

A scenic photograph of a waterfall cascading into a pool of water, surrounded by a mossy, rocky cliff face. The waterfall is on the left side, and the pool of water is in the foreground. The cliff face is covered in green moss and lichen. The text is overlaid on the image.

Seventh Month Feasts *For Kids*

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Seventh Month

Feasts

For Kids

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Table of Contents

Dear Parents and Teachers:	5
The Biblical Calendar	7
The Feast of Trumpets	8
<i>The Feast of Trumpets</i>	8
The Day of Atonement	11
<i>The Daily Sanctuary Service</i>	11
<i>The Day of Atonement</i>	13
<i>The Great Disappointment</i>	15
<i>The Midnight Cry</i>	17
The Feast of Tabernacles	19
<i>The Pilgrimage in the Desert</i>	19
<i>The Ark Rests on Mount Ararat</i>	21
<i>King Solomon Dedicates the Temple</i>	23
<i>The Return of the Exiles</i>	25
<i>Rebuilding the Temple</i>	28
<i>God With Us</i>	30
<i>Drink from Jesus</i>	32
<i>Surrounded by Spies</i>	35
<i>The Light of the World</i>	37
<i>God's Generosity</i>	40
Templates and Worksheets	43

Dear Parents and Teachers:

We graciously present to you some stories and activities related to the Seventh Month Feasts of the Lord, with the hope that they can help our children to understand these feasts and their meaning. There is also reference to Adventist History and how the Day of Atonement and the Biblical teachings of the Sanctuary shaped our understanding of Scripture. You will find that for both the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles, there are more stories than you will be able to use at one time. The topics in this booklet are not necessarily in any particular sequence; depending on how many days you need to teach for, you can choose the lessons you prefer. For example, you can teach a topic from the Day of Atonement during the Feast of Tabernacles. The goal is for the children to understand the main themes of these feasts by the time the final day of Tabernacles arrives. We were tentative on the approach to this booklet, since there are more stories than what can actually be covered in 9-10 days (unless you hold morning and evening sessions most days). In the end we decided to include them all, to allow for variation from year to year, and to give parents/teachers a wider range of options. If you're not sure which stories to pick for the first time that you use this booklet, we suggest the following sequence:

- Feast of Trumpets:
 - o (Evening): The Feast of Trumpets
 - o (Morning): The Daily Sanctuary Service
(If you can only provide one session, we recommend the Feast of Trumpets).
- The Day of Atonement:
 - o (Evening): The Day of Atonement
 - o (Morning): The Great Disappointment
(If you can only provide one session, we recommend a combination of the Sanctuary Service and the Day of Atonement)
- Feast of Tabernacles:
 - o Day 1: The Pilgrimage in the Desert
 - o Day 2: King Solomon Dedicates the Temple
 - o Day 3: The Return of the Exiles
 - o Day 4: Rebuilding the Temple
 - o Day 5: Drink from Jesus
 - o Day 6: Surrounded by Spies
 - o Day 7: The Light of the World
 - o Day 8: God's Generosity

Each lesson comes with the following parts:

- **Biblical Calendar:** it will be interesting for the children to understand on which day and on which month each feast is celebrated. They don't need to understand every single detail, nor how to work it out; a basic knowledge of the Biblical dates is enough.
- **Story:** This is the main section of the lesson. Use illustrations and any materials that will help bring to life the stories to the children.
- **Memory verse:** Each lesson comes with a memory verse that helps to sum up the main message of the story. Some of these texts have been set to music, and the audios are available at the YouTube channel "Agape Piece", on the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCrJe1zxXhO9gjCybHhHSXQ>. Once you have presented the memory verse, explained its meaning, and had children repeat it and listen to the song, you can later play the recording of the day's memory verse, and previous days', while the children work on the day's activity.
- **Activity:** These are hands-on activities, usually crafts, which will help the children to remember the story and its message. They have been purposely designed without reading and writing in mind so that children within a wide age range can do them.
- **Singing:** Before and at the end of your program, you can include children's songs from Sabbath School, and scripture songs as well. Songs that praise God and remind us of His goodness are very fitting for the Seventh Month feasts.

The Biblical Calendar

Feast of Trumpets: Today is the first day of the seventh month in the Biblical calendar, and we are celebrating the Feast of Trumpets. This is the first of the Autumn feasts. The Spring feasts were three: Passover, Unleavened Bread and Firstfruits. The Autumn feasts are also three: Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and Tabernacles, and they are the last feasts of the year. They were celebrated in the seventh month. [The lesson on the Feast of Trumpets will explain this day in more detail].

Day of Atonement: Today, ten days after the Feast of Trumpets, on the tenth day of the seventh month, is the Day of Atonement. It's the most important day of the year, and it's a Sabbath. The people got together to worship God, and sacrifices were offered on the altar. The day of Atonement is a very serious day, in which the people fasted and prayed and asked God to forgive their sins. On this day, a special ceremony was performed, which was to cleanse the sanctuary of all the sins of the people of the whole year. The people didn't do any work on that day as on the Sabbath. When the Day of Atonement ceremony was finished, the people had the joy of knowing that their sins had been taken away from them forever, and that everything was right between them and God.

Feast of Tabernacles: Five days after the Day of Atonement, on the 15th day of the seventh month, the last and the happiest feast of the year began: The Feast of Tabernacles. During Tabernacles, the best part of the year, the people celebrated the blessings that God had given them during the year.

This was a time to be joyful and grateful. They would have recently finished harvesting their grains, and they were ready to rest and rejoice. They also remembered how God had guided the Israelites so long ago through the desert, always giving them food, water, and protection.

To celebrate this, the people would build booths, or tabernacles, or tents, out of sticks and palm leaves, and sleep in them during the days of the feast. They would build booths on the sides of the streets, next to the temple, or even on the rooftops of houses. They would also bring in flowers from the fields and forests, and decorate the city with them.

Everyone, including foreigners, were welcome, and all received the best care during this feast. Even the poor people were provided whatever they needed to celebrate this feast. Through the whole the year, the Israelites saved up an extra tithe so that they would have enough to share freely with anyone who needed some help.

During Tabernacles, people would eat the most delicious food, and they would play and sing the most joyful music. They also had special ceremonies at the temple. The Feast of Tabernacles lasted seven days, and there was also an extra eighth day added to it; in total it was celebrated for eight days.

The Feast of Trumpets

The Feast of Trumpets

Materials needed: illustrations of: a shofar and a silver trumpet, a New Moon, the tabernacle, the Ten Commandments spoken at Sinai, the second coming of Jesus, the three angels; a real trumpet, or something similar; For the trumpet craft: a plastic bottle or plastic funnel for each child, a piece of hose for each child, hot glue, paint or stickers or decorations for the trumpet.

Leviticus 23: 23-25

Numbers 10: 1-10

Memory verse: Blow a trumpet in Zion; sound an alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming; it is near. (Joel 2:1)

On the first day of the seventh month, the trumpets sounded from the tabernacle. They sounded to let the people know that this was the day of Trumpets, a special feast that was a Sabbath.

What kind of trumpets did the Israelites use for the Feast of Trumpets? They used two kinds: silver trumpets made from hammered silver, and a ram's horn, also called a shofar. [If possible, show the children videos or recordings of these instruments]. Both of these kinds of trumpets were used not only during the Feast of Trumpets, but also during all the feasts of the seventh month.

The Feast of Trumpets was a special day to get together and worship God, but it was also given to the people for a very special reason: the trumpets reminded the people of something very important. As they listened to the trumpet sounds and got ready to worship, the people were reminded: "Very soon, in ten days, we will celebrate the most important day of the year, the Day of Atonement. We need to make sure to confess every sin before then, because on the Day of Atonement, the Sanctuary will be cleansed of all the sins of the year. We want all our sins to be taken away with that cleansing, too. Make sure all your sins are confessed, and that everything is right between you and God, and others. Don't let anything take away from the blessings of the next feasts that are coming."

During the next ten days after the Feast of Trumpets, as people prepared for the Day of Atonement, the priests were very busy. Many people came to the sanctuary with their sacrifices and offerings, and they asked God to show them if there were any other wrongs that they needed to ask forgiveness for. By the time the Day of Atonement came, everyone was at peace with God, and with each other.

Since the Feast of Trumpets falls on the first day of the month, it falls on a New Moon. Do you know what the New Moon looks like in the sky? In science and astronomy books, it says that the

new moon is when you can't see the moon at all in the sky. But the Jews said the New Moon was when you can see the first tiny sliver of the moon [show a picture of the New Moon].

We read a lot about trumpets in the Bible. Usually, the trumpets were played to give people a message. When they heard a trumpet, they knew that something important was about to happen. For example, trumpets were used for calling the people to meet at the door of the Tabernacle. When God spoke the Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai, the people heard a sound like loud trumpets. When Jesus comes for us in His Second Coming, His voice like a trumpet will give life to those who died believing in Him. In the prophecies (in Revelation), angels hold and play trumpets just before giving an important message.

So, every year on the Feast of Trumpets, the people would hear the trumpets sounding, and they would be reminded to make things right with God and with each other before the Day of Atonement. It was reassuring to them that, in ten days, their sins would be completely cleaned out from the Sanctuary, and that they had a God who longed to forgive them and help them to live a life without sin. Through this feast, God was trying to tell them, "The judgment¹ is coming, and you need to get ready. I want to help you and save you and give you joy."

Right now, we also need this message. We are waiting for Jesus to come, and we need to get ready to meet Him. And as we wait for Jesus, we have an important message to share with the world. This message is called the Three Angels' Message in Revelation 14. The people who believe this message will be ready and excited to meet Jesus when He comes. In this message, there are three angels and each angel has an important message for us. The Bible doesn't say that they are holding trumpets, but it does say that they spoke in a loud voice, just like trumpets are loud.

The **first angel** says, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come. And worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. [To fear God means to know Him so well that we admire, love and respect Him; it is not about being afraid of Him].

The **second angel** says, "Babylon is fallen. [We need to come out of the false teachings and beliefs that Satan has deceived us with].

The **third angel** says, "Don't receive the mark of the beast and his image. [We need to come to the Father and His Son and get to know them and obey them only].

¹ We are mentioning the judgment here, but we are not explaining it. Depending on what your children understand about the judgment, it might be necessary to clarify what it is. The judgment is about us having to face the choices we made in life and facing our sins. It is not about God condemning us. If we have allowed Jesus to come into our lives and help us through His Spirit, we will be purified and "covered" or protected by His righteousness, and we will feel secure. However, if we refused Christ's Spirit, we will have to face our own sins, how they hurt our Father and His Son, and how they separate us from God, our source of life. During the judgment, we judge ourselves.

The Feast of Trumpets can help us to remember that Jesus is coming soon and we need to get ready to meet Him, just like the people of Israel got ready for the Day of Atonement. Let's thank God for giving us such a beautiful message, and the hope of meeting Jesus very soon.

Activity:

Show the children pictures of trumpets from Bible times. Some were made from rams' horns, and some were made from silver. If possible, show them a modern trumpet, and let them try to play it. Then tell them they'll make their own trumpet today, to remind them that God has important messages for His people.

Make a trumpet. There are many ways to make one. One suggestion is to make trumpets out of plastic bottles and a piece of hose:

1. Cut off the bottom part of the plastic bottle (or skip the bottle and use a funnel instead)
2. Put a piece of hose through the mouth of the bottle, and glue it so it will stay there. The hose can be long or short. If it's longer, you can curl it up like a horn.
3. Have children decorate their trumpets with stickers, and teach them to blow hard to get the sound out.

Alternately, if you'd rather skip this activity, you could print out a picture of a trumpet and have the children glue silver paper or glitter on it.

The Day of Atonement

The Daily Sanctuary Service

Materials needed: illustrations of the sanctuary and its compartments and furniture. A stuffed sheep or sheep illustration; pages 41 and 42 for each child to make their own sanctuary.

Patriarchs and Prophets chapter 30

Great Controversy chapter 23

Leviticus 4:27-35; 23: 26 – 32

Memory Verse: And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. Exodus 25:8

The Israelites spent over 40 years living in tents on the desert plains. They needed all this time to learn how to trust God so that He could take them into the land of Canaan which He had promised for them.

In a few days, we will celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles, to remember that God took special care of the people in the wilderness while they lived in tents, or tabernacles. But it wasn't just the people who lived in tents during that time – God gave Moses special instructions so that there would also be a special tent, or Tabernacle, for God Himself to be much closer to the people. This Tabernacle was a smaller version of the Sanctuary that is in Heaven.

The Tabernacle, and everything within it, was supposed to teach the people about the Son of God and what God wanted to do for them. There were daily services performed there, and there was also a yearly service, the Day of Atonement.

Today, we will see what the daily services in the Tabernacle were like:

The Tabernacle had three parts [use illustrations as you explain this]. All around the tabernacle, there was a fence of white linen curtains. The white reminds us of the righteousness of Christ. If a sinner came into this white fence, he could find forgiveness and righteousness. How? He needed to bring a year-old lamb, a perfectly healthy lamb, to the sanctuary. The person came in through the door – only one door. Who is the door? Jesus. Jesus is the only one who can bring us to God. Then that person would bring the lamb to the altar of sacrifice. He would place his hands on the lamb's head, and silently, he would confess his sin to God; he would not say it out loud in front of the priest. Then he himself would have to kill the lamb. The priest was there, but the priest did not kill the lamb. The lamb was supposed to make the person think of God's Son. Every time we sin, we hurt Jesus. Our sins caused Him to die on the cross, even though He, like the lamb, never did anything wrong. The priest also represented Jesus, because the priest was there to help the people to find forgiveness.

The priest would catch some of the blood from the lamb in a bowl. He would then go to the laver and wash his hands and feet. The laver reminds us of Jesus, who washes us clean from sin, and who gives us His Spirit. Then the priest would enter the Holy Place and sprinkle the lamb's blood before the veil. Behind this veil was the ark that had the Ten Commandments in it, God's law that had been disobeyed. By this ceremony, the sin was transferred to the sanctuary, and the person was now forgiven.

In the Holy Place, there was a candlestick of seven lamps. These lamps had been kindled by God Himself. The priests just had to keep adding oil continually to them to keep them burning. The oil reminds us of the Spirit of Jesus. The light represents Jesus, who said He is the light, who brings joy to us and helps us to see the truth.

In front of the candlesticks, there was the table of shewbread. Every Sabbath morning, the priest placed 12 fresh loaves of bread on this table, in two piles of six. Who is the bread? Jesus Himself. He gives us everything we need, and we need to learn about Him through the Bible. Jesus once said that, just like we need bread to live, we also need God's Word to live, so bread also represents the Bible.

In front of the beautiful veil was the altar of incense [bring incense if you can, for the children to smell it]. It was made from acacia wood and covered with gold. Every morning and evening, a priest would burn incense on this altar. As the smoke from the incense rose up, the people were reminded that their prayers went up to God in heaven, who was willing to hear them, and the incense itself reminded the people of the righteousness of Jesus. Our prayers can only reach God through Jesus, who is our righteousness and our High Priest.

Every morning and evening, the priests would burn incense on the altar, and they would also offer a lamb for all the people (as well as the lambs that people would bring for their own sins). Every day, twice a day, and whenever they went to confess their sins to God in the Sanctuary, the people were reminded that God loved them and had given them His Son to save them from sin. As we learn about the Sanctuary, we can further understand how much more we need Jesus, and all He has done and is still doing to save us from our sins. Let's thank Him right now!

Activity:

Make a sanctuary by using a copy of pages 41 and 42 for each child. Have them color the pictures, then cut out the pictures from page 42 and glue them where they belong on page 41. Tell the children you will be talking about the Most Holy Place next time, as the Most Holy Place is where the High Priest entered only on the Day of Atonement.

The Day of Atonement

Materials needed: illustrations of the sanctuary, especially of the ark and what's inside it. Illustrations of the High Priest and the two goats. A copy of pages 43 and 44 for each child; scotch tape.

Great Controversy chapter 24

Leviticus 16; 23: 26 – 32

Memory Verse: As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. (Psalm 103:12)

The Day of Atonement was the 10th day of the seventh month. Before that day, the fathers had made sure that they had offered sacrifices for themselves and their families, and that they had confessed their sins to God. People wanted to fix any wrongs they had done to each other. They wanted to make sure that no sin would separate them from God, or from the rest of the people, especially on the Day of Atonement. On this day, the people fasted; they didn't eat any food.

Through the whole year the people had been comforted by the daily services in the sanctuary with the sacrifices and the burning of incense. Many times, during the year, when they realized they had sinned, they would come into the courtyard by themselves with a lamb and offer it on the altar. They knew the blood of these lambs would be sprinkled before the veil in the Tabernacle, the veil that separates the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. This beautiful veil represented the lovely life of Jesus, who would carry all of our sins.

The people knew that there was one more ceremony that needed to be done before all those confessed sins were taken away from them forever: and that was performed on the Day of Atonement.

The Most Holy Place represented the throne of God in Heaven. Inside the Most Holy Place was the Ark of the Covenant. There were two cherubim on the lid of the ark, and between these cherubim was the bright holy light of the Shekinah, the glory of the presence of God. Because the veil did not reach the ceiling, some of that light could be seen from the Holy Place.

The ark was a wooden box covered in gold. Inside the box were the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments, which God wrote with His own fingers. Over time, the Israelites also added Aaron's rod which had budded and a jar with manna, all reminders of God's care for them. The Ten Commandments are God's Law, and they explain what God's character is like. Breaking them is a sin, and sin is what separates us from God. Breaking God's law brings unhappiness and death, because it separates us from the God who gives us all good things.

The lid of the ark was called the mercy seat, because it represented the throne of God, and God is always merciful. The two cherubim on the mercy seat represented the angels in heaven.

No one ever entered the Most Holy Place, except for only one person: The High Priest. And he did this only on the Day of Atonement, once a year, and during a very special ceremony.

On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest washed himself well and put on his special white linen robe which was only to be worn on this day. Then he would offer a sacrifice for himself, then sprinkle the blood from this sacrifice onto the mercy seat inside the Most Holy Place. Now he was cleansed from sin so he could act as a mediator for the people.

Then two goats were brought to the door of the tabernacle. One of these goats would represent Jesus, and the other goat would represent Satan. The goat chosen to represent Jesus was the sacrificial goat, and it was killed by the High Priest, just like Jesus would be killed for all our sins. The High Priest would then go into the Most Holy Place again, and sprinkle blood from this goat onto the mercy seat. The sins of the people had been passed from them, to the goat, and now to the Most Holy Place, and now to the High Priest. As he came out of the Most Holy Place, he carried the sins of the people, away from the sanctuary.

Now the High Priest would come to the second goat, the scapegoat, which represented Satan. He would place his hands on the head of this goat, and pass all the sins of the people from himself to this goat. Then this goat would be taken away by a strong and responsible man, who would leave the goat in the desert, far away from the camp so it could not find its way back. This way, the sins were forever taken away from the people. The trumpet would sound, and the people could rejoice knowing that their sins had been taken away from them, and they were free.

God is always merciful and ready to forgive, and He wants to remove our sins from us forever. All we need to do is come to Him for forgiveness, and be very sorry for the wrong things we have done and wish to not hurt Jesus again. Let's thank God for His love, mercy and forgiveness.

Activity:

Give each child a copy of pages 43 and 44. Color the ark box, the mercy seat, the manna, Aaron's rod and the Ten Commandments. Cut the box and the mercy seat, and use scotch tape along the sides and bottom of the box to stick in onto the rectangle on page 43, to make an envelope. Put the manna, the Ten Commandments and Aaron's rod inside the envelope or pocket.

Remind the children what each item in the ark meant. Remind them what each goat meant.

The Great Disappointment

Materials needed: illustrations of this story (we recommend the set of felts on Ellen White and the Pioneers by Little Folks Visuals). Copies of page 45 for each child, card paper for each child.

The Great Controversy chapters 20-22

Memory Verse: And he said unto me, unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. (Daniel 8:14)

In the early 1800's, people in different parts of the world began to study the book of Daniel in the Bible. Even though these people didn't meet each other, they all believed, after studying Daniel chapter 8, that Jesus was going to come very soon, at around 1840. The biggest group of believers, and the ones who did the most preaching, were in the United States of America, led by a man called William Miller.

Mr. Miller and others with him studied the prophecies in Daniel very carefully, and they read Daniel 8:14, which says, "unto 2300 days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed". The end of the 2300 days would be in 1844, and they understood that it would happen on the Day of Atonement in 1844. That year, the Day of Atonement would fall on October 22.

Mr. Miller and the others who preached this message believed that the "sanctuary" to be cleansed would be the earth. "Surely the earth will be cleansed when Jesus comes, so this must be talking about the second coming of Jesus!" they decided. They checked and re-checked the dates, until they were sure that the correct date was October 22, 1844. And they decided that on this date, Jesus was going to come.

The people who believed and taught this message were called Adventists, because they believed in the advent, or the second coming, of Jesus. They excitedly shared this message with everyone that they could. They shared the message even though many people treated them badly or made fun of them for it. There were ranchers, farmers and businessmen, doctors and lawyers who left their jobs, and even sold everything, to use their time and money to spread the message. The people who believed in the second coming of Jesus studied the Bible carefully, and also confessed their sins to God and did all they could to make things right with everyone around them.

When October 22 arrived, the Adventists joyfully, yet peacefully and patiently, waited. They woke up early. Some of the people had even stayed up all night praying and reading their Bibles. They kept on asking God if there were any more sins they needed to repent of and confess. Some met in churches to wait for Jesus' coming, while others waited at home. They all wore their best clean clothes. Among the people who waited for Jesus that day was sixteen-year-old Ellen Harmon. She later married James White, so we know her as Ellen White.

October 22, 1844, finally ended. The Adventists were bitterly disappointed. Many of them cried like they had never cried before. This day will forever be remembered by Adventists as The Great

Disappointment. They had given up everything to get ready for the second coming and to teach others about it, and now it had not happened as they had understood it would.

As the non-believers around them started making even more fun of them, the Adventists needed to make a choice. Would they keep on believing in the coming of Jesus, or would they give up their beliefs? Many of the Adventists, those who had believed only out of fear, quickly gave up their beliefs and wanted nothing to do with Adventism anymore. But there was a group that held on, and who still clung tightly to Jesus, and who prayed that He would help them understand where their understanding had been wrong. This group of Adventists had studied the Bible so carefully that they knew the date, October 22, 1844, was correct. They could see how the Adventist message had helped them to come closer to Jesus and to abandon their sins, so they were sure that God was with them. They decided to study, pray and wait until God would show them where their mistake had been.

And God answered their prayers. The day after the Great Disappointment, an Adventist man called Mr. Edson was walking in a field with a friend. They were on the way to visit some believers to encourage them. Suddenly Mr. Edson heard a voice and strongly felt God's presence, and he knelt to pray. The friend was confused. He hadn't heard the voice, so he wondered why Mr. Edson was kneeling down in a field! Mr. Edson told his friend, "God is answering our prayer. As I knelt, I heard a voice telling me, 'The sanctuary to be cleansed is in heaven.' And I saw a vision of Jesus in the sanctuary in heaven, and the angels were bringing the record books for Jesus to examine them."

Mr. Edson and his friend joyfully went to share with the rest of the believers what God had shown him. Their mistake had been in believing that the "sanctuary" mentioned in Daniel 8 was the earth, when in fact, Daniel 8 was talking about the sanctuary in heaven. October 22 had been the Day of Atonement, not only for that year, but also for the history of the earth. On that particular day, Jesus moved from the Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary, to the Most Holy Place. He is going through all the record books, starting with those who died first, and eventually He will go through the records of those who are still alive, to see who will be ready and happy to live with Him forever when He comes back for us.

The Adventists were very happy to understand this. Before this, they hadn't known that there was a sanctuary in Heaven and a prophecy about it. They now understood that we are living during the time of Atonement, and it's the time to get ready for the coming of Jesus. And this eventually led them to learn about the blessing of the Sabbath.

This is the time of Atonement, the time to learn to trust Jesus, get to know Him and follow Him, so that He can help us live without sin. When Jesus comes to take us to Heaven, we will then celebrate the most joyful feast of all: The Feast of Tabernacles, on the way to Heaven with Him. Let's ask God to help us get ready to meet Jesus, because He is coming very soon for us!

Activity: Have each child cut out the scenes of the story found on page 45 and paste them in their correct order on a piece of card paper. Let the children color the pictures.

The Midnight Cry

Materials needed: illustrations for the story of the ten virgins; pictures of: the bridegroom, the five wise girls, the five foolish girls, the lamp, the oil, the second coming. A copy of pages 46 and 47 for each child.

Great Controversy chapter 22

Matthew 25

Memory Verse: And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. (Matthew 25:6)

After the Great Disappointment, the Adventist people kept on studying the Bible. And they began to discover passages in the Bible that gave them comfort. “Look at Ezekiel 12!” they said excitedly, “it says that God’s people will think that there’s a delay, but in the end, God will do what He has promised!” Ezekiel 12 prophesied exactly what had happened to them: they thought Jesus was delaying His coming, but He is actually going to come. As they studied, the Adventists learned to trust God even though they were terribly disappointed that Jesus had not come.

The story of the ten virgins also comforted the Adventists. “This story tells us what is happening to us just before His coming,” they said.

One day, the disciples said to Jesus, “Please tell us the signs of Your coming and of the end of the world.” Jesus told them the signs. You know some of these signs, don’t you? After mentioning the signs, Jesus added, “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins.” The ten virgins were ten young women who were not yet married. Their story would help us to understand the problems that God’s people would have at the end of time.

Jesus continued telling the story: These ten virgins had been invited to a wedding, and they had been asked to wait for the bridegroom. They held oil lamps in their hands, in case the bridegroom came after the sun had set.

The girls began to think that the groom was taking too long to come. In fact, they waited for such a long time that they fell asleep while they waited. All the while, their lamps were still lit up and were burning up the oil. Many hours later, at midnight, the virgins were awakened by a cry – the Midnight Cry – “Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him!”

The girls woke up suddenly and grabbed their dying lamps. Five of the girls had brought extra oil with them, so they quickly filled up their lamps, and were ready to meet the bridegroom. But the other five virgins hadn’t brought any extra oil with them, and their lamps had already run out of oil; they had no light.

The girls who had no oil were desperate. They begged the other five girls, “Please, give us some of your oil so that we can meet the bridegroom!” But the girls with the oil answered, “We only have enough for our own lamps. We don’t have any extra. Why don’t you go and quickly buy some oil?” The girls ran off to find oil, but of course, they weren’t able to find any oil soon enough, and they lost their chance to join the wedding feast.

What is the Midnight Cry in this story? It is the message of the soon coming of Jesus. The Adventists read this story and they said, "We have been telling the people that Jesus is coming. We have been sounding the Midnight Cry."

And who is the Bridegroom in this story? It is Jesus. And who was waiting for the Bridegroom? The ten virgins who were holding lamps. What is the lamp? It is the Bible. And what is the oil in the lamps? It is the Holy Spirit. To get light from the lamps, the girls needed oil. In the same way, we need the Holy Spirit in order to receive light from the Bible, to understand it. Without the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, we will not be ready for the Second Coming of Jesus, just like the girls without oil were not ready for the coming of the Bridegroom.

All ten girls knew the Bridegroom, but only five of them had extra oil. These virgins with extra oil represent those who believe in Jesus, but who have a personal relationship with Him as well. These people allow the Holy Spirit to work in their hearts.

But there were also five girls who didn't have extra oil. These girls are like those people who know about Jesus, but they don't have a personal relationship with Him. They have not allowed the Holy Spirit to change their hearts, so they are not ready to meet with Jesus when He comes, just like those five virgins that were not ready to meet the bridegroom.

All ten of the virgins fell asleep while waiting for the bridegroom. This is what happened to the Adventists when Jesus didn't come on October 22, 1844. The disappointment they felt is shown in the story by having the girls sleep. Yet in spite of falling asleep, or being disappointed, five of the girls continued to have faith in God and His Word; they had that extra oil for their lamps. The disappointment didn't stop them from being ready to meet with Jesus. The other girls, however, had no oil; they had no personal relationship with Jesus, and not enough faith, so they were not ready to meet Jesus. During the disappointment, when everyone was "asleep" or discouraged, only those who had a personal, close relationship with Jesus were able to get through that difficult time. No one could pass on their oil, or their relationship with Jesus, to someone else. This is something that each person has to do, personally, with Jesus.

This story comforted the Adventists, and they were even more eager to spend time with Jesus and "fill their lamps with oil". They knew that Jesus *will* come, because in the story, the Bridegroom finally came.

We know that Jesus is coming very soon. With His help, we need to have our lamps, and to have them filled with oil. How do we do that? We can only do it by coming to Jesus. We need to learn from Jesus, and to listen to His Holy Spirit whenever He is trying to tell us that we have done something wrong and that we need to change. By reading the Bible, we will learn more about Him and will come closer to Him. And the more we learn, the more we will love Him and want to be with Him. This is how we get ready for the coming of Jesus. Let's ask God to help us come closer to Jesus, to love Jesus and others as He loves all of us, so we can be ready to meet Him when He returns.

Activity:

Give each child a copy of pages 46 and 47. Have them color the pictures. Then have them cut out the oil jar and the lamp, and paste them by on the top so they can be "flaps" that cover the Bible and the Holy Spirit. The children can then open the flaps and be reminded that the oil represents our relationship with Jesus through His Spirit, and that the lamp represents God's Word, the Bible.

The Feast of Tabernacles

The Pilgrimage in the Desert

Materials needed: illustrations of the tents in the desert, the water flowing from the rock, the manna, the pillar of cloud/fire, the bronze snake. For the craft: a clothes hanger for each child, a roll of twine or string, card stock, and a copy of page 48 for each child.

Deuteronomy 8

Nehemiah 9: 7 – 21

Psalm 78

Patriarchs and Prophets chapter 52

Memory Verse: But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19)

The Israelites spent forty years in the desert. God would have wanted them to be in the desert for only a few months, as He wanted to take them into the Promised Land of Canaan. But because the Israelites didn't trust God nor believe His words, it took 40 years before they were ready to leave the desert and move into Canaan.

For those forty years, God gave them everything they needed. The Israelites lived in tents which were easy to pack up as they moved from place to place in the desert. All that time, their tents, clothes, blankets and shoes didn't get completely worn out. Have you or your parents ever had to buy new clothes or shoes because the old ones wore out? It was truly a miracle that their clothes and tents lasted that long.

In the desert, there was no food to be found anywhere. Yet God made sure they always had food. Every morning, they would find manna on the ground, a special food from heaven. The manna had everything their bodies needed to stay healthy. They were told to gather only enough for that day, and to trust that each morning, new manna would be waiting for them on the ground. Any leftover manna would rot and spoil before the next morning.

There was only one day on which that manna did not appear: on the Sabbath. So, every Friday, they had to pick enough manna to last them for two days. On Sabbath mornings, the manna that had been gathered on Fridays did not spoil. Through this food, God taught the Israelites to trust in Him for the food they needed every day. He also taught them how holy and special the Sabbath was.

Deserts are very dry places. It is impossible to find water in the wilderness, but God made sure that the Israelites always had the water they needed. Once, He turned a very bitter pond of water into a source of water that was good to drink. God did this by asking Moses to cut up a tree and throw it into the water.

After that, God allowed water to flow from a rock wherever the Israelites camped. The first time God did this, He asked Moses to strike the rock once with his rod. This was supposed to show the Israelites that the Son of God would have to suffer in order to give us of His sweet Spirit.

The water represented the Spirit of the Son of God. Near the end of the forty years, Moses got impatient with the people when they claimed for water again. God told Moses that this time he should only speak to the rock, just like we only need to pray to Jesus to receive His Spirit, but Moses in his anger hit the rock twice with his rod. The water flowed from the rock anyway, but the beautiful lesson that God wanted to teach the people had been ruined, and Moses was not allowed to cross over to Canaan.

During the daytime, deserts are very, very hot, and during the night, the temperature is extremely cold. Yet the Israelites were safe from the hot sun during the day, because God placed a large cloud over them to give them shade. And they were safe from the very cold night, because that same cloud became a pillar of fire during the night, giving them light and warmth. This kept reminding the people that God was with them.

The desert is full of dangerous animals like poisonous snakes and scorpions, but these animals didn't hurt the Israelites. There was only one time, when the Israelites complained so much and had so little trust in God, that He began to withdraw His protection from them, and then the snakes began biting them. Even then, God helped them by asking Moses to make a bronze snake and to hang it on a pole. Anyone who looked at that bronze snake was protected from the snake bites, because looking at that snake meant that they had faith that God could help them.

The Israelites did not celebrate the feast of Tabernacles until they reached Canaan. The feast of Tabernacles was a wonderful time to remember God's care and love during those years of living in tents in the desert. Some of the temple ceremonies in Jerusalem reminded them of these things.

During the Feast of Tabernacles, the people also celebrated that the work of that year was done. All their crops had been harvested, and they could see how much God had blessed them that year. Just five days before, during the Day of Atonement, they had watched as the High Priest performed the wonderful ceremony of cleansing the Sanctuary of the sins of the people of that year. For a whole week, the Israelites had many things to thank God for, and many reasons to praise Him. They gladly shared their food with anyone who needed it, so that not even the poorest people went hungry during Tabernacles. We can do the same. We can look back and remember all the care, love and blessings that God has given us this year, and praise Him, too.

Activity:

Have each child make a "blessing mobile". They should color the pictures on page 48, glue them on card stock, and tie each picture onto a hanger. They can hang it up in their homes as a reminder of how much God blessed the Israelites then, and how much He blesses us today.

The Ark Rests on Mount Ararat

Materials needed: Illustrations of the story of the flood. Illustration of the second coming of Jesus. Copies of pages 49 and 50 for each child (page 50 preferably printed onto blue cardstock paper). Card paper (optional, for the ark).

Genesis 6-9:17

Patriarchs and Prophets chapters 7- 8

Memory Verse: I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. (Psalm 91:2)

When God made the world, it was perfect. Adam and Eve were surrounded by beauty, love, and kindness. None of the animals hurt them or each other, and the weather was always pleasant. There was perfect harmony, peace and happiness.

Sadly, Adam and Eve sinned by trusting the words of the serpent instead of trusting God's words. After their fall, their children, and their children's children, became more wicked and more sinful, until the world was full of sin.

The more people sinned, the more they asked God to stay away from them. But if God withdrew from them, He would no longer be able to protect them, and that would be terrible! God wanted to give people a chance to be safe. He spoke to Noah. Noah loved God and obeyed His laws. "Noah, because of all the sin in the world, there's going to be a flood. Water will fall from the sky and cover the earth. I want you to build a large ark so that you, your family, the animals, and all the people who want to be saved, can be saved. I want you to tell people about this," God instructed Noah. He told Noah exactly how to make the ark.

It took Noah 120 years to build this ark, with the help of many people. During this time, his three sons were born, grew up, and got married. All this time, he told the people what he was doing and why. Sadly, the people didn't take his message seriously. They all laughed at him. They didn't believe his story, because before the flood, it had never rained. They thought it was silly to make a huge boat on a valley, away from any rivers.

Then the day came when the ark was finished. The animals started arriving, some in twos, and some in sevens. They all walked towards the ark in a line, in perfect order. Unseen angels were guiding them towards the ark. Even after seeing the line of animals, the people still continued to not believe Noah. Only Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their three wives believed God and entered the ark. The hand of God closed the door. Eight days later, the terrible rains started, and the whole world became completely covered in water. It was evidence of nature's response to all the evil, cruelty and sin that people had brought into the earth.

For forty days, the storm was terrible and strong. The ark rocked to and fro, and holy angels helped to protect it, or the waters and winds would have completely destroyed it. For five

months, the ark was tossed about. While it was difficult for those in the ark, they knew that God had brought them there and that He would protect them.

The rains finally stopped, and the waters went down a little. On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the ark rested on some still waters between the mountains of Ararat. God had preserved these mountains, and the ark floated gently in this spot, giving rest to the people and animals in the ark.

It's interesting that the Bible mentions the date in which the ark rested on the waters. The seventeenth day of the seventh month is the time of Tabernacles. Centuries later, the Israelites would celebrate how God had protected them in the desert and lived among them, while they lived in tents. God has always been with His people, protecting and providing for them, long before and even after the time of the desert. He chose this special time to give rest and protection to Noah and his family. Just like the Israelites didn't have their own homes and had to live in makeshift tents all those years, Noah and his family didn't have their own homes, either. They had to live in a boat that they couldn't even steer. And God's presence comforted and protected them.

Noah and his family still spent a few more months in the ark until the waters finally dried up and they and the animals were able to go out on dry land. All this time, God provided them with food, water, protection and health, just like He did with the Israelites in the desert. When they got out of the ark, God didn't just keep on caring for them; He also gave them a promise, a rainbow, so that every time they saw a rainbow, they would remember how much God loved them and cared for them.

The story of Noah gives us assurance that just like Noah had to prepare an ark and warn people about the coming flood, we should now be asking Jesus to prepare our characters for heaven, and letting people know that Jesus is coming soon. It won't always be easy for those of us who love God to follow Him, but He will always be with us. Just like He gave Noah everything he needed during the flood, God will supply all our needs, too. Also, just like God gave Noah a new home, He will give us new homes, too. We simply need to trust Him and ask Him to help us to be ready when Jesus comes.

Activity:

1. Have each child color the pictures of the ark and the mountaintops (remind them that the mountains were still under water, so they can color them partly blue). Color the water on page 50 if necessary.
2. Glue ark and mountains onto cardstock, then cut (this step is optional)
3. Use scotch tape to tape the bottoms of the mountains on the water.
4. Place the ark behind the mountains (don't glue it; keep it loose). Remind the children that until the ark found this spot between the mountains, it was rocking continually, but now it was finally at rest in this calm spot.

King Solomon Dedicates the Temple

Materials needed: illustrations for this story. A copy of page 51 for each child.

Prophets and Kings chapter 2

2 Chronicles 5 – 7

1 Kings 8-9

Memory Verse: I will abide in thy tabernacle forever; I will trust in the covert of thy wings.
(Psalm 61:4)

King Solomon had been building the Temple for seven years. He had bought the best and most costly materials, and the workmen had been so skilled that they had cut up the wood and stones away from the temple site. He wanted the place of the temple to be silent and reverent, even while the workmen were building it. No axes or hammers were heard at the temple. Now it was finally finished, and it was the most beautiful temple the people had ever seen or built. So that the people could go there to worship, it was time to dedicate it to God.

Solomon chose to dedicate the temple during the seventh month that year, when the people came from all over the country to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. This was the time when the people had finished all their work in the fields for the year, and were ready to rest, celebrate and worship.

The Israelites, as well as leaders from many other countries, came to the temple for its dedication. It was a very special ceremony, full of splendor.

First, they brought in the ark of the covenant, as well as the other furnishings from the Tabernacle tent, which had been their place of worship until then. For this ceremony, Solomon offered many animal sacrifices, and the best music was played. A large band of musicians sang and played cymbals, harps, psalteries and trumpets. With the music, they praised God and thanked Him for His goodness. As they sang, the temple was filled with a cloud, because the glory of God had filled the place. Solomon understood that God's presence was filling the temple.

In the middle of the courtyard, they had built a large platform. There Solomon stood and prayed, while the people knelt and listened. In his prayer, Solomon reminded the people that God wanted to bless them, but that in order to receive those blessings, they needed to obey His law. If they disobeyed God's law, then they would be placing themselves away from His blessing. He also reminded them that God was always willing to forgive those who are truly sorry for their sins. When Solomon ended his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the offerings they had placed on the altar, and God's glory filled the temple.

The people were reminded that the temple was a holy place, filled with God's presence, and to be reverent there. Wherever we meet with God, we need to be reverent. Solomon also reminded

them that God wasn't only in the temple, yet God was willing to meet the people in the temple that they had made for worshiping Him. The temple was not the only place in which to find God; God wants to meet with anyone who calls to Him and asks Him to guide them. Also, whenever people meet together to worship God, and whenever they are willing to love each other and learn what God's will is, He meets with them by His Spirit and blesses them.

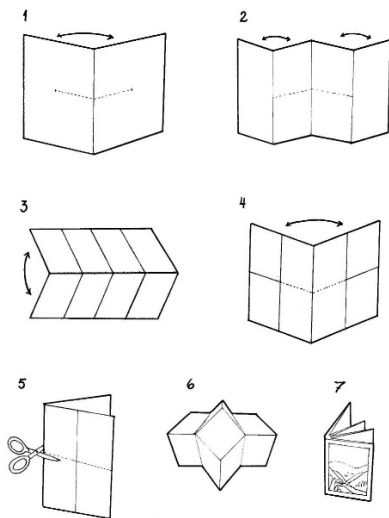
Solomon had done everything he could to encourage the people to give their hearts to God. In the night, he had a vision. In that vision, God told him, "I have heard your prayer, and I have chosen this temple for Myself, so people can come and worship in it. If the people begin to have problems, but they humble themselves and ask Me for help, I will forgive them and heal them. This temple is holy." God also said to Solomon, "If you follow Me like your father David did, and obey Me, then Israel will always have a king from your family."

After this beautiful message from God, Solomon lived the best part of his life. As long as he obeyed God, the kings from many countries came to him for advice and to learn about God and about how he could manage such a wonderful kingdom.

The Feast of Tabernacles that year was a joyful one. The people were thankful that God had been willing to bring His presence to the newly made temple. Most of all, God wants to bring His Spirit to each of our hearts, to teach us His will, and to bless us. God wants to "tabernacle" in our hearts, and this is the most peaceful and joyful experience of all.

Activity:

Have each child color the pictures on page 51, then cut up the paper to make a booklet. Use the following instructions:



The Return of the Exiles

Materials needed: illustrations for this story. A scroll. For each child: cardstock paper, copies of pages 52 and 53, and a brad pin.

Prophets and Kings chapter pages 551 - 563

Ezra 1, 3:1-7

Memory Verse: Seek the Lord, and his strength: seek his face evermore. (Psalm 105:4)

Most of the kings after King Solomon did not love or even obey God. Because of this, the people began to forget God's Law, and they began to worship idols. God sent prophet after prophet to warn the people of the danger they were putting themselves in, but most of these warnings were ignored. Finally, God had to allow the people to have what they wanted. They wanted their idols, not God. So God was forced to remove His Spirit and protection from the people, and one day the Babylonian army came and took all the people far away from their homes. The Babylonians also destroyed Jerusalem and the beautiful temple that King Solomon had built. The Israelites were now scattered all over Babylon, away from their home in Israel.

There were still some people who loved God, and who understood that all of this had happened because the people had ignored God and His law. Even during this time, God sent the people messages of comfort and hope. He gave visions to Daniel about the future. He also sent messages to Jeremiah, Nehemiah and Ezra. Those who followed God were comforted to know that their time away from Israel would not last forever; God promised that they would come back after 70 years and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple.

After several years, a new kingdom called Medo-Persia appeared. The Medo-Persian king fought against Babylon and won, and this king became the new king of the land. King Cyrus was the king of this kingdom. When he became king, he wanted the prophet Daniel to be one of his advisors. Through Daniel, King Cyrus found out that his own name, the name "King Cyrus", was in the Scriptures. The God of Heaven had written to Him more than a hundred years before his birth! Cyrus was fascinated as he read in Isaiah 44 and 45 [Suggestion: hold up a scroll and read from it]:

"Cyrus is my shepherd and will do all that I want. He will say of Jerusalem, 'Let it be built', and of the temple, 'Let its foundations be laid.'... This is what the Lord says to his anointed to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of... I will go before you and level the mountains... I will give you hidden treasures... so that you may know that I am the Lord, the God of Israel, who calls you by name... I call you by name and give you a title of honor, though you don't acknowledge me. I am the Lord, and there is no other God apart from me. I will strengthen you, even though you have not acknowledged me, so that ... people may know

that there is none beside me... I will raise up Cyrus in my righteousness. I will make all his ways straight. He will rebuild my city and set my exiles free.”

Cyrus was glad to do what God wanted. He was sure that he was now the ruler of the largest kingdom of the earth because God had placed him there. He wrote out a document with orders to allow all the Hebrews to travel to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple if they wanted to. He also encouraged the Israelites who stayed in their homes to help by giving silver, gold, animals and other things they would need. King Cyrus himself also paid for much of this, and he even returned precious cups and utensils that had been stolen from God’s temple by the Babylonians.

The Israelites rejoiced at this wonderful news. They could now go back to their homes! A large group prepared for the long trip back to Jerusalem. Their friends gave them as many gifts as they could: silver, gold, animals, and precious things. They also packed the vessels and utensils of the temple that Cyrus gave back to them. The leaders of this group were Zerubbabel (a descendant of King David) and Joshua the High Priest. It was a long trip back to Jerusalem, but the people were joyful, and they arrived safely.

When the group arrived at Jerusalem, they got together and watched as Zerubbabel and the priests built an altar right where the old altar had been. This was the first thing the Israelites did upon arriving: they worshiped God and began to keep the special worship times that God had invited them into. They had a whole city to rebuild; their homes were in ruins, there were no marketplaces, the temple was in rubble, and everything had been destroyed. Most people would have just said, “Wait, let’s build our homes first so that we have a place in which to stay, and let’s plant our fields, then we can build the temple.” Instead, they chose to build an altar and worship God before doing anything else.

It was time for the Feast of Tabernacles, and they happily celebrated this feast together. As they celebrated, they thought of how wonderful it would be when the city and the temple were rebuilt and beautiful again. They also thanked God for using King Cyrus to give them back their freedom. “We lost our freedom because we abandoned God and refused His blessings,” they thought. They were happy to be worshiping God again, and to receive His protection and blessings once more.

Just like the Israelites needed to spend time with God before doing anything else, and before even fixing up their houses, we also need God every day, before we start doing any of our activities. God is always willing to be with us and help us, but He will only do it if we allow Him to; He won’t force us to worship Him. The Israelites were able to eventually rebuild the temple and their whole city; God blessed them. In the same way, God can especially bless our day when we put Him first; we will notice that even on the busiest days, if we put God first, we will be able to get all the important things done. Let’s thank God that He loves us so much that He wants to spend time with us and help us every day!

Activity:

1. Give children copies of pages 52 and 53. Glue them onto card paper, and cut.
2. In each slot on page 53, ask children to write or draw things that they have to do every day (chores, school, play, eat, etc.). They can colour the picture on page 52, too.
3. Use a brad pin to join both circles together. Remind the children that we will always have many things to do each day, but none of those things are as important as spending time with God; meeting with God should be the most important activity of the day. Ask them to remind their parents to help them meet with God and worship Him every day.

As a further illustration, you can bring in a jar and rocks of several sizes, along with sand. Tell them the largest rock represents our time worshiping God. The smaller rocks and the sand represent the other things we need to do. What happens if we place the smaller rocks and sand inside the jar, and then try to fit in the largest rock? It won't fit! On the other hand, if we put in the largest rock first, the smaller rocks and sand will still fit. The same happens when we make time to worship God; the whole day goes smoother and better.

Rebuilding the Temple

Materials needed: Illustrations for this story. A scroll. A copy of page 54 for each child.

Prophets and Kings chapter 56

Nehemiah 7:73 - 10

Memory Verse: We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.
(Psalm 48:9)

The Israelites had worked for several years to rebuild the temple, and it was finally complete. They'd had many problems while trying to rebuild the temple, but God had been with them and had always sent help and encouragement. Now they were ready to rest and enjoy their new temple.

The people were grateful and joyful, but some were very sad. The older people could still remember the splendor of Solomon's temple before it was destroyed by the Babylonians. The newly restored temple was beautiful, but not nearly as majestic as the first temple had been. The city of Jerusalem was also not completely restored yet.

It was time for the Feast of Trumpets. The people built a large wooden platform, and Prophet Ezra stood there to speak to the people. The people gathered to worship God together. Ezra began to read God's law to the people. God had instructed the people to read the law during the Feast of Tabernacles every seven years. These people didn't know the law, because in all those years away from Israel, no one had ever taught it to them. They didn't even understand the Hebrew language so well, because many of them had married people from other countries, who spoke other languages. Ezra, the priests, and the Levites knew that the people would find it hard to understand the Scriptures, so they began to read and explain the law to them, so that they would understand it correctly.

The people listened reverently, and they understood that they had sinned and done many things wrong, and this made them very sad. Ezra kindly told them, "This feast is supposed to be full of joy. Please don't cry. Go and enjoy delicious food, share your food with those who don't have any, and be joyful. This is a holy day for our Lord. The joy of the Lord is your strength."

The people, now convinced of how unworthy and sinful they were, went home and thanked God for blessing them so much. They enjoyed the best food and shared it with others. They were happy because now they understood God's law better.

After the Feast of Trumpets, the people continued gathering to hear the law being read and explained. They did this for ten days, and then it was time to celebrate the Day of Atonement. "We are so sinful," the people said, but they also said, "How thankful we are that God loves us and forgives us!"

Then it was time for the Feast of Tabernacles. The people enjoyed celebrating this very joyful feast. They built booths out of branches. The city was full of booths on the rooftops, the yards, and even in the court of the temple.

The people said, “Now that we read the law, we understand that we went far away from God and pushed away His protective care. That’s why we ended up being taken far away from our homes. Let’s make a covenant with God and follow His commandments!”

Right after the Feast of Tabernacles, the people confessed their sins and asked God to forgive them. Their leaders encouraged them, “God has heard your prayers. Believe that He has forgiven you. Show your faith in Him by remembering His goodness towards you, and praise Him.” The prophet Nehemiah was one of the leaders who encouraged the people to come back to God and worship Him.

Then the people sang a beautiful song of praise together. After this, they wrote a document in which they promised to obey God’s law, and the priests, Levites and princes signed it. God hadn’t asked them to do this, but they wanted to do it. God simply wanted the people to hear His words and allow Him to help them and bless them. They didn’t need to promise Him anything. But He accepted their promises. The people were now eager to worship God and obey His law. The people went home feeling joyful and at peace, because God had forgiven them, loved them, and wanted to be their God.

Just like God helped the people rebuild the temple and learn how to worship Him again, He will help us to come to Him and build a relationship with Him. God will gladly come to help all those who understand how sinful they are, and who feel sorry for their sins. We can thank Him and be glad that He will never leave us, and will always be ready to help us.

Activity:

Give each child a copy of page 54. They should join the dots to finish rebuilding the temple, and color the picture. They can also draw booths on the sides of the temple, as a reminder that the people didn’t only rebuild the physical temple; they also re-learnt how to worship God and celebrated His feasts.

God With Us

Materials needed: Illustrations for this story. A copy of page 55 for each child. At least 4 craft sticks for each child; dried grass or hay or small twigs; fabric squares.

Desire of Ages chapters 1 - 6

Matthew 1:18-2:21; Luke 1:26-2:39.

Memory Verse: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

When Adam sinned, God promised him that He would send His Son to be born in this earth, and that His Son would overcome sin and help us overcome sin, too. Ever since that promise, God's people had been waiting for this special baby. Eve wondered if she would give birth to the promised baby. Noah and his wife wondered if any of their daughters-in-law would give birth to that baby. Abraham received the promise that the Messiah would be born through His family. And after that, every Hebrew woman hoped that her baby would be the promised one.

Hundreds of years passed, and the baby still hadn't come. God told the prophet Daniel when the baby would be born; He also told the prophet Micah that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

Mary was a young woman who was not yet married, but she was engaged to a man called Joseph. One day, the angel Gabriel came to her and said, "You are highly favored and blessed; the Lord is with you." Mary was a bit frightened, but the angel said to her, "Don't be afraid. You will have a baby boy, and His name will be Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of God."

Mary believed the angel's words, but she didn't understand how she could have a baby if she wasn't yet married. She asked the angel about this. The angel explained, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you; your baby will be called the Son of God." Mary believed and said, "I am the Lord's servant; let it be according to your word."

Joseph, who was engaged to Mary, was not happy to hear that she was pregnant. He thought that she had been with someone else. He planned to cancel the wedding quietly. But in the night, the angel Gabriel came to him in a dream. "Don't be afraid to marry her," he encouraged Joseph, "The baby in her is from the Holy Spirit. You will call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins. The prophets foretold that a virgin would have a baby, and His name shall be Emmanuel, which means God with us." After this dream, Joseph decided to have the wedding, because he believed the angel's words, too.

The time came for Jesus to be born. Although Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth, they had to travel to Bethlehem because the Roman government was doing a census. There were so many people in Bethlehem that day, that Mary and Joseph couldn't find a room to stay in. Finally,

someone allowed them to stay in a stable for animals, the only spot they could find to sleep in. While there, in that stable, the baby Lord Jesus was born.

There were only a few people at that time who were ready to understand who Jesus was. He could have received the most important kings, teachers and priests as visitors, but none of these men had been studying the Scriptures carefully enough, and none of them were listening to the Spirit of God in their hearts. Only some shepherds got to see Jesus on the night He was born. And a few days later, two elderly people, Simeon and Anna, knew who Jesus was when He was dedicated at the temple. A few weeks later, some wise men from faraway lands also arrived, ready to meet and worship this baby. But the rest of Israel didn't even realize that their Messiah had finally arrived to live among them as a human being.

The Bible doesn't tell us *when* exactly Baby Jesus was born, or came to tabernacle, among us. But people who study these things have added up the months, and many of them believe He might have been born at around the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. If this is so, Jesus was born in something very similar to the booths the people would build during the feast of Tabernacles; it was a stable, or simple booth, built for animals.

During the Feast of Tabernacles, the people didn't live in their houses; they lived in booths. In the same way, Jesus didn't live in a house during that Feast, either. In fact, He left His home in heaven to come to earth. And during this Feast of Tabernacles, while the people were remembering that God had been with them as they lived in tents in the desert; Jesus came to be with them completely, to be one among them. While the Israelites lived in the desert, God had given the people everything they needed. But this time, God wasn't just giving them the food, water and shelter they needed; He was giving them His begotten Son, to make sure that everything was being done for all to be saved.

Let's thank God for sending Jesus to be Emmanuel, to be God with us. Knowing that Jesus came to the earth to be among us, and that He wants to be with us, is one of the most beautiful truths we can think about during this special feast.

Activity:

1. Give each child a copy of page 55. Paste it onto card paper, and have the children color the picture.
2. Glue craft sticks or popsicle sticks to make a stable over the picture. The children can also glue straw or dry grass on the roof and on the manger, and a piece of cloth over Baby Jesus.

Remind the children that God sent Jesus as Emmanuel, God with us, to live among us.

Drink from Jesus

Materials needed: Illustrations for the story. For the craft (for each child): rocks, a tray or firm cardboard, blue plastic bags or fabric, brown paint (optional); playdough.

Desire of Ages pages 447-454

Patriarchs and Prophets pages 411-413

John 7:1-15, 37-39.

Memory Verse: In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." John 7:37

When Jesus was on earth, the priests and the people had lost sight of the deep meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles. They went through all the ceremonies, but the truths that they were supposed to learn through this feast did not change their hearts, and did not bring them closer to God.

The Israelites did not celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles until they reached Canaan. The Feast of Tabernacles was a wonderful time to remember God's care and love during those years of living in tents in the desert. Some of the temple ceremonies reminded them of these things.

One of the ceremonies that the priests performed during all seven days of the feast was to celebrate the time that water flowed from the rock in the desert. When the day was dawning, the people would hear silver trumpets sounding, and then more trumpets would answer this call, with all the glad shouts of the people from their booths.

Then the priests would go to the spring of Siloam. A whole group of Levite musicians and singers would follow them, as well as a large group of people who came to watch. One of the priests carried a special golden vessel. He would dip this vessel into the spring and fill it up with water. Then he would lift it up high while the trumpets sounded. All the while, there was joyful singing, and the people would repeat a text from the Scriptures: "With joy you shall draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isaiah 12:3). Then the priests would carry the water to the temple. While the trumpets sounded, they would say, "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem" (Psalm 122:2). They poured the water on the altar of burnt offering while the singing continued. Next to the altar there were also two basins. The priest would pour water into one basin, and wine into the other, and both the water and the wine would flow into a pipe that sent the wine and water into the Kedron Valley, toward the Dead Sea.

It was the last Feast of Tabernacles that Jesus would be here on earth. That year, Jesus hadn't been attending the feasts. He had stayed away to avoid trouble with the Pharisees and leaders. He was waiting for His Father tell Him when He should go to the feast. But the brothers of Jesus didn't understand. "Go to the feast," they urged Him, "Go, show them all the things you're doing in Galilee! Let everyone know who you are!"

The brothers and disciples of Jesus wanted Him to become king. They wanted Him to tell the people, "Look, I'm your powerful Messiah!" But instead, Jesus was saying things like, "I am the bread of life." This was not what the people wanted to hear!

Jesus answered them gently, "It's not my time yet. The world hates me, because when I'm there, they can see that they are evil. Go to the feast. I won't go yet."

People from all over Israel, and from different countries, arrived at Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles. Many people asked for Jesus. "Where is He?" they wanted to know. They had heard of His miracles. The priests were also looking for Jesus. They were hoping they would find a reason to condemn Him. Yet no one knew where Jesus was, because He had stayed in Galilee, waiting for His Father to tell Him when it was time to go up to the feast.

Jesus finally arrived at Jerusalem, quietly and all by Himself. He had traveled through a road that few used, so they wouldn't see Him. He went inside the court of the temple, where many people had gathered. The people, knowing that the priests hated Jesus, were surprised to see Him there. Everyone was suddenly quiet.

Jesus looked at the large group of people, and began to speak to them, teaching them as no one had ever done before. The people could see He understood the Scriptures very well. Day after day, until the end of the feast, Jesus taught them. The priests and leaders were unable to stop Him from teaching the people.

When the priests had performed the ceremony of the water flowing from the rock, Jesus said to the people, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink." With His words, He invited the people to understand that the feast was all about Him, and that He could really give them everything they needed to stop sinning and to be joyful.

Many people who listened to Jesus really wanted to go to Him and receive His blessings. They were tired of being sad, disappointed and unhappy with their lives. The priests only did the ceremonies, but they didn't teach the people God's message from the Scriptures. The words of Jesus gave the people hope of something better. When dry land receives water, then plants begin to grow again. In the same way, when a sinner receives the Spirit of Jesus, then he stops sinning and begins to do kind and loving things. People who have the Spirit of Jesus in them have peace, joy and strength. The Bible tells us of the fruits of the Spirit. Anyone who receives the Holy Spirit becomes like a plant that grows and gives fruit. Our fruits should be the fruits of His character: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

When Jesus said to the people "Drink of Me", He was also letting them know that He would be hit like the rock in the time of Moses, so that they would be able to receive His blessings.

Jesus asks us to drink of Him, too. He wants to comfort us and help us to stop sinning. He does this by giving us of His Spirit. In the Bible, water represents the Spirit. So, when Jesus was offering the people to drink from Him, He was telling them that He wanted to give them His Spirit, to help

them have a beautiful character like His. He offers us the same. Will you drink from Jesus, from His Spirit, today?

Activity:

Give each child (or have them collect it themselves) a rock (or several small rocks), a piece of blue plastic bag or blue fabric, and a tray or piece of cardboard.

Glue the rocks together (if you have several) onto the tray or cardboard, leaving a cleft for the plastic or fabric. Place the fabric or plastic between the rocks, to make it look like water flowing out from the cleft of the rocks. They can also paint the ground brown.

(Optional) children can make water jars out of playdough to add to their scene.

Remind the children how, in the desert, Moses had had to strike the rock only once, and the water flowed. After that, he only had to speak to the rock, and the water would flow. The rock reminds us of Jesus, and the water reminds us of His Spirit. Just like we can't live without water, we can't live without the Spirit of Jesus, either. Jesus was struck, or crucified, once, and since then, we only need to pray to Him, and He will gladly send us His Spirit. For His last Feast of Tabernacles here on earth, Jesus wanted the people to understand this. He invited everyone, even us, to drink of Him, to receive His Spirit.

Surrounded by Spies

Materials needed: Illustrations: Jesus teaching at the temple; the Pharisees and the spies. For each child: a pair of chopsticks or craft sticks, light brown fabric, felt, or card paper, a picture of Jesus.

Desire of Ages, pages 455-460

John 7:16-36, 40-53

Memory Verse: Then Jesus said to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. (John 8:31-32)

When Jesus was living here on earth as one of us, He was always blessing people. He healed the sick, brought back people to life, gave people peace and forgiveness of their sins, and taught them about the kingdom of God. Many people wanted to follow Jesus because they could see that what He did came from God. But there were others who didn't like Jesus at all. The priests, Pharisees and most leaders noticed that more and more people were listening to Jesus and following Him, and they didn't like this. They thought that if the people followed Jesus, then no one would respect them as leaders. Also, they could see that if they decided to follow Jesus, they would need to change several things in their lives. They didn't want this at all. Finally, they decided that the best thing they could do was to arrest Jesus and have Him killed, so that His teachings wouldn't bother them anymore.

It was now the last Feast of Tabernacles of Jesus' life on earth. Every day during this feast, He came to the temple to teach the people. The priests and rulers saw this as a chance to catch Jesus saying something wrong. They sent spies to watch Jesus. Jesus knew what they were trying to do, yet He was always polite to them. Whenever they asked Jesus, "Who do you think you are, teaching these things?" Jesus would politely answer, "It's not my teaching, but it's the teaching of Him who sent Me. If anyone wants to do God's will, they will know if this teaching is from God." But the leaders didn't like what Jesus was teaching; it made them feel uncomfortable. So they refuse to accept that what Jesus was teaching came from God.

Jesus taught the people how to know the truth. "If someone speaks to make himself look important, then he is not teaching God's truth. But if someone speaks in a way that helps you know God better, then he is telling the truth," said Jesus.

Jesus continued speaking. He gently answered the priests and leaders when they accused Him. Very soon, the people noticed that the priests and leaders could not argue with Jesus. The people wondered, "Do these men know that Jesus is the Messiah? He is so brave to speak to them!"

But sadly, even though it was clear that Jesus was teaching the truth, many people decided to listen to the priests instead. “He can’t be the Messiah,” they thought, “He’s too humble and poor. The Messiah is supposed to be rich and powerful!”

Jesus knew what they were thinking. He said, “You know Me and where I come from. I didn’t come from Myself, but He that sent Me is true, and you don’t know Him.”

Many people understood: Jesus was trying to tell them that He was the Son of God! The leaders wanted to arrest Jesus right then, but God protected Him. Jesus was able to keep on teaching the people every day of the feast.

On the last day of the feast, the Pharisees sent some men to arrest Jesus, but these men came back without Jesus. “Why didn’t you bring Him?” the Pharisees asked angrily. The men answered, “We have never heard a man speak like Jesus does.” Even though they had been sent to accuse and arrest Jesus, they listened to His teaching and realized that Jesus really was the Son of God, and they dared not arrest Him. This made the Pharisees even more angry. They got together and planned to arrest Jesus, but someone stopped them: Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a Pharisee who believed in Jesus. “It’s against the law to do this!” Nicodemus said. The Pharisees knew he was right, so they did not arrest Jesus that day.

God protected Jesus from the Pharisees. He allowed a few more months to pass so they would have a chance to think about the teachings of Jesus and decide whether to accept Him as the Messiah. Sadly, most of these priests and rulers did not accept Jesus, but at least God gave them every opportunity to do so.

We are given this chance, too. We can learn all the beautiful truths that Jesus taught the people during Tabernacles, and we can accept Him as our Savior, too. Will you accept Him?

Activity:

Make a scroll, like the way the Scriptures were written in the days of Jesus. Use a strip of light brown felt or paper, and glue chopsticks or craft sticks at the ends of the strip. Glue a picture of Jesus on the scroll. Remind the children that Jesus taught the people that anyone who teaches the truth will be teaching according to what the Bible says, and that they will help people to understand God and His character better.

The Light of the World

Materials needed: Pictures of festivals with lights; illustrations of the story; blindfolds (optional); for the craft: coloured card paper, glitter, coloured papers, glue.

Desire of Ages pages 460-470

John 8

Memory Verse: Then Jesus spoke unto them again, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. (John 8:12)

During the Feast of Tabernacles, which is also called the Festival of Lights, the temple was beautifully lit up with very large lampstands so that it shone more brilliantly than any other place in Jerusalem. [Show pictures of current feasts in which streets and buildings are lit in the evenings. Several Asian countries have feasts which involve lights].

The priests performed a special ceremony of lights to remember the pillar of light that had guided the Israelites during the night in the desert. The lights also represented the Messiah that the people were waiting for.

On the last day of the feast, the priests went home angry because they had not been able to arrest Jesus. As everyone went home, Jesus went up to the Mount of Olives to spend the night.

The next morning, the priests had a trap waiting for Jesus. When He arrived at the temple, the priests dragged to Him a very frightened woman. "She was breaking the seventh commandment," they told Jesus, "Moses said that people who do this should be stoned. What do you say?"

Jesus knew that this was a trap. If He told them to stone the woman, they were going to tell the Roman authorities that He was causing trouble. If He told them not to stone her, they were going to tell the people that He didn't respect God's law.

Jesus didn't say a word. Instead, He began to write on the ground. The priests moved closer to see what Jesus was writing, and then they felt ashamed. He was writing their own sins on the ground. He didn't write their names, but they knew that it was their sins. Then Jesus stood up and said, "Whoever is without sin, let him throw the first stone at her." Then He stooped down and continued writing on the ground.

The enemies of Jesus could not accuse Him of anything. Instead, they were faced with their own sins. Ashamed, but being too proud to confess, one by one they quietly left. Soon, only Jesus and the woman were left.

"Where are those who accused you? Has anyone condemned you?" Jesus asked her kindly. "No one," she said. "Neither do I condemn you," Jesus told her gently, "Go, and sin no more." The

woman was full of love and gratitude. She asked Jesus to forgive her sins, and after that, she became one of His most loyal followers.

Jesus had just helped this woman, and He longed to help all the people who were at the temple that day. He stayed in the temple and taught the people some more. The people could see the large lampstands, and they remembered how brightly these shone at night, reminding them of their hope for the Messiah. "I am the light of the world," Jesus told them, "Those who follow Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Have you ever tried to walk around in the darkness? How was it? Is it easy to know where to go when you can't see anything? Did you bump and hurt yourself in the darkness? [*Optional: you can blindfold some of the children and let them try to get from one point to another in the room, without being able to see. Tell them that living without Jesus is like going through life without being able to see. People who don't have Jesus as their Guide often end up doing things that hurt them*].

Jesus called Himself the light, because when we follow Him, we can see the truth, and not get hurt by sin. When we have light, we can see where we're going, and we won't bump or hurt ourselves. When we have Jesus, we will see our sins more clearly, and He will help us stop doing them, so that we don't get hurt by them anymore.

The Pharisees accused Jesus, "Who are you to say this of yourself?" Jesus assured them, "I do nothing of Myself. I speak the things that My Father has taught Me. The Father sent Me, and is with Me." To those who were willing to hear and believe Him, He said, "If you continue in My word, then you are My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

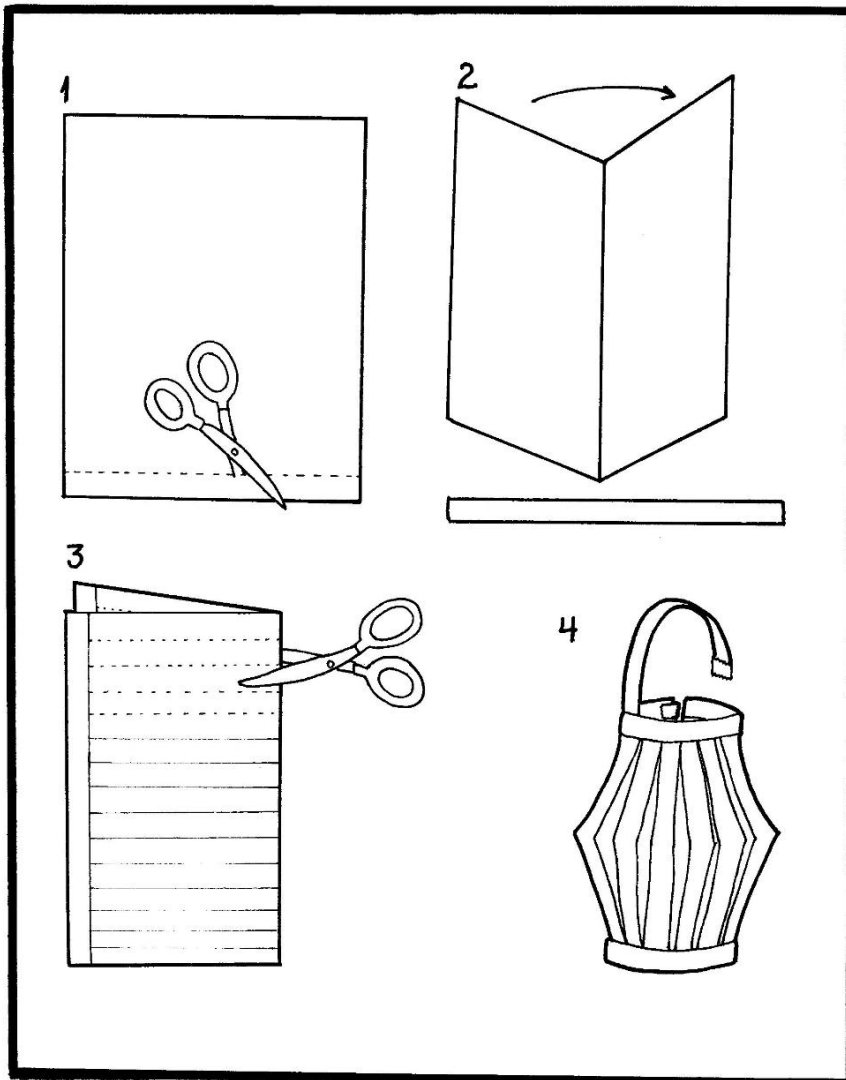
Jesus wanted to set the people free from their sins! If they followed Him, He would be able to give them freedom from sin. "It's not enough to be children of Abraham," Jesus said, "You need to believe God's word." The Pharisees thought they were so important because they came from Abraham, but they didn't believe God's word – they didn't accept Jesus as the Messiah. They knew that if they accepted the teachings of Jesus, they would to make several changes in their lives, and they weren't willing to do that! They liked their own ideas more than the words of Jesus.

The Feast of Tabernacles had ended. Jesus had been with the people, showing them that God is always loving and compassionate. He had told them that He was the water, the light and the truth – everything that people need. He invited them to come to Him. Now it was up to each person to decide whether they would follow Jesus or not. Jesus wants us to know, too, that He is the light, the one who can help us see the truth about God's character. And when we see this, we will become lights for Him, to bring others to Jesus, the true light. Let's ask God to help us get close to Jesus, the light, and to understand His truth.

Activity:

Have the children make Chinese lanterns out of coloured card paper. They can decorate it with glitter before cutting, if desired. After making it, they can glue on other coloured papers if they like. They can write "Jesus is the Light" on their lamps. Remind the children that we can only see clearly, and know how to live our lives well, if we have Jesus as our Guide.

Here are instructions for making Chinese lanterns:



God's Generosity

Materials needed: Illustrations of the sanctuary (particularly the altar of sacrifice); flour, olive oil, grape juice, unleavened bread; olives, grapes, wheat, a grinder; the chart of quantities provided in the lesson (it should be large enough for all the children to see when placed up in the front): a picture of wine, the word "joy" and "Jesus' blood", a picture of flour, the word "Jesus", a picture of oil, the word "Holy Spirit", a picture of unleavened bread, the word "Jesus". For each child: a jar or tin; papers, fabrics, markers and/or stickers to decorate with.

<p>Memory Verse: Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift. (2 Corinthians 9:15)</p>

Do you like getting presents? The Feast of Tabernacles was a time when the people could see most clearly how much God had given them. They could see all the gifts of food, water, clothing, houses, family, forgiveness and joy that God had provided to them during the year. And the biggest gift of all was knowing that God was willing to give His Son to them.

The Feast of Tabernacles was the happiest time of the year. The people looked especially forward to this particular time that God gave them to spend time together, worship God, rest from all of their labor in the fields, and enjoy good food and the beauty of the flowers and lights that adorned the city. The people had just finished their work for the year; their crops had already been harvested, and it was too soon to plant anything new; this was the perfect time for resting and enjoying friends and family. What made it extra special was that just five days before the feast, on the Day of Atonement, the people had watched the scapegoat being taken far away from them, reminding them that their sins had truly been forgiven and that God loved them.

During the year, the people saved up grain and money so that during this special feast, they would have plenty to share with anyone who needed it. During the Feast of Tabernacles, the people joyfully shared what they had with the poor and with any visitors who came to the city and needed help. It was a time for everyone to be satisfied and cheerful. Generosity was a part of this feast: the people would look back on the year and see how much God had blessed them. They would remember how God had led and protected the Israelites throughout their history, and how much He had done and was doing to save them. When people thought about God's generosity towards them, it was easy for them to be generous to others.

The offerings at the temple also reminded the Israelites of God's generosity. Every day during the morning and evening sacrifice times, the priests would offer bread and wine on the altar, as well as a lamb. The bread was made with flour and oil. During Sabbath, New Moons, and feast days, the priests offered even more bread and wine than on regular days. When did the priests offer the most bread and wine at one time? *[The numbers on the chart are rounded off; they're not exact measurements]*. The biggest amount of bread and was offered during the seventh-month feasts, especially during Tabernacles!

What does the bread mean? *[Bring unleavened bread, flour and oil to show to the children]*. The bread, or the flour, means Jesus. Jesus said, "I am the bread". The oil in the bread is the Holy Spirit, which Jesus gives us freely every day, and especially during these times.

What does the wine mean? *[Bring grape juice to show to the children]*. The wine or the pure, unfermented juice of the grape means two things. One is the blood of Jesus. Jesus gave Himself and died for us, and the wine reminds us of that. Also, wine in the Bible means joy. Whenever people had a special occasion like a wedding or a special visitor, they would drink the delicious, sweet grape juice, and enjoy it, just like we enjoy our favorite foods. Whenever people are celebrating something joyful, they eat their favorite foods and drink their favorite drinks.

The bread and wine that was offered on the altar was a reminder of how much Jesus gives of Himself to us every day, and how much joy His presence can give us. Look at how much more Jesus wants to give us during the Sabbaths, the New Moons, and the feast days! Look at the numbers during Tabernacles! *[Show the children the chart, and show them the numbers]*.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Flour (kg)</i>	<i>Oil (liters)</i>	<i>Wine (liters)</i>
Daily	4	2	2
Sabbath Day	8	4	4
New Moon	37	15	11
Unleavened Bread	266	109	78
Pentecost	37	15	13
Feast of Trumpets	64	26	279
Day of Atonement	31	15	
Feast of Tabernacles	774	317	

Jesus really wants to share with us His Spirit during this time, and He wants us to feel the joy of His presence. People who have the presence of Jesus are the happiest and most peaceful people. But we don't usually realize that when Jesus gives us His presence, it causes Him suffering, because we are so sinful. Our sins hurt Him, but He comes to us anyway because He wants to help us get victory over these sins, just like He was able to overcome the temptation to sin.

How do we get flour? We need to grind the wheat. *[If possible, grind some wheat or some other seed to show the children how we get flour]*. The seed had to be crushed, to give us this flour.

And how to we get oil? By pressing olives *[Bring olives and show the children how squeezing them can bring out some of the oil]*. The olives are pressed, or squeezed, until we get the oil.

How do we get wine? By pressing grapes. *[Bring grapes and press them to let some juice out]*.

The wheat, olives and grapes need to be pressed, or crushed, to give us the bread and wine. A similar thing happens with Jesus. He comes close to give us of His Spirit, and as He does this, He sees and feels all the sinful and terrible things that happen on this earth, and this crushes and

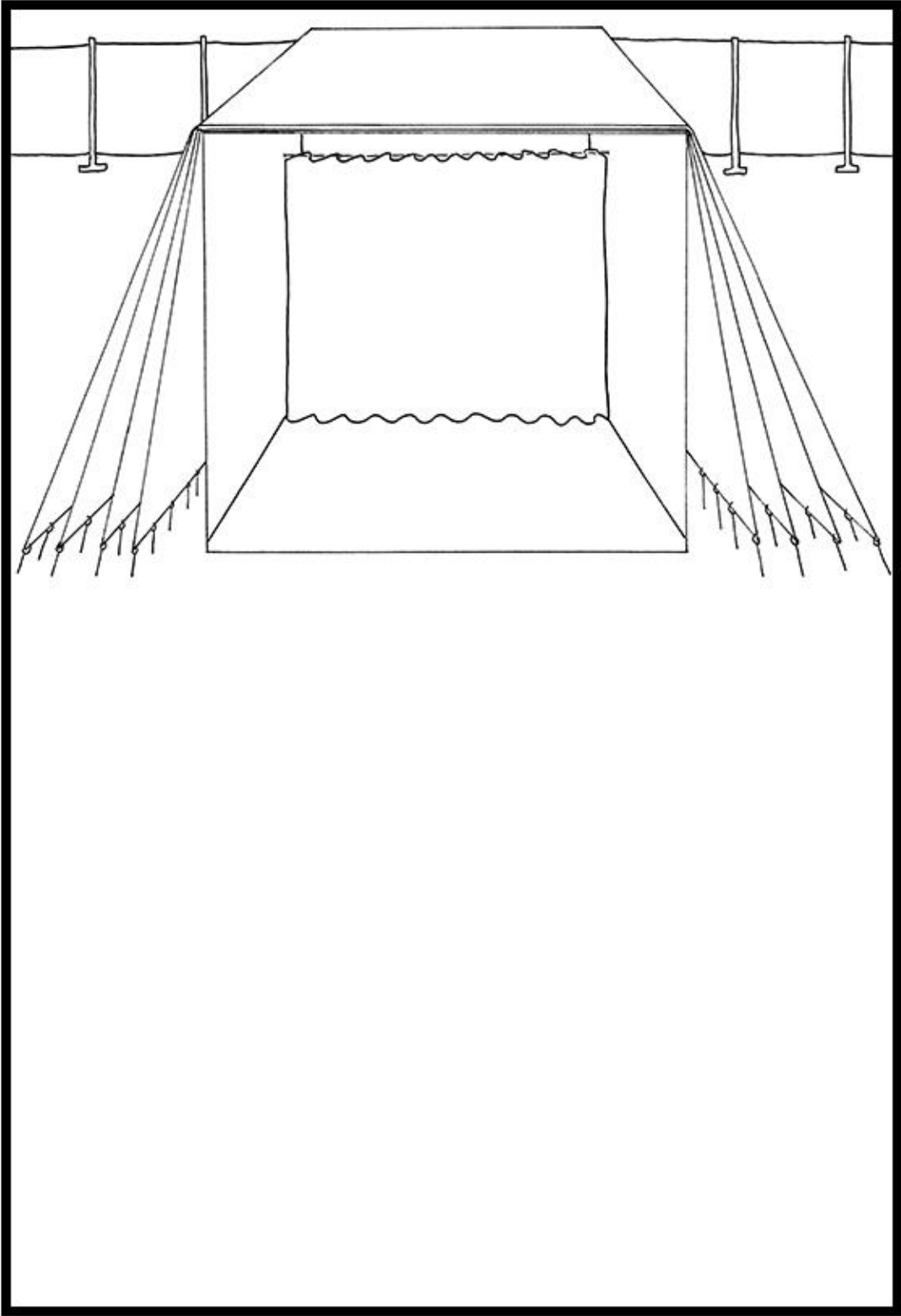
hurts Him deeply. Yet He still comes to us, because He wants us to receive His joy and His Spirit; He wants to help us overcome sin. This is how generous Jesus is.

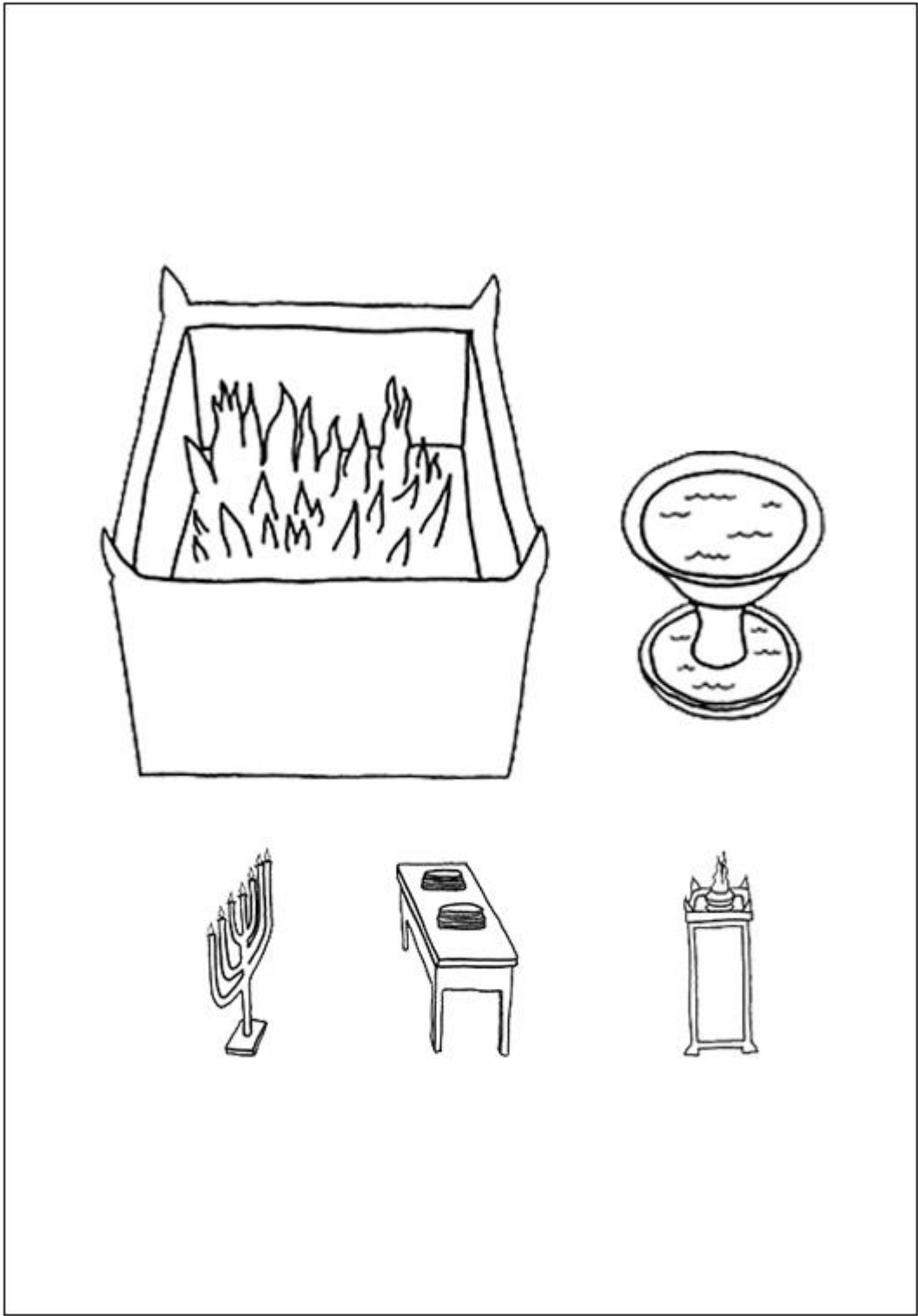
Our Father in Heaven gives us everything through Jesus. The people of Israel were reminded of this, especially during the Feast of Tabernacles. As the people saw how much God had done for them that year, and how much He loved them and forgave them, they wanted to do more for others. How comforting and joyful it must have been for the poorer families who were given all that they needed to celebrate the feast. How wonderful it must have been to spend time together with people who were so happy and generous! It makes us think of when we go to Heaven, where we will all be joyful and thankful to God for all that He and His Son have done for us.

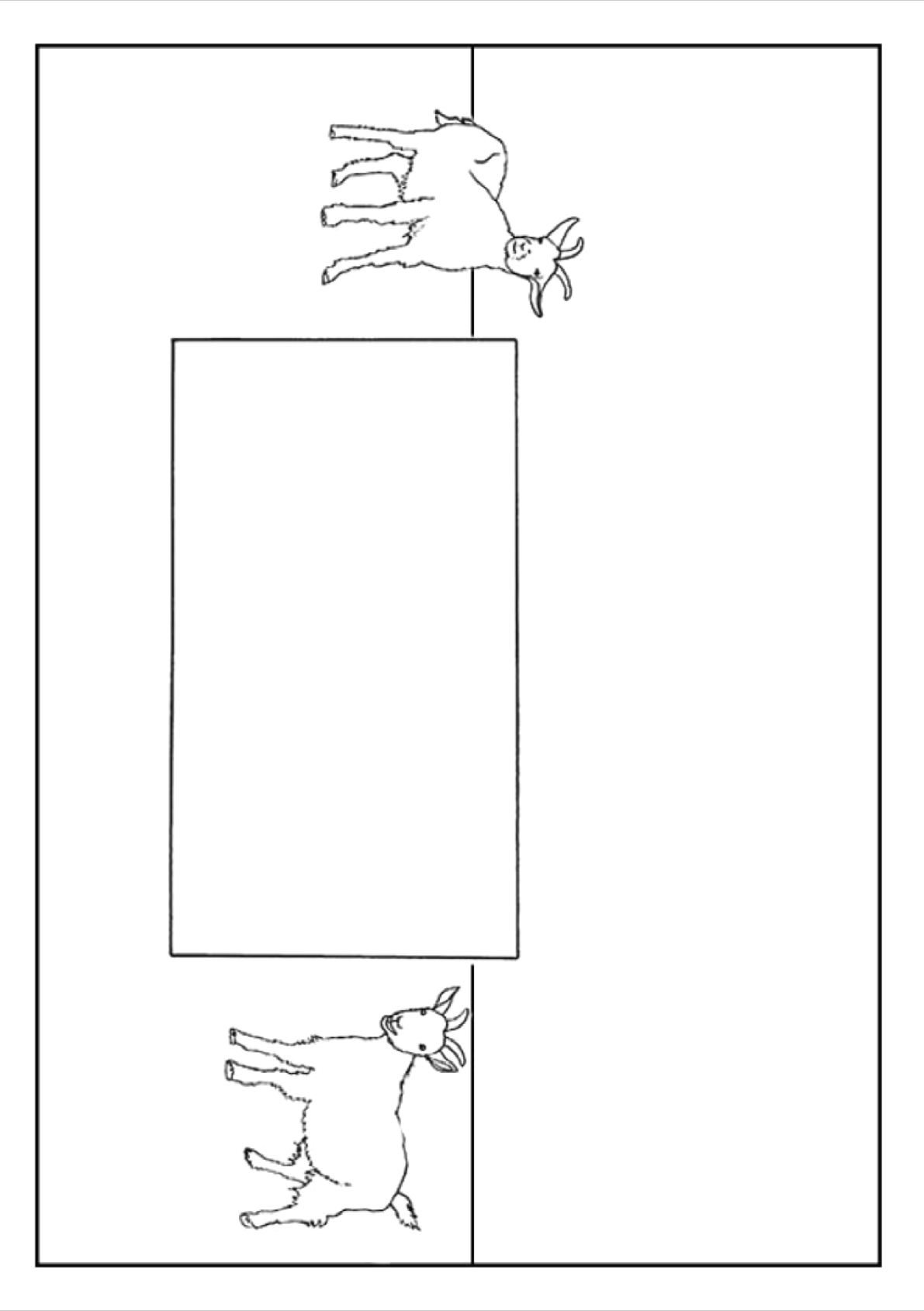
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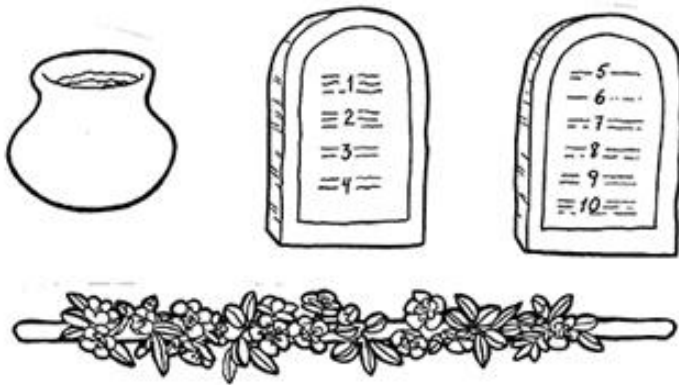
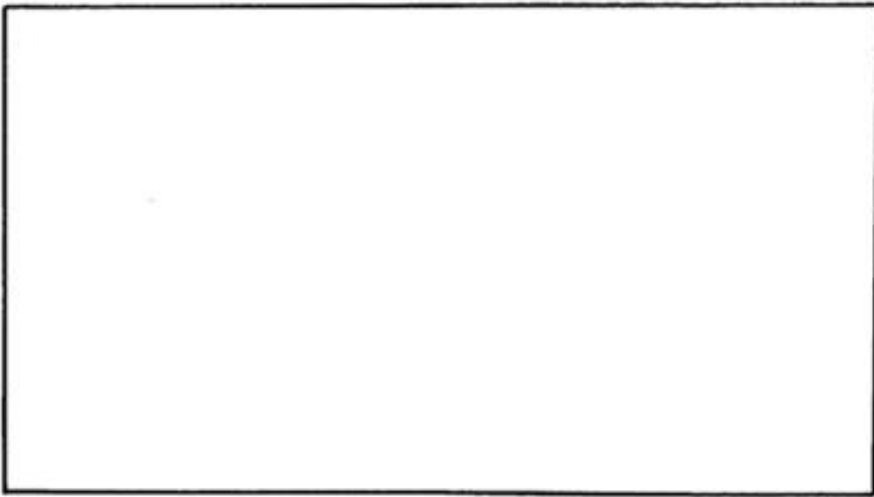
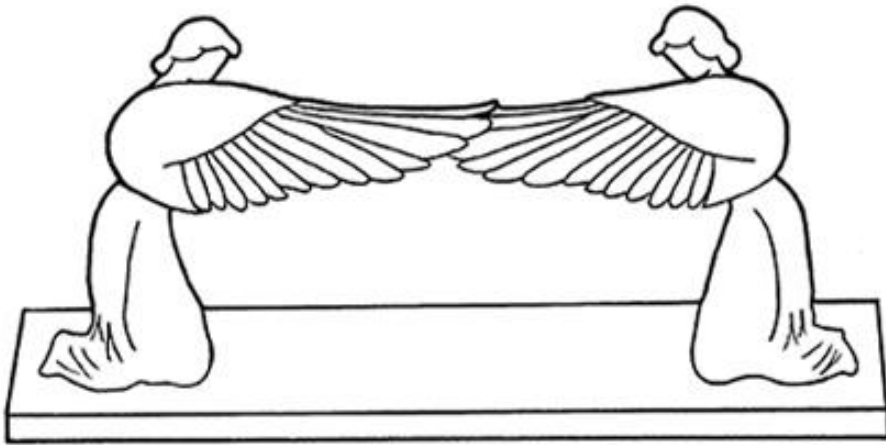
Ask the children to mention blessings they've received from God this year. Tell them that God will keep on blessing us this coming year. Even when sad things happen to us, we know that God is there with us. Tell the children to make a plan for giving to someone. Have each child decorate a jar or box in which they'll put in change during the next few weeks or months, to collect money for someone who needs it. They could write "Sharing God's Blessings" on their jar. Give children ideas for who they can collect money for, and tell them to ask their parents for ideas. Then pray over the money jars, thanking God for the many blessings He's given us, and asking Him to help us be generous with all that He gives us, and to bless this project.

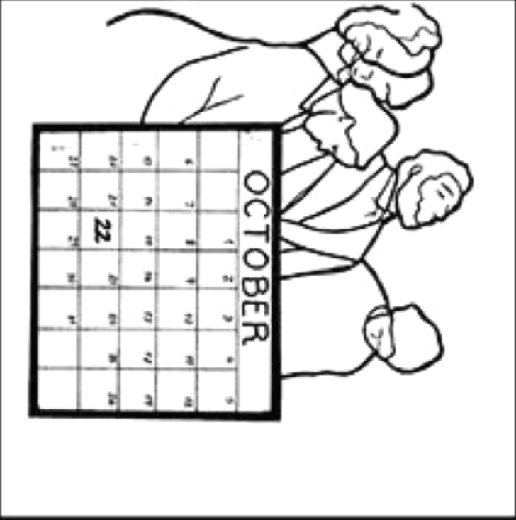
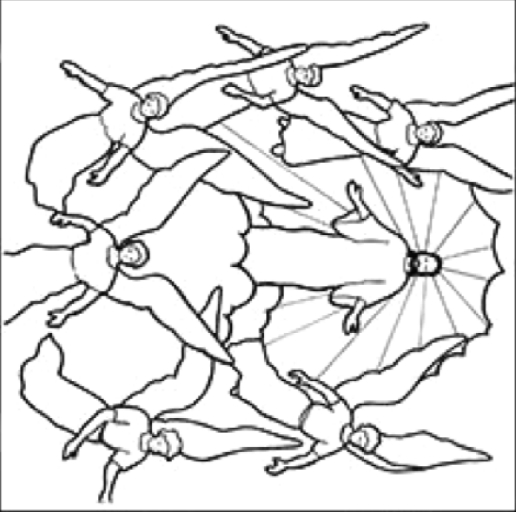
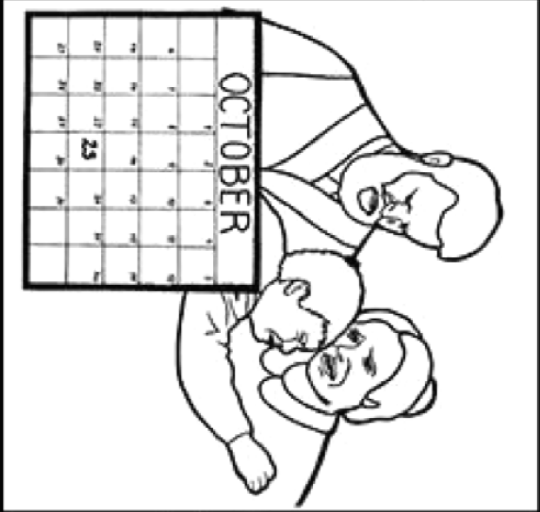
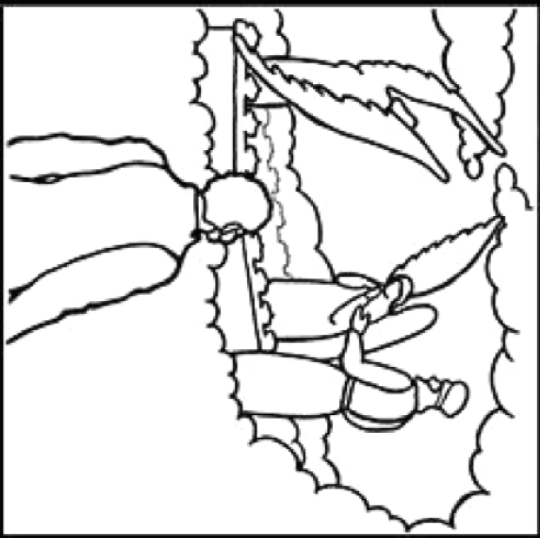
Templates and Worksheets



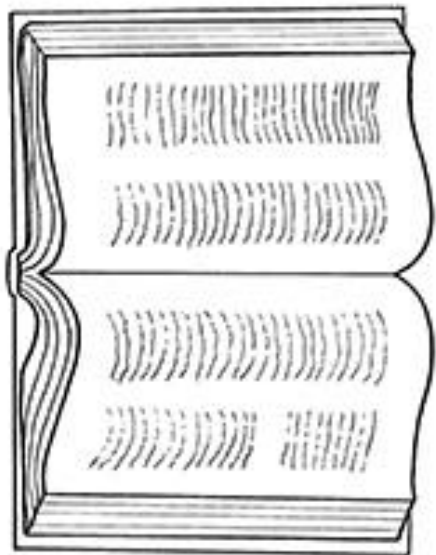


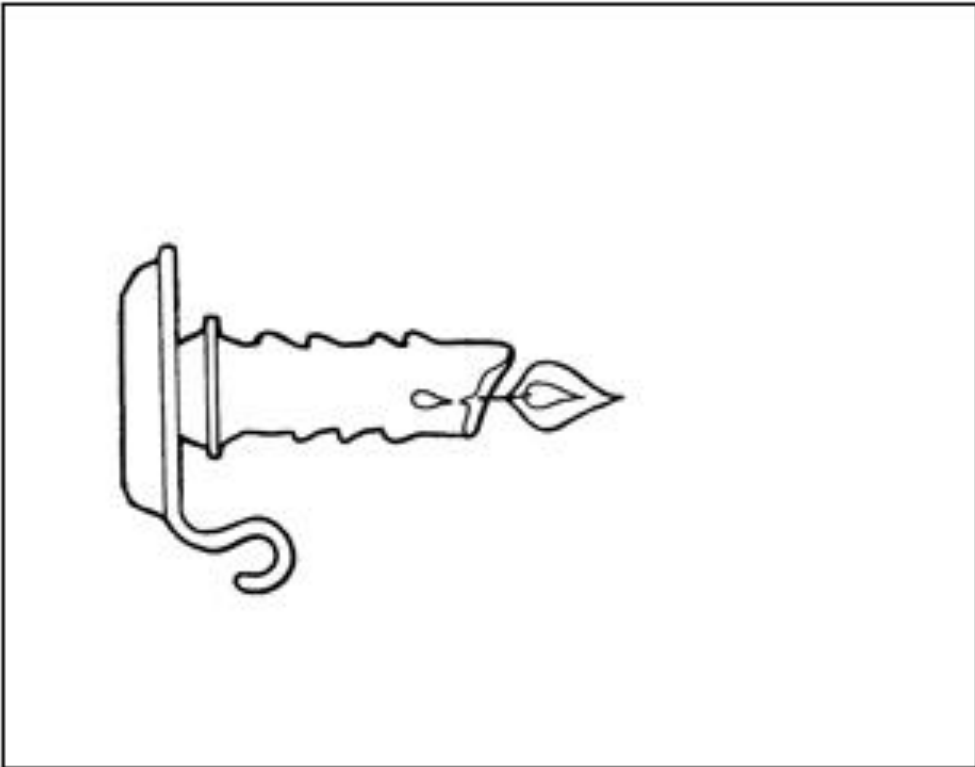
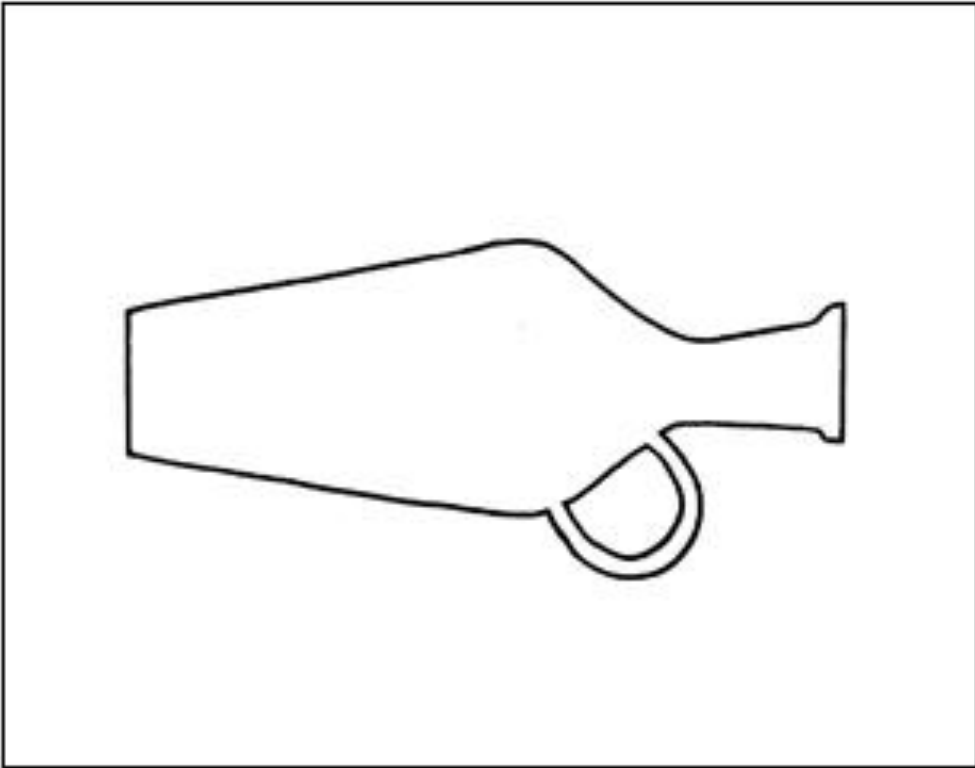


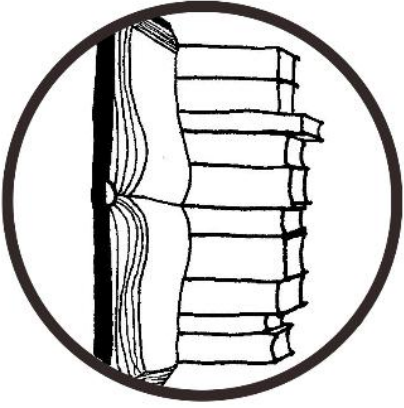
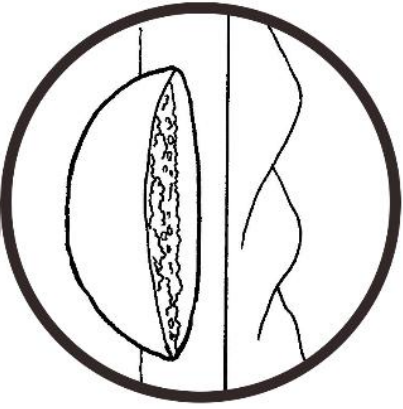
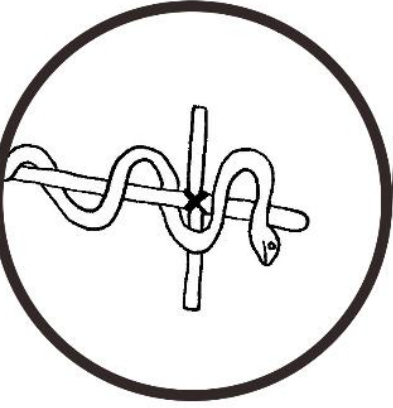
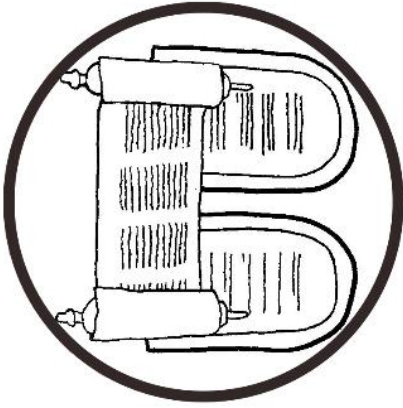
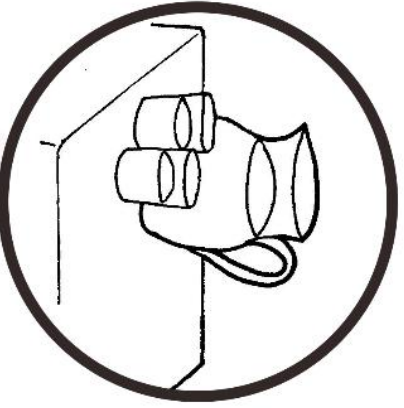
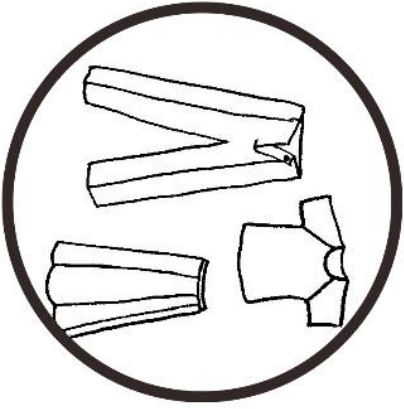
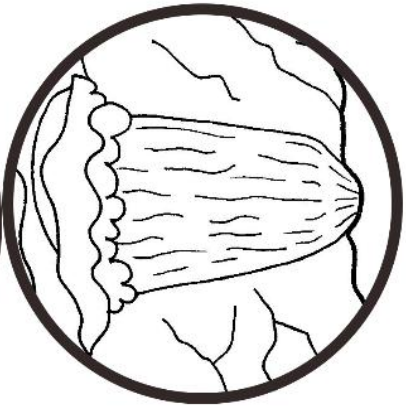
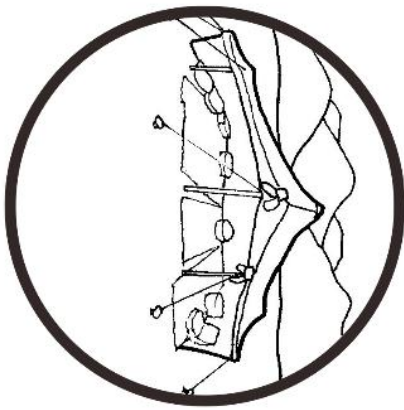
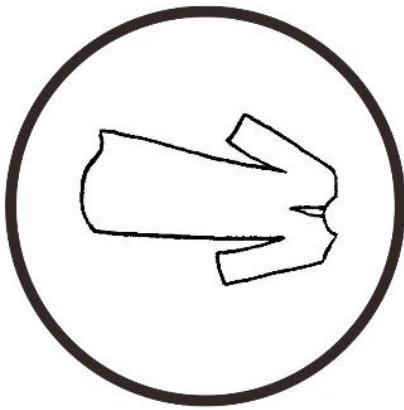


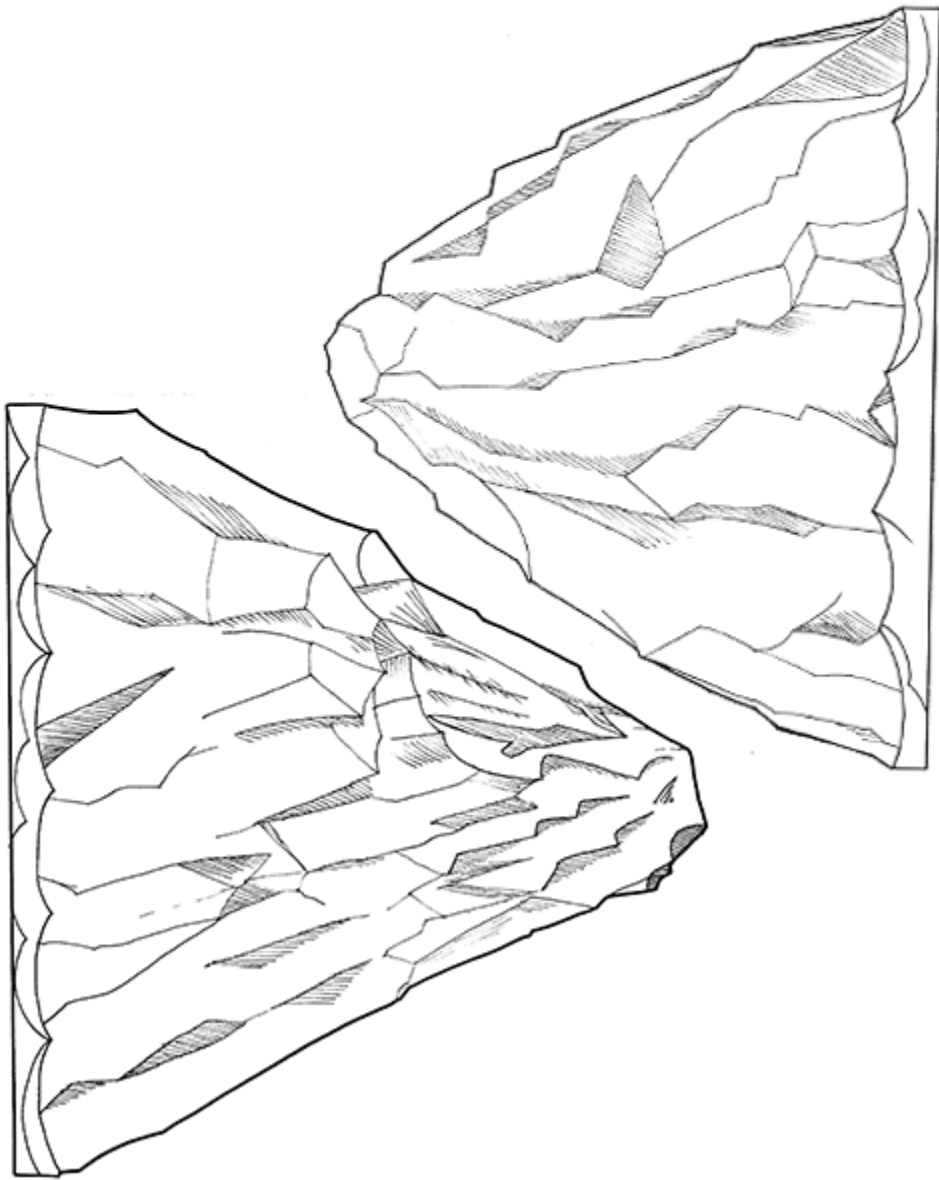
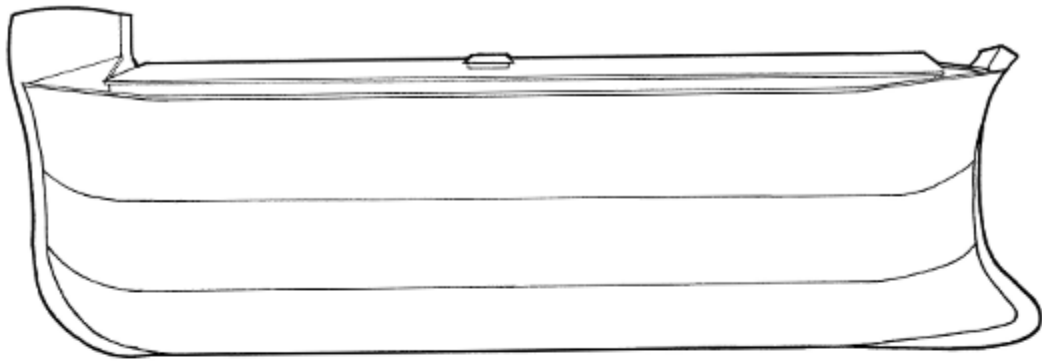


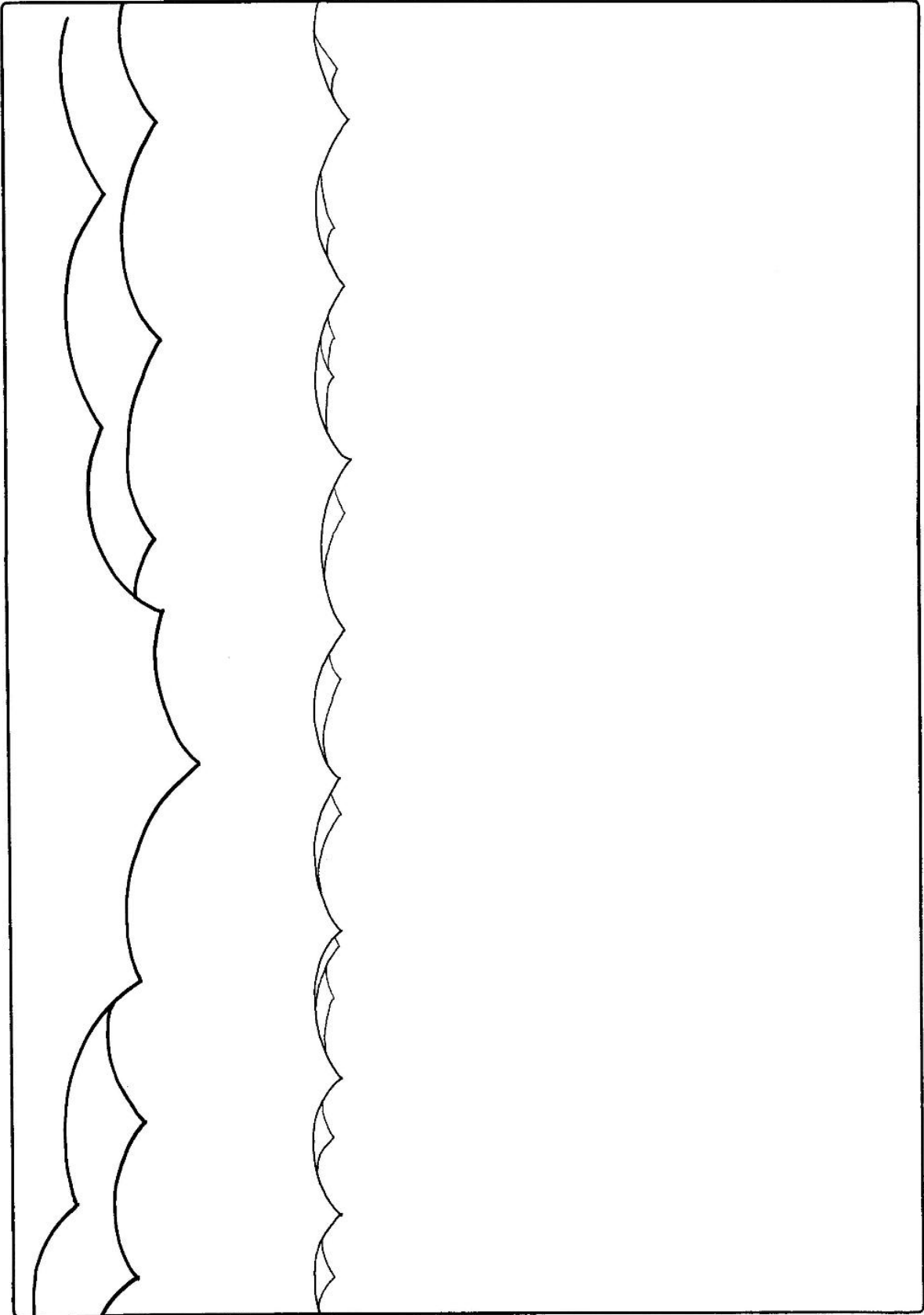
HOLY SPIRIT

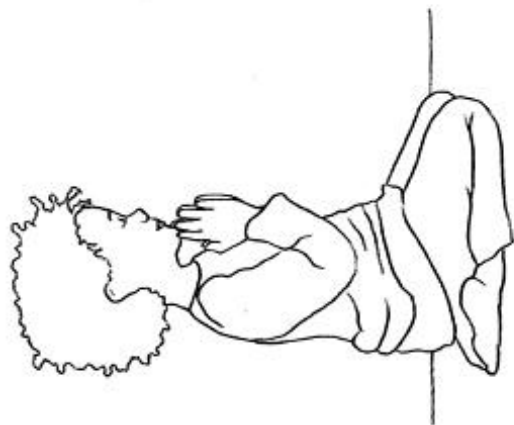
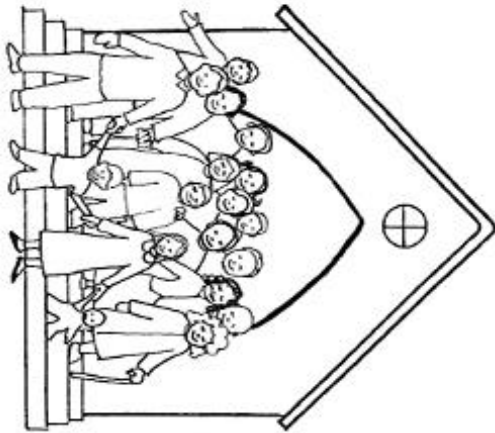












**Worship
God
First.**



