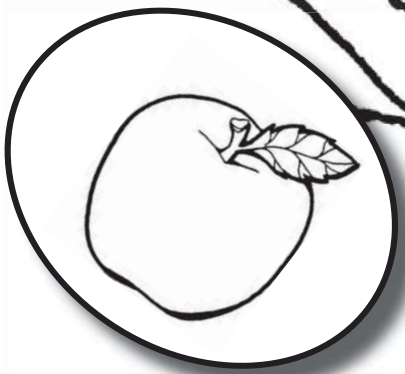
Trees



AGE
7-9

And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food;

GENESIS 2:9a

The Missionary Baptist
Vacation Bible School Literature Committee presents

Trees

Vacation Bible School Lessons for Ages 7-9
Written by Sister Susan Collins

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The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil
Adam and Eve

Lesson Text: Genesis 2:16-17
Memory Verse: Romans 3:23

This year our VBS theme is “TREES”. You might think this an unusual topic for Bible School. Read along to find out what it is all about.

Many years ago, after God made most of creation, He decided to make man. This man he called Adam which means “The Man”. God told Adam that he might freely eat of everything God created except the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which was in the middle of the garden. Why do you think God did not want Adam to eat of this tree? God told Adam that in the day he ate of this tree he would surely die.

Then God said that it was not good for man to live alone. He decided to make Adam a helper. God caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep. Then He took one of Adam’s ribs and closed the flesh around it. God performed the first surgery! He used the rib to fashion woman, which means taken out of man. Adam was so pleased with his new wife! The Bible says that they were both naked and were not ashamed. This seems strange to us but remember, Adam and his wife had no knowledge of good and evil. This was about to change, however!

One day the serpent came along. He was the most cunning of all the beasts God made. He desired to trick Adam and his wife into eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. The serpent taunted the woman, saying, “Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Adam’s wife explained that they were allowed to eat of the fruit of all the trees except the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden (tree of knowledge of good and evil). She went on to say that God told them not to eat of it, or to touch it, lest they die.

Now, God did not say they could not touch it, only that they could not eat of it. See how God’s commandment is getting all mixed up?

Then the serpent scoffed at Adam’s wife saying, “Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”

The woman looked at the tree. She saw how beautiful it was and how desirable the fruit was

if it could make her wise. Then she made a big mistake! Adam's wife trusted the serpent rather than God. She took of the fruit and ate it then gave some to Adam and he ate it also. Why do you think Adam chose to do wrong also? Have you ever gone along with something you knew was wrong?

Realizing now that they were naked, Adam and his wife began to gather fig leaves to cover themselves. When they heard God walking toward them they hid. They were so ashamed. "Where art thou?" God called out. Adam replied,"I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." God said, "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?"

Then the whole story came tumbling out. Adam blamed his wife for giving him the fruit. Eve blamed the serpent for tricking her. Then God pronounced the punishment!

The Serpent's Punishment

The serpent's punishment would be that he would be cursed more than every beast in the world. He would crawl on his belly and eat dust all of his life. The serpent would always be an enemy to mankind. God said that the woman's seed would bruise his head. He said that the serpent would bruise the heel of woman's seed. This is a reference to the fact that Jesus would have to die, but then would become victorious over Satan by His resurrection.

The Woman's Punishment

For woman's punishment, God said that He would greatly multiply her sorrow and conception. Childbirth would be painful. God also said that her desire would be for her husband and that he would rule over her.

The Man's Punishment

To Adam, God said that the ground would be cursed to him. There would be thistles and thorns, which would make the ground hard to till and raise crops.

The Bible now says that Adam called his wife Eve, meaning the "mother of all living." God then made clothes of skin for Adam and Eve and sent them out of the garden. Did they die that day? Not physically, but spiritually they died as they were separated from God. Only through trust in the coming Savior could they be redeemed to eternal life. It also meant that while their bodies did not die that day they began to age and in time would die and return to the dust. If they did not trust in God's promise of a savior before they died then they would be separated from God forever.

God did not leave them without hope, however He promised that through Eve, mankind would continue to be born and in the fullness of God's time the promised Savior would come. We know this Savior to be Jesus Christ. Come back tomorrow to learn more about him.

Questions:

1 What does the name Adam mean?

2 What does the word woman mean?

3 What was the name of the tree that God forbade them to eat from?

4 Who tempted Eve?

5 What was the serpent's punishment? Eve's punishment? Adam's punishment?

6 What hope did God give Adam and Eve?

Unscramble the following words from today's lesson:

1. nadegr _____
2. mada _____
3. onwma _____
4. trepnes _____
5. viel _____
6. itufr _____
7. elokdwegn _____
8. sejus _____
9. vasori _____
10. erte _____

The Cross
Jesus
Lesson Text: 1 Peter 2:24; Memory Verse: Acts 5:30

Yesterday's lesson ended with the hope God gave to Adam and Eve that a Savior would come through their children. That Savior is Jesus, God's only begotten son. Although our body, like Adam and Eve's must one day die a physical death, our soul can have eternal life through trust in Jesus Christ.

What does this have to do with a tree? Look at the lesson text again and you will find that Jesus was crucified on a cross which was made from a tree. He was the sacrifice for all the sins of mankind.

What is a sacrifice? It is someone or something that takes the place of the guilty party and receives the punishment for the crime. In other words, because we are sinners we deserve to die and be separated from God, but Jesus took our place. He was willing to endure the pain and the shame of the cross that we might have eternal life. For the period of time that He was on the cross, Jesus was even separated from the Father. The Bible says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

But let's go back and study the life of Jesus. He was born in a stable in Bethlehem as there was no room in any of the inns. The city was full because people had crowded in to pay their taxes by Herod's decree.

Later, Jesus was taken to Egypt to escape from King Herod who sought to kill him. Herod was afraid Jesus had been born to take his place. After the danger was passed, Jesus' mother Mary and her husband, Joseph returned to Israel settling in their hometown of Nazareth. The Bible teaches that Joseph was a carpenter. No doubt he taught Jesus carpentry skills. So you can see that Jesus' life began in a very humble way.

When He was twelve, Jesus traveled with His family to Jerusalem for the annual Passover celebration. He visited the temple there and sat down with the priests and scribes to listen to the scriptures. Jesus astounded everyone there with His knowledge and understanding. Already Jesus realized the role He was to play as the Savior!

After returning home the Bible says in Luke 2:51-52 that Jesus was obedient to Mary and Joseph, increasing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.

When Jesus was around thirty years old, He began His earthly ministry. John the Baptist had been preparing the way for Jesus, preaching, Repent! Prepare ye the way of the Lord! Jesus had John baptize Him in the Jordan River. Jesus was giving His followers the example that Christians should be baptized to represent their identity to Him and His church.

After this Jesus traveled throughout the land teaching God's word, healing the sick, and performing miracles. Soon the temple priests and leaders, the Pharisees and Sadducees, became very jealous of Jesus. They were afraid He would become more powerful than they were. But Jesus was not interested in earthly power; He was interested in spiritual matters. It was Jesus' desire that all men might have eternal life through belief in Him.

After about three years of ministry, Jesus knew it was time for Him to give His life on the cross. Jesus observed the Passover supper with His disciples. He tried to prepare them for His death, but sadly, they did not understand. They thought Jesus was going to set up an earthly kingdom just as the Pharisees feared. During this Passover supper, Jesus set up a new ordinance called the Lord's Supper which was to be observed by His church in memory of Him.

Then Jesus went with His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane. He prayed over Jerusalem, crying in anguish while the disciples slept. Although Jesus asked that He might be spared the ordeal that lay ahead, He also prayed for the Father's will to be done, not His own. Jesus knew that He was meant to die.

Then the Roman soldiers came and arrested Jesus, who went with them meekly. He first appeared before Annas, who took Him to Caiaphas, the high priest. After being questioned, Jesus was sent to Pilate who could find no fault with Him and sent Him on to Herod. King Herod and his men then mocked Jesus and put a crown of thorns on His head and a purple robe around Him.

Herod then sent Jesus back to Pilate. Since he was still reluctant to condemn Jesus, he called on the people to free him through a custom that allowed the people to pick one prisoner to go free. Pilate hoped it would be Jesus but instead the crowd cried for a common thief, Barrabas, to be freed instead. After saying that he washed his hands of the matter, Pilate then turned Jesus over to be crucified. During His crucifixion, Jesus asked the Father to forgive His accusers. He knew they did not truly understand what they were doing.

Crucifixion was the most shameful way to die at that time. It was reserved for the lowest criminal yet God's Son, Jesus, consented to die this way for all of us!

As for the tree, we don't even know what kind of wood was used to make the Cross, just that

it was used to help Jesus accomplish the task of dying for our sins. As the song says, “On a hill far away, stood an old rugged cross, the emblem of suffering and shame. And I love that old cross, where the dearest and best, for a world of lost sinners was slain.”

Later in the week we will study Jesus again when we speak of His triumphant entry into Jerusalem and His glorious resurrection!

Questions:

1 What hope does Jesus bring?

2 How was the tree used in this lesson?

3 About how old was Jesus when He began His earthly ministry?

4 Why are we to be baptized after we are saved?

DISCIPLES
EGYPT
GETHSEMANE
JERUSALEM
JESUS
JOHN
JOSEPH
MARY
NAZARETH
PASSOVER
PILATE

C N P T R Q I B S C J M M P Q
J P A P P C U E B M S E I F G
T P U Z C Y L S P O U L T G K
A A C H A P G G B F A A Q L A
W D X A I R Q E O T N S Q R D
E A T C D X E P E O A U J A C
F N S U S E J T O N R R P E H
R I A W B E S W H W M E Y A B
D D Q M J C B Y D V Y J D M K
J X T N E W U G Q T O X Z N G
O X T D A S C Z H D D P H J K
S G Y C Q M H P A S S O V E R
E K R Q M A F T J G J G D X T
P K A W J Q C X E G G Y N U M
H T M W S F M I U G S T G E O

The Ark of the Covenant
Moses
Lesson Text: Exodus 25:22; Memory Verse: 1 Samuel 4:5

Do you remember the story of Moses leading God's people across the Red Sea and how Israel crossed on dry ground but the sea swallowed Pharaoh's army?

Do you remember how God allowed them to wander for forty years in the wilderness because they were disobedient to Him? They were supposed to go into Canaan to claim the land but became too fearful when they heard there were giants there.

The whole time the Israelites traveled, God desired to be with them. He took care of them providing for their daily needs, yet in spite of this Israel complained constantly. "We need food! We need water!" they cried. "Did you bring us out here to die? We were better off as slaves in Egypt!" they said. They even persuaded Aaron, Moses' brother, to make them a golden calf to worship. This was while Moses was on Mt. Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments from God. They were afraid something had happened to him, and wondered what they would do without their leader?

Do you ever worry about anything? Perhaps a test at school or an appointment with the dentist or doctor makes you fearful. God wants you to know that He will take care of you and help you. God does not want you to be afraid of life. Jesus said we were not to be fearful because fear brings torment. This is so true! God wants you to pray to Him and leave all your cares with Him. Then you may go about your day in peace.

God wanted to reassure Israel of His presence. He led them by a cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night. In those days God's people lived in tents because they were constantly traveling. God wanted a dwelling place to symbolize His presence with Israel. The tabernacle would also be in a tent. God said it was to be made with ten curtains of finely woven linen and sewn with blue, purple, and scarlet thread. He gave specific instructions for how it was to be decorated and what was to be placed inside. (See Exodus 26)

God also instructed Moses to build an ark with acacia wood, or shittim. The Acacia was a large thorny tree with rough gnarled bark. The orange-brown wood was hard grained and it repelled insects. It grew in the desert of Sinai, southern Canaan and Egypt. *(Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary)*

This ark was to be two and one-half cubits long, one and one-half cubits wide and one and one-half cubits high. It was to be overlaid inside and out with pure gold and with a mold of gold all around it. God told Moses to cast four rings of gold and put them on the four corners. Then poles from the acacia wood were to be made to be put into the rings as a means of carrying the ark. These poles were always to be in the rings and never taken out. God instructed Israel that if any man touched the Ark he would die, so you see how important it was to always have the poles in the rings!

The ark was called the Ark of the Covenant because of the covenant God had made with Israel to be their God and take care of them. In return, they were to be obedient to Him. The Ark of the Covenant symbolized God's presence with Israel. When the Ark was with them, the people knew that God was there, too!

The stones that had the Ten Commandments written on them were placed inside the Ark. The Israelites also placed Aaron's rod that budded and the gold pot of manna inside.

Finally, God instructed Moses to build a mercy seat. This seat was to be made of pure gold. It was to be two and one-half cubits long and one and one-half cubits wide. It would completely cover the Ark. On the mercy seat, two cherubim, also made of gold, were to be built all in one piece with the mercy seat. These cherubim were to face each other with their wings stretched out above the mercy seat. God said He would meet Israel there, above the cherubim.

When the Ark was finished, God instructed Moses to place it inside the tabernacle tent. There was to be a veil across the back of the tent and behind this veil, or curtain, the Ark of the Covenant was to be placed. Only the high priest was allowed to go behind the curtain.

In those days the high priest would offer a sacrifice, or burnt offering, to God as atonement for Israel. When Jesus died on the cross, He became the ultimate sacrifice for our sins. No longer was there any need for the priest to stand between the people and God. In fact, Luke 23:44 records that as Jesus was on the cross, darkness came across the earth from the 6th hour to the 9th. The sun was darkened and the veil of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus cried out, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Then He died. Now Jesus is in heaven sitting on the right hand of the Father. He is now our mediator, or go-between.

The Ark of the Covenant is now long gone. When Israel was a nation, before the time of Christ, they were to carry the Ark of the Covenant everywhere they went. Eventually, a permanent house, or temple, was built for God, and the Ark of the Covenant was placed there. Come back tomorrow to find out what tree was used to build this temple.

QUESTIONS:

1 Why did Israel wander in the wilderness for forty years?

2 What did God want Moses to build to symbolize His presence?

3 What type of wood was used?

4 What was the mercy seat made of?

5 Why do we no longer need a priest?

Across

4 During this time, the high priest would offer a _____, or burnt offering, to God as an atonement for sin.

8 God's people were known as the _____.

10 God gave the Israelites instructions to build a _____ to hold the Ark.

Down

1 These were placed inside the Ark.

2 The children of Israel wandered here for 40 years because they were disobedient to God.

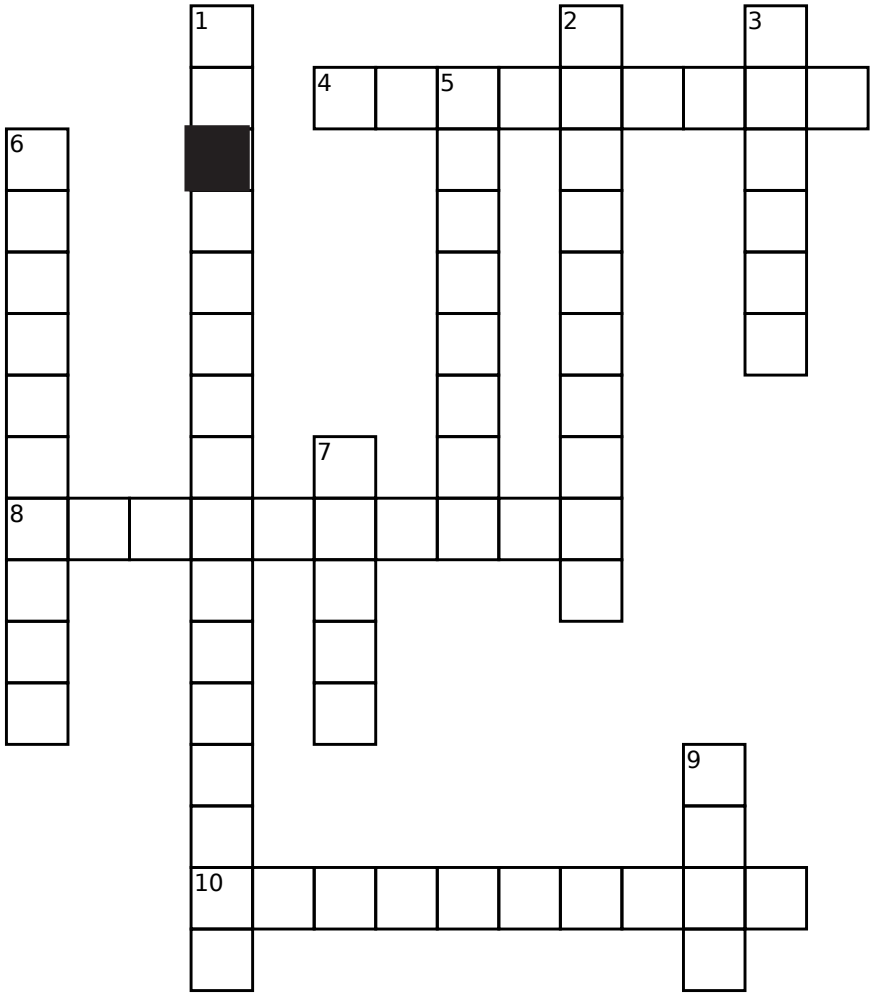
3 The Ark was made of this type of wood.

5 The Ark of the _____.

6 The Ark _____ God's presence with Israel.

7 This is what God used to lead the Israelites during the day.

9 The Ark was overlaid with this type of metal.



The Cedars of Lebanon
King Solomon Builds the Temple
Lesson Text: 1 Kings 6:7-10; Memory Verse: 1 Kings 6:9

King David wanted to build God a home, where the Ark of the Covenant could stay in one place. While the children of Israel were traveling in the wilderness, God's house had to be in a tent so they could take it with them wherever they went.

Many years had passed since God had delivered His people and guided them into the Promised Land. God had set up judges to guide Israel. When Israel cried out for a king, He gave them one.

Israel's first king was Saul, a tall strong man who looked regal. But he disobeyed God, so God appointed David in his place. David was the youngest of his brothers, a shepherd boy, but he had shown himself full of courage when he faced Goliath. Because of his faith in God, he was able to slay this giant and Israel became victorious over the Philistines. David went on to win many battles, both under Saul and then as king himself.

Israel then enjoyed a time of rest. David looked around and thought about God's blessings on him. He had a fine palace made of cedar from King Hiram of Tyre. The cedar tree, a fragrant evergreen, could grow taller than 100 feet. The circumference could be 40-50 feet around. It was rot-resistant and free from knobs making it the ideal wood for building purposes.

David wondered why he should have such a nice house while God's house was still in a tent. David sought the advice of Nathan the prophet. At first Nathan thought it was a good idea for David to build God a house, but later that night God came to Nathan in a dream. God told Nathan to give David the message that all the time he had traveled with Israel he had never asked for a house of Cedar. God basically said that he would bless David's descendants and there would always be a king from the house of David over Israel as long as they taught their sons His commandments and were obedient to Him. Then God told Nathan that it would not be David who would build Him a house but David's son. He asked Nathan to remind David where he came from and how far God had brought him, even up out of the sheepfold.

The next day Nathan went before King David and told him all that God had said. You might think David became angry but you would be wrong! David remembered all that God had done for him, and how he had been a lowly shepherd boy and God raised him up to be the king of God's people. David felt very humble that God would make a

covenant to his descendants that they would always be king as long as they followed God. David said in II Sam. 7:26, “And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee." No wonder God said that David was a man after His own heart! God knew that in spite of David’s past mistakes his heart was in the right place.

When David grew old and realized he was about to die, he called his son Solomon to him. David instructed Solomon to always follow God and to teach his children His commandments. He told Solomon of God’s promise that He would always have a king from the house of David house over Israel. Then David died.

King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to Solomon when he heard that David was dead. The Bible says that Hiram loved David. Just as Hiram had helped David build his house, now Solomon wanted Hiram to help in the building of God’s house. Hiram promised to send the cedar wood and also workers to help Solomon with the building. In return, Solomon agreed to pay Hiram’s men whatever wage Hiram asked.

So Hiram sent the wood and the workers, and the building of God’s house began. I Kings. 6:1 says, “And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon' reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.”

So once again you see how trees were used in God’s work. Come back tomorrow for the final lesson when we will read about Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

Questions:

1 Why did David want to build God a house?

2 What wood was to be used? Why?

3 What did God promise David?

4 Who did God allow to build the house?

S	O	H	E	B	N	U	I	L	T	T	H	E	H	S
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D	C	O	V	E	O	R	E	D	T	H	E	D	H	L
O	U	S	E	L	L	W	I	T	H	B	A	E	A	M
S	A	N	I	D	O	B	O	C	A	V	R	D	S	O
F	C	A	E	D	S	A	R	E	I	H	R	S	B	M
E	T	N	A	H	T	A	N	D	H	R	G	H	Q	E
H	E	L	P	M	E	T	K	A	J	N	W	I	U	R
D	B	A	Q	N	I	D	S	R	I	H	G	R	Z	R
E	K	K	H	A	B	Z	D	K	B	J	X	A	W	N
M	I	L	K	D	R	Y	R	I	J	I	M	M	L	V
Q	S	N	R	J	Y	P	D	D	N	S	U	M	R	S
M	E	I	T	Q	L	W	N	M	Q	D	F	A	H	V
O	U	Y	E	X	D	W	L	X	T	O	L	G	D	N

CEDAR	HIRAM	NATHAN	TEMPLE
DAVID	ISRAEL	SAUL	
GOLIATH	KINGS	SOLOMON	

Put the left over letters from the puzzle in the spaces below to get a special message:

__ __   __ __   __ __ __ __ __   __ __ __   __ __ __ __ __,

__ __ __   __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __   __ __   __ __ __

__ __ __ __ __ __ __   __ __ __   __ __ __ __ __   __ __ __ __

__ __ __ __ __   __ __ __   __ __ __ __ __ __   __ __

__ __ __ __ __ .

The Palm
Jesus
Lesson Text: Revelation 7:9-10; Memory Verse: John 12:12-13

It seems only right for our last Bible School lesson to return to Jesus and study more about Him.

As we learned in a previous lesson, Jesus tried to prepare His disciples for His death. Jesus wanted to meet with them one last time before He died. It was the time of the Hebrew Passover celebration. Remember, the Passover commemorated the time that the death angel “passed over” the houses of the children of Israel who had the blood over their doors and allowed them to escape with Moses from Egypt. Jesus desired to institute a new and final commemoration. This was to be called the Lord’s Supper and represent the sacrifice Jesus was going to make-dying for the sins of the world.

The disciples did not yet understand that Jesus had to die. They still hoped He would set up an earthly kingdom that would free Israel of her enemies. The disciples knew that the Pharisees and Sadducees sought to kill Jesus. They were concerned about Him traveling to Jerusalem but loved Jesus so much they were willing to go with Him.

As the time of the Passover drew near, Jesus, along with His disciples, traveled to Bethany, a short distance from Jerusalem. Jesus visited the home of His dear friends Mary, Martha and Lazarus. While Martha served the food, Lazarus sat at the table with Jesus, and Mary took a pound of expensive oil and anointed Jesus feet wiping them with her hair. When Judas criticized Mary for spending so much money on the oil instead of giving it to the poor, Jesus told him, “Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.” Jesus was once again preparing His disciples for his death. Since Jesus had raised Lazarus form the dead, the Pharisees had become even more vigilant against him. They knew many people had observed this miracle and believed Jesus was indeed the Son of God. In fact, many people followed Jesus to Bethany at this time to see Lazarus and to find out if the stories were true. Perhaps Mary knew that Jesus was about to die and wanted to show Jesus she loved Him.

The next day a crowd had gathered in Jerusalem to observe the Passover feast. When they heard Jesus was coming, they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him. The crowd cried, "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." (John 12:12)

The palm tree, also called the date palm, grew in that part of the world to a height of 60-100 feet and had branches 6-8 feet long. It lived to be 100-200 years old. Palm branches were considered to be a sign of victory, so when the people waved palm branches before Jesus as He rode into Jerusalem, they were symbolizing His triumphant entry.

Later, when Jesus was crucified on the cross, this triumphant entry seemed a failure to many. He died alone with only a few followers around Him. The crowd who shortly before had greeted Him with palm branches was all dispersed and even Jesus' disciples were scattered, confused, and afraid.

But all that changed on the third day after His death as Jesus rose from the grave triumphant! How thrilled His disciples were when He appeared to them alive, walking and talking with them! Jesus spent forty days with His disciples, giving them instructions for the future and promising them a comforter, the Holy Spirit, who would live in their hearts.

Jesus set up His church while He was on earth and told His followers to travel everywhere preaching and teaching the gospel, or good news. This has been called the Great Commission. Jesus did not just die for them but for all the world, and it was His desire that all men everywhere would know Him.

Then Jesus ascended into heaven to sit at the Father's right hand. There he remains until He returns to claim those who have trusted in His name.

As Revelation 7:9-10, says, "After this I (John) beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

In the end, when the world passes away, Jesus will have His final triumph as all the saved by His grace stand before Him in worship.

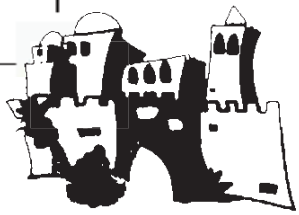
Questions:

1 Why were the disciples concerned about Jesus traveling to Jerusalem?

2 Whose house did He visit in Bethany?

3 What event caused the people to believe He was the Son of God?

4 What type of branches did the people wave before Jesus as He entered Jerusalem?

5 What did the branches symbolize?

6 When will Jesus have His final triumph?