

Remember & Celebrate

FEAST OF HARVEST: CELEBRATING GOD'S ABUNDANT PROVISION

Inspire (for parents)

It has become a tradition for our family, for over 20 years and now three generations, to trek to Pumpkin City in the fall. Candidly, it's not an adventure to the country. The setting is a suburban mall parking lot bordered by hay bails where SUV-driving soccer moms corral their kids from the pony ride to the petting zoo while country music blares. We're far from the farm, but it marks the beginning of the fall season.

Our first outing with our grandchildren, who were still too young to appreciate the effort, was fun. One granddaughter was the most excited about putting wood chips on top of a pumpkin. Our two daughters, both new moms, wanted to share an important childhood experience with their kids.

The faith of the Hebrew people was passed on from generation to generation by festivals ordained by God to remind His people where they came from, who delivered them, cared for them, and blessed them. They intentionally gathered to remember and

celebrate God's faithfulness to all generations. God commanded incorporating periodic and habitual moments in the life of a family to anchor their purpose in faith.

We don't kneel and pray before the hay at Pumpkin City. We don't stack 12 pumpkins next to the river to record when God delivered His people into the Promised Land. But for our family, a short drive down the freeway to enjoy the harvest festival marks the beginning of a season when we remember and celebrate with thanksgiving our Lord's abundant blessings on our family.

☪ by Doug Webster

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This resource is designed to encourage your family to have time in God's Word **before your children attend church**. Because God's plan is for parents to be the primary spiritual nurturers of their children's faith, we know that as you grow spiritually, your children will grow spiritually as well.

Equip (for parents)

FEAST OF HARVEST

This feast, also known as the Feast of Pentecost or Weeks, corresponded with the nation's harvest season. This feast is preceded by the Festival of First Fruits, during which the barley was harvested, and ushered in the time when wheat was harvested. During this festival, the Israelites thanked God again for His provision for their physical needs. In addition, they also thanked Him for providing a way into relationship with Him. Pentecost was set in motion as a remembrance of when God gave Moses the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai. Pentecost means "50 days." These 50 days leading up to Pentecost (after Passover) were a season of gladness, abundance, and thanksgiving for God's provision.

Remind your children that everything we have comes from God.

OLD TESTAMENT SIGNIFICANCE

Several times a year, the Israelites gathered together for a feast or festival. In Leviticus 23, the Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'These are my appointed feasts ... which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies.'" These seven feasts and festivals are: Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, Festival of First Fruits, Feast of Harvest, Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles (or Booths). In addition, the Israelites would gather weekly to celebrate the Sabbath. These were times to remember what God had done for His people and to celebrate His goodness. They were times for the entire faith community to gather together without the burden of work to simply worship and celebrate. During the feasts, the Israelites ate, danced, sang, played instruments, prayed, and offered sacrifices to God.

NEW TESTAMENT SIGNIFICANCE

The Feast of Passover was fulfilled by the death of the Messiah, the Feast of Unleavened Bread was fulfilled by His sinless sacrifice, and the Festival of First Fruits was fulfilled by the resurrection of the Messiah. The Feast of Harvest began with a great harvest of three thousand souls by the coming of the promised Holy Spirit, who continues to harvest souls today. The Feast of Trumpets will announce Christ's return, the Day of Atonement will usher in His judgment of the nations, and finally, the Feast of Tabernacles begins the journey to our new home in a new heaven and new earth. ☪

Support (for parents & kids)

This week, **JUST FOR FUN**, take a few moments around the dinner table to remember and celebrate all that God has done in your family's lives. Thank Him for the many things that we often expect or take for granted, like food, clothing, and roofs over our heads. Remind your children that everything we have comes from God. Ask them to list some things they are thankful for. Then together **read Psalm 100**.

Remind your children that this week at church they will have the opportunity to remember and celebrate all that God has done with a special service set aside to worship God for His abundant provision in our lives. ☪