodus 20:1-17; 31:18; 32:15-16

Supplies:

- Modeling Clay - either self-hardening or polymer baking clay (There are many recipes for making your own clay if you don't want the added cost for store-bought clay)
- Wax paper
- Knife or carving tool
- Letter stamps (optional)
- Alphabet noodles (optional)
- Gray or black acrylic paint

Directions:

1. Form Modeling Clay into two tablets of desired size on the wax paper. Keep in mind whether you wish to write the commandments in short form or long form. Also, remember, the tablets will be carved on front and back, so the clay will need to be thick enough the engravings on one side won't interfere with the engravings on the other side.
2. Plan out where you want to write each of the commandments using both the front and back of both tablets. Also decide if you want to write the Long form or short form
3. Carve the commandments into the tablets.
4. If you are using white clay, you may want to paint your tablets gray or black to look like stone.
5. Once you are finished carving, bake your clay (according the clay package directions)

Variations: If you don't feel comfortable enough carving all the letters in the clay on your own, you may want to make your own letter stamps that you can push down into the clay (Try searching for DIY cork letter stamps online if you're interested). Another option is to get some alphabet soup noodles which you can use to press into the clay to form words. Remove the noodles before baking the clay.