



Sabbath Keeping Youth

A Joyous Time of the Year!

It's that time of year again and what a great time it is, a time to rejoice and a time to be somber. Also, a time to take a good look at ourselves and see where we are in our walk with Jesus Christ. Along with examining ourselves, it is a time to celebrate Christ's victory over death, thanks be to our Heavenly Father. My question for you is, where are you in your walk with Christ? Somewhere? Nowhere? Who cares? My answer to that question is God does care where you are.

Have there been any changes in your life over this past year? Are you any closer to Christ than you were a year ago? Do the Spring Holy Days have anymore meaning to you than they did last year at this time? Do you get excited about going to church or is it something you dread and it feels like doing time in prison? Hopefully, you are excited about Passover and the Days of Unleavened
(continued on page 3)

Prayer Turns Problems Into Miracles

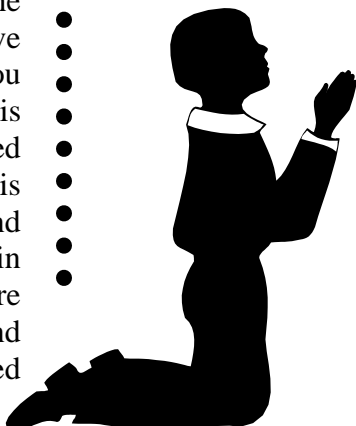
Have you ever had anything tough or bad happen to you? Maybe you've had to move to a new school, or you've had an argument with a friend, or you talked back to a parent and they didn't allow you to go to a special party.

There were two ladies in the Bible who were very upset because of something that happened in their lives. Mary and Mary Magdalene had cried lots and lots of tears over the death of someone very special to them, Jesus.

The two ladies had watched people be very cruel to Jesus. They witnessed others making fun of Him, spitting on Him, beating Him, and pressing a crown of thorns into His head. Mary and Mary Magdalene felt much pain from the death of their Savior. During their time of sorrow, the ladies must have had many thoughts of what they had learned from Jesus' life and teachings. Jesus had showed them how to pray. During the days following Jesus' death the two Mary's probably spent many hours praying.

On the third day after Jesus' death, the ladies had prepared spices to anoint Jesus' body. Imagine how shocked they were when they arrived at the tomb and it was empty. They were terrified! But in their fear, God had a plan. Jesus had risen from the dead!! He was alive!

The two Mary's had to endure some painful things, but God let them be a part of an incredible miracle. When something bad happens to you, pray and ask God for a miracle! God has a neat way of turning our problems into miracles!



The Parents Corner

Unleavened Shortbread Cookies

1 ½ C butter	1 tsp. Vanilla or lemon flavoring
¾ C sugar	3 ½ C flour
1 egg	

Mix. Roll thin and cut with cookie cutter. Bake 10-12 minutes or until light brown on bottom at 350. Sprinkle with sugar or frost.

The Passion of Christ

There has been a lot of controversy over the movie, "The Passion of Christ." Possibly this movie is more controversial than any other movie that has been made. The question that has to be asked is, do we allow our children to see this movie? It is an individual decision, but a decision that needs to be made based on all of the facts we can gather.

The major concern is the violent scenes that are filmed. The beating of Christ is graphic and detailed. It goes on for some time. It is a very emotional and, at times, a distressing movie. We, as parents, have to be aware of how this movie may impact our children.

First of all, we have to look at the age of our child and their emotional state. Some children are more emotionally stable than others no matter the age. However, the movie is rated R and we are told to be cautious of who we allow to watch this movie. Parents need to be involved with what goes on in their children's lives. This movie can have a lasting impact on anyone, along with certain images that may be traumatic. We can't always delete certain images that have been implanted into our brain.

We know, as fact, violent and traumatic experiences can change certain activities within the brain that are permanent. These traumatic experiences usually evolve from some act of violence. Children cannot handle such violent experiences as well as adults and that is simply because their brain is not fully developed. Research shows the brain is not fully developed until the age of approximately 21 years old.

We live in a society that thrives on violence. We are a violent people. The scenes may depict what Christ had to go through, but is it possible that Hollywood also loves to overplay the violence to draw the audience in and push their emotional buttons? This isn't an attack on Mel Gibson or the movie, however, my concern is parents need to be educated and made aware of the other side of the movie, especially if they are debating whether or not they should allow their children to see this movie.

There are other options. The Spring Holy Days are upon us. What a great time to share with our children the life of Jesus Christ—not just the

sacrifice, but who Christ was before the sacrifice on the cross, and after He was resurrected. The Bible is the main source and it's not too graphic to read to our children the sufferings of Jesus and why He had to suffer. It doesn't have to be bloody and gory. We have an account from eyewitnesses and their story will not have a detrimental impact on our children.

Our children need to hear the story of Jesus Christ and the sacrifice he made for them and us. We have to always remember we are talking to little people who are not emotionally mature and fully developed as most adults. Their little brains, at this precious time, cannot handle the things we can handle. We, also, have to always remember to protect their innocence. There is no need to rush them through their years of innocence.

Our family used to do some role playing as Israelites and we would take a stuffed toy lamb and act as if it was alive and we took it into our home. We then pretended as if we killed the lamb and then roasted it. We, also, showed how we would spread the blood of the lamb across the doorposts and on top of the door. Then we talked about how the firstborn were protected from death. This would lead into the story of the sacrifice of the lamb, Jesus Christ, and how we come under his blood that has been shed for us. The kids would love it.

Now that may sound goofy, or you may be thinking what's wrong with this guy. It was an effective way to teach our children and our children still remember those times. It has stayed with them after all of these years. We did other things with them too. The main purpose was to teach them about God and Jesus Christ. They were not traumatized and, yet, they learned about the sacrifice Christ made for us.

Most of us can be very creative when it comes to using tools to teach our children. We don't need to use a movie that may be too violent to teach them what Christ had to go through for us. They will listen to us if we take the time to teach them and what a better time than now. Make this Passover Season a great one for all of the family and one that will have a lasting and uplifting affect that will stay with them forever.

A Joyous Time of the Year! (*continued*)

Bread. Hopefully, this time of the year is special and has a significant meaning in your life.

We live in an ugly world. We are sojourners in this world, on our way to a better place. We're not sure what lies ahead in our physical life, but we are sure of who holds our future when the physical no longer remains. Many patriarchs understood this. You can read about them in Hebrews chapter 11. We can also read about those who grew up in the church in the same chapter.

They may not have had a church as we know today, but believers who followed God surrounded them. Isaac was one who is mentioned in Hebrews 11. Isaac was just a lad. The meaning here for lad is, "at any age from infancy to adolescence." Isaac could have easily been a teenager who was totally obedient to his father. When Isaac figured out he was the sacrifice, he didn't run or scream and holler. He didn't stop to think, "what's in it for me?" He allowed himself to be in total obedience to his physical father and his Heavenly Father.

We don't know what Isaac was feeling at the time, but we do know he didn't rebel or give Abraham a rough way to go. Apparently, he had faith in God and put his life in God's hands. Well, that was back then and today things are different. Are things that different? The world does seem crazier but God is still God and He still wants to have a relationship with you, just like He had a relationship with Isaac.

David is also mentioned in Hebrews 11. Scholars teach David was a teenager when he faced Goliath. He was approximately 15 years old when Samuel anointed him to be king. We can probably find all kinds of excuses as to why things like that don't happen today. The hard cold fact is, both of these boys were boys.

Were these boys more mature than most boys back then or even today? Maybe, and we can spend a lot of time trying to explain or justify why kids today are just so much more immature or maybe they were the exception. Is that true? Has God decided not to call any kids today because the times are different and we are not reproducing as good a product as the parents did way back when?

My belief is we all need to be more involved and not use the immaturity excuse as an escape clause so we don't have to be held accountable. It's much easier to say, "I'm not ready." What if God needs you today? Each person gets to choose and decide. So many young people have walked away from having a wonderful and blessed relationship with Christ and their Heavenly Father. They have missed out on a wonderful and joyous time. The time we spend with God is a precious time and something we can hang onto for the rest of our lives.

However, it's not always cool or the hip thing to do. It may even be embarrassing to tell people you are a Christian. We do stand out. David stood out amongst thousands and stood up for God. Some thought he was crazy and a fool. God didn't think that and He was well pleased with David. There are other stories of young men and women who decided to walk with God and we have the privilege of getting to read their stories and see what they had to go through in their physical life.

Spring is an exciting time. It's a time of rebirth, growth, beautiful colors and fresh aromas. It is also a time to take a good look at the new year ahead of us. Most importantly, it's a time to look to the Lord and come to understand the meaning of His glorious Holy Days. Jesus Christ died for you, and our Great God gave up His only begotten son for you, so you can have the opportunity to know both of them and come to see how much they truly love you. Have a joyous and bountiful Passover Season!



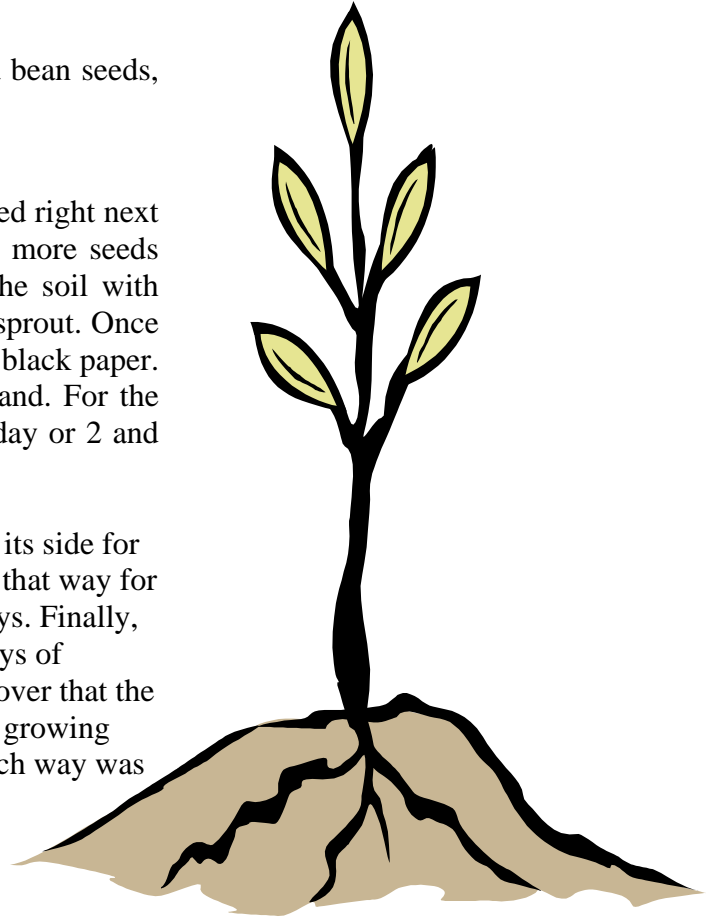
Which Way Are You Growing?

God wants you to GROW UP! He wants you to be more like Jesus and demonstrate the Fruit of the Spirit in your life everyday. Even the plants and flowers around the world know they must grow up. In the experiment below you'll see that no matter which way you turn a bean it will always grow upward. God wants you to be like this bean and grow up no matter what is going on in your life.

What you'll need: glass or plastic jar, potting soil, lima bean seeds, water, black paper, tape, plastic wrap, and a rubber band

What to do: Fill your jar with potting soil, and push a seed right next to the side of the jar where it can easily be seen. Place more seeds around the jar where they can also be seen. Moisten the soil with water, and check daily to see if the seeds have begun to sprout. Once the seeds have sprouted, cover the outside of the jar with black paper. Make a lid for the jar with plastic wrap and a rubber band. For the next 12 days, check the moisture level of the soil each day or 2 and add a little water whenever needed to keep the soil moist.

To begin the position changing experiment, lay the jar on its side for 3 days. After 3 days, turn the jar upside down and keep it that way for the next 3 days. Then lay the jar on its side again for 3 days. Finally, set the jar right side up for the last 3 days. After the 12 days of position changing, remove the black paper. You will discover that the beans kept changing their growth pattern in order to keep growing upward even though there was no light to show them which way was up.



Noni McVey
Youth Director
Church of God, International
P.O. Box 223675
Carmel, CA 93922

Sabbath Keeping Youth
