



GOD'S FALL FESTIVALS—PART 4: LAST GREAT DAY

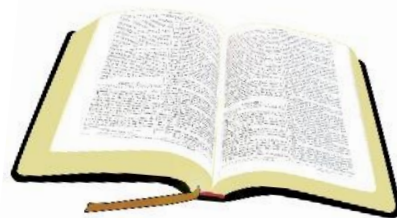
A STUDY GUIDE FOR PARENTS TEACHING THEIR CHILDREN GOD'S WAY

Artist: Ava Mitchell—Plainview, NY

HAVE YOU EVER HAD A “GREAT” DAY? Maybe your parents took your family to the beach where you got to play in the sand and the waves all day long before you finished off the afternoon with a large ice cream cone. Or perhaps you had a great day when you and some of your closest friends spent the day at an amusement park riding roller coasters and eating popcorn and funnel cakes. Whatever you may consider to have been a “great” day, nothing compares to how great the Last Great Day is going to be! When God calls something great, there can be no mistake that it is certainly GREAT!

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!



THE LAST GREAT DAY OF THE FEAST!

The Last Great Day directly follows the Feast of Tabernacles, and for this reason this special day is sometimes lumped in with the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles and counted as day eight. Even though it is closely related, the Last Great Day is a separate holy day with specific meaning, different from the Feast of Tabernacles.



OLD TESTAMENT

For Ancient Israel, they were given particular instructions about the eighth day. Interestingly, even though it is definitely a separate feast, it is not given a name in the Old Testament. No wonder so many people in the world miss the fact that it even exists!

Read Leviticus 23:36, 39

(The book of Numbers also talks about the special offerings the Israelites were told to give on the feast days, including on the eighth day after the Feast of Tabernacles—**Numbers 29:35-38**).



Think for a moment:

Looking back at the list of instructions, what do each of those things mean? Is it obvious that God was making the eighth day special in a different way than the Feast of Tabernacles? Why do you think God decided not to give this special day its own name for the ancient Israelites?

Here are a few instructions we learn from the Old Testament about the eighth day:

- It was to be kept as a “holy convocation”
- It was to be a sacred (or solemn) assembly
- No one was to do any customary work on it
- It was to be a “sabbath rest”
- It had its own special offerings

Did you know? There are some other places in the Bible that mention the eighth day. One is around the dedication of the temple in Jerusalem by Solomon (**2 Chronicles 7:8-9**), and after the wall was completed in Jerusalem during the days of Nehemiah (**Nehemiah 8:18**). Can you find any more?

NEW TESTAMENT

Understanding the Bible is sometimes a bit like putting together a jigsaw puzzle. There are pieces here and there that have to be put together in order to see the whole picture. If you miss some pieces, you can't really see the whole thing. Studying the truth about the Last Great Day is a bit like that. While the other holy days are more clearly labeled in the Bible, the Last Great Day is a bit mysterious to those who don't have all the pieces. God gives us some important clues in the New Testament about the meaning of this special day which we can piece together with clues from the Old Testament in order to see what this day is really about.

We can find this special day mentioned in the gospel accounts. The gospel of John records that Jesus stood up to speak on "the last day, that great day of the feast". The subject He talked about ties in with the meaning of the holy day.

Read John 7:37-52

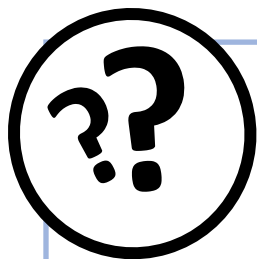
What is Jesus Christ talking about on this special day of the Feast? First, we understand that when Christ says "rivers of living water," He is referring to the Holy Spirit. So He is essentially saying that anyone who desires will be able to come to Him and receive the Holy Spirit. We know that at this time God is not calling everyone, so what is He talking about? He is referring to the time when all people who have ever lived will have a chance to understand God's way, and this, we know, is the time of the second resurrection! The Bible talks about the second resurrection in Revelation 20.

Read Revelation 20:12-13

Can you imagine how wonderful this special time will be? Everyone who has ever lived will be given an opportunity to learn about God's way, to have "the books"—or the understanding of the Bible—open to them. We call this time the Great White Throne Judgement period. Why? Because John described seeing God sitting on a "great white throne" (**Revelation 20:11**), and the people are going to be "judged according to their works," by God's word. It will be a time when the people will be able to practice living God's way and work on building God's character just like we do today! What an amazing hope this is!



Think for a moment about the people you know who don't go to church. Maybe some of them are close friends of yours, or people you have met at school or other places. Now think about all the people you have seen but have never met—like the people you see driving by on the road, or the people you see at the grocery store, or at the airport. Now think about ALL the other people who live in the world today, including those who live in other countries. That's a lot of people! Now think about how many people have lived throughout history. When God says everyone, He really means EVERYONE! Just imagine for a moment what it will be like for all those people to finally learn the Truth and be able to have access to God through His Holy Spirit! Wow!



Consider this:

Most people in the world today don't know God or anything about His Laws. What do you think will change once everyone in the world finally knows about God's commandments, His promises, and His plan? How do you think things in the world will be different?

HOW DO WE KEEP THE LAST GREAT DAY TODAY?

If you have had the opportunity to keep the Feast before, you will know that the first day and the final day of the Feast are kept a bit differently than the other days of the Feast. Most of the days of the Feast begin with an inspiring and exciting church service where we learn about the days we are keeping, usually followed by a fun afternoon of activities and, well...feasting! But have you noticed that the first and the last days are treated differently than the other days? This is because God told us to set them apart from the others. They are "high" holy days and are treated much like the weekly Sabbath day, only usually with more time spent learning and worshipping God in services. God wants us to treat the Last Great Day as a special time to reflect on Him and His wonderful plan.



Artist: Sienna Grandin—Brisbane, AUS

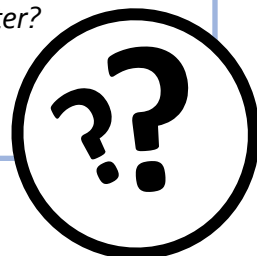
Besides having two church services on the Last Great Day, there are other things we do to make sure we treat it as a special day. One of the things is to collect a special offering. Just like the other Holy Days, on the Last Great Day, God's people give Him a special offering. In the Old Testament times, the Israelites would have given a free-will offering of a sheep or goat—or perhaps even some grain—to show their dedication to God. God told His people that He expected them to appear before Him on the Feast days and not to come "empty-handed".

Read Deuteronomy 16:16-17*

**note: "three times a year" refers to the three seasons of Holy Days: the spring holy days, Pentecost (Feast of Firstfruits), and the fall holy days*

Pause and consider:

*How does having two services on the High Holy days help us remember God's plan?
Why would God want us to remember His plan?
Why does it matter?*



Did you know?

Today, there are places in the world where it is easier for people to bring their offerings in grain, or fruit, or even goats when they come to the feast because often they don't have money to give! These special offerings are certainly still helpful in those areas of the world. They know it will be used to help feed people at the Feast or to support the ministry in their mission to preach the gospel in that area of the world.



Does God expect us to bring a sheep or a goat to Him at the Feast? Because we live in a different time, most people don't have animals or farms from where they could harvest grain. For God's people who are farmers, goats and grain wouldn't necessarily be the most helpful for those doing God's work. The offerings are meant to support God's work, and today the easiest way to give offerings is through money. We are expected to carefully plan our offering based on how we have been blessed during the year—that way we can truly give as we are able!

Go back and have a look at the section about the Last Great Day in the Old Testament. What things on the list of instructions for keeping this Holy Day do we still practice in one way or another? How do we practice these things?



WHAT'S NEXT?

The Last Great Day is, of course, the final Holy Day on God's yearly calendar. So what does this mean for us? Does God's plan end after the Great White Throne judgment period? Of course not! God is planning great things far beyond that awesome time. He tells us a little bit about that future when He describes the New Jerusalem at the end of the book Revelation.

Read Revelation 21-22

We can see from Scripture and the Holy Days that God has a most incredible adventure planned for each and every person who has ever lived, including YOU! He is so excited to share that future with us, and He never wants us to forget what He is planning. Remember, He wants to have a family, and He desires you to be a part of it! It's so amazing to think about! Once the Last Great Day is over, He doesn't want us to forget the things we have learned. Rather, He wants us to keep looking ahead to the future He has planned for us. He wants us to look ahead and prepare for the next year when we can keep all His amazing feasts again and again! Ultimately we are getting ready for when all the promises that He has given us relating to His annual Festivals finally come to pass! So keep doing your best to follow Him and never forget that God's special Holy Days tell us of His wonderful plan to have a family!



Stop to think: *The Last Great Day directly follows the Feast of Tabernacles. Why do you think God put His Holy Days in that order? Why would He resurrect the majority of people who have ever lived after the time of the Millenium? What do you think we will be doing after the Great White Throne judgment period?*



QUESTIONS FOR MEANINGFUL DISCUSSION



Level 1

1. We know from the Last Great Day that one day everyone will get an opportunity to know God. Can you think of some people you know who haven't had a chance to know God yet who you would like to see in God's kingdom?
2. God asks us to give an offering on His Holy Days. How does God want us to feel about giving Him a gift? If you aren't sure, read 2 Corinthians 9:7.
3. Go look up the current population of the world. Out of that number of people, only a small number of them have been called to know God's truth. Over history, many people have died who never knew God's way. How do we know that God won't forget about any person who has ever lived?

Level 2

1. What would you say makes the Last Great Day a GREAT day?
2. What is the Book of Life? Why would God open the Book of Life during the Great White Throne judgment period?
3. What do you think John meant when he described the people as both "small and great"? Could there be more than one meaning? How?

Level 3

1. When Jesus Christ talks about "rivers of living water" He is referring to God's Holy Spirit. What did we learn from the Feast of Pentecost about why we need the Holy Spirit? What does the Holy Spirit have to do with the Last Great Day?
2. How is the second resurrection different than the first resurrection? Remember the first resurrection relates to the Feast of Trumpets.
3. Think about offerings for the feasts. God gives us this opportunity to give Him a gift to show our appreciation and our devotion to Him. What are some important reasons to be prepared to give an offering on the holy days? Is God more interested in the amount you give or in the attitude you have when you give it?



MEMORY VERSES

FOR THE LAST GREAT DAY

Level 1

Leviticus 23:39 Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the Lord for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest.

Level 2

John 7:37-38 On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

Level 3

Revelation 20:11-13 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.



ACTIVITIES

FOR THE LAST GREAT DAY

Activity 1: Rice and the Population of the World Throughout History

This activity focuses on giving a visual estimate of how many people will be in the second resurrection. While the calculations are a rough estimate, this visual can give a greater sense of how big God's family will be after the Great White Throne Judgment period.

Special Thanks to Mr. Wallace Smith for helping with the calculations.

Related Bible Verses: Revelation 20:11-13

Supplies:

- At least 3 lbs of rice
- scale
- Calculator
- paper/pencil

Directions:

1. **Scale:** Assume that 1 grain of rice is equivalent to 200,000* people . Around 6,500 people can stand on one full-sized football field, that means you would need around 30 football fields to fit everyone!! That's a lot of people!

1 grain of rice (0.029 grams) \approx 200,000 people

**We are using this round number for easy calculating*

1. **Calculate:** In the Living Church of God today, we have about 10,000 people (round number count from Feast of Tabernacles). To represent the church today in comparison to 200,000 we have about 5% of one grain of rice! So, based on our scale, if you were to cut up one grain of rice into 10 pieces, the church today would represent around $\frac{1}{2}$ of one of those pieces!
2. **Compare:** Lay one grain of rice on the table to represent 200,000 people. With help from an adult, try cutting another grain of rice into ten pieces. Even though it won't be an exact proportional ratio, you can get an idea of how many people are in the Living Church of God today, compared to 200,000 people.
3. **Current World Population:** The current population of the world is about 7,530,103,737! That's a lot of people. Using our same scale (1 grain of rice=200,000 people) the population today would be represented by how many grains of rice?

$7,530,103,737 / 200,000 = 37,650.518685$ grains of rice

So you don't have to count so many grains of rice, we will turn it into a weight.

$1(0.029g) \times 37,650.518685 \text{ grains of rice} = 1,091.865041865g$

1,091.865g turns out to be a little more than two pounds of rice! (2.4071503 lbs to be more exact).

Compare your two pounds of rice with the first two grains of rice on the table.



Activity 1: Rice and the Population of the World Throughout History (cont.)

4. **How many people have lived?** Now, approximately how much rice would we need to represent all the people who have ever lived? First, we need to figure out about how many people have ever lived. This is a really hard number to calculate and there are lots of assumptions that have to be made about birth rate, death rate, wars, natural disasters and many other events and situations (expert mathematicians spend heaps of time trying to come up with good approximations and even many of them don't agree!). For our purposes, let's keep things simple. We will choose a number somewhere halfway between the most popular calculations (60 billion and 100 billion). Our number will be 80 billion (80,000,000,000). Remember, this is just a very rough guess!
5. **Rice for everyone!** Using our scale again (1 grain of rice=200,000 people), how many grains of rice would we need to represent 80,000,000,000?

$$(80,000,000,000 \text{ people} / 200,000 \text{ people} = 400,000 \text{ grains of rice!})$$

Let's change that into a weight. (

$$1(0.029g) \times (400,000 \text{ grains of rice}) = 11,600g$$

That ends up being over 25 lbs of rice!!!!

4. **Discuss and Reflect:** Take some time to talk about God's plan and how many people will be in the second resurrection. Even though we don't have exact numbers, it's fun to get a general idea of how many people will be there

Some fun questions to think about as you do this activity:

1. Think about the number of friends you have: About how many people have you met whose names you can remember? About how many of those do you know pretty well (you feel comfortable talking to them in social situations)? How many of those would you say are your close friends (you know lots about them and share lots of things about yourself with them)? How many of those are your closest friends (whom you trust the most)? Now, what do you think it would be like to know 80,000,000,000 people so well that you know all of their names? That you feel comfortable with them and have fun hanging out with them? That you share your time and life with them? What do you think it would be like to have 80 billion best friends?
2. What do you think it will be like for people to meet other people from every time period in history?
3. What kind of things would you like to ask people who lived at different times in history?
4. What do you think people who lived in Bible times would think of our modern technology (phones, computers, cars, etc.)?