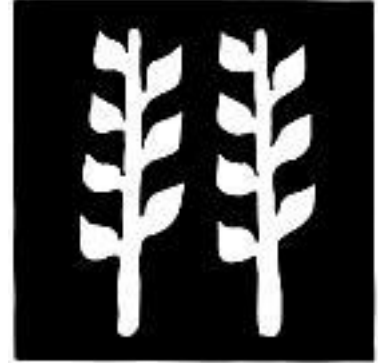


# Year 6

## God is a Provider 5 Weeks



### Outcomes

At the completion of this module students will understand that:

- God provides and cares for us as a loving Father.
- God is happy when we thank Him for the things He has provided.
- God not only provides food, water and shelter, but also protection and deliverance.
- God instructed the Jews to celebrate God's provision in the form of festivals.
- Celebrations are a way of remembering what God has done for us.

### Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Plants, crop farming, soil, earthworms

### Link between "God is Provider" and classroom topics:

God provides for our needs through His creation.

### Values:

faith; care for the environment; peace; generosity, thankfulness

### Biography:

Antonina and Jan Zabinski

# God is Provider

## Week 1

### God provides an escape

#### Bible references

Leviticus 23 List of annual feasts that the Jews were instructed to celebrate

Exodus 12 The reason for the Passover feast and the festival of unleavened bread

Luke 22:14-20 The Lord's Supper

The Israelites were called together to celebrate annual feasts. Seven of these are listed in Leviticus 23. During these events, the people stopped all work and devoted themselves totally to the celebration. They shared a meal together, with some parts of the meal reserved for the priests and the rest given to those who gathered at the temple or the altar for worship. The feasts were joyous times with thanksgiving and worship. The purpose was to help the people remember events when God had delivered the nation, and to encourage them to focus on God's continuing faithfulness to them as a nation and as individuals.

### Two celebrations of deliverance:

#### 1. The Passover

##### Bible references:

Exodus 12

Leviticus 23:5

##### Passover overview:

**Hebrew name:** Pesach (Pronounced *Pey-sach*)

**What's it about?** Passover celebrates God setting the Israelites free from slavery in Egypt. It refers to Exodus 12:23, when God passed over the Israelites. The holiday lasts eight days.

**Activities:** A big holiday meal called a seder where they retell the story of the Exodus from Egypt.

**Foods:** Traditionally, Jews eat no bread with yeast but only leavened bread, (flat bread), called Matsah. At the seder meal, lamb is eaten because of the lamb that was killed and the blood that was placed on the door posts. The meal also includes eggs, bitter herbs, sweet herbs, salt water.

##### Go deeper

On one never-to-be-forgotten night God passed through Egypt, and the oldest child of every household had died – all except those in the houses of the Israelites who had obeyed God's instructions by applying the blood of a lamb to the door. God had said, "When I see the blood I will pass over you and will not harm you when I punish the Egyptians for their cruelty to the Israelites.

Pharaoh now knew that this tragic event was the judgement of the God of the Hebrews, so he decided to release God's people from their slavery. To help Israel remember, God called

for an annual celebration: “You must celebrate this day as a religious festival to remind you of what I, the Lord, have done. Celebrate it for all time to come.” The annual celebration lasted seven days, from the 14th to the 21st day of their calendar’s first month, (March/April on our calendar depending on the cycle of the moon.)

### **Seder: The special meal.**

Best plates and glasses are used. Everything is specially polished and bright.

The table is specially set.

The meal begins at sundown.

On the seder plate there are portions of five foods to remind them of their journey to the Promised land.

- Bitter herbs – grated horseradish, (a bitter herb) which reminds them of their bitter time in Egypt.
- Lamb – symbolizing the lamb that was killed.
- A roasted egg – representing the festival offering at the Temple
- Parsley or a sweet herb for dipping in a bowl of salt water to remind them of the tears from the hardships they had, and for the crossing of the water when they escaped from Egypt.
- Charoset – a mixture of grated apple, honey, cinnamon, nuts and a dash of red wine, so it looks like the mortar used for building bricks they had to make in Egypt.

Three slices of Matzah, unleavened bread, is set out in a special bag on the table. One piece is broken in half during the story telling, wrapped in a clean napkin and hidden away.

The story of the Exodus is read out by the head of the table and discussed. Some songs are sung, and stories told. Towards the end of the story, there is a break for a special meal. It is at this time that the children go and search for the hidden piece of bread.

### **Passover Bible Study**

Ask the students to read (in pairs or in groups), Exodus 12:1-14, and 24-28, and answer together the following questions (one person in a group can report, or students can write answers in their books).

1. What community of people was preparing to escape from Egypt?
2. How were they to dress for the meal?
3. How did the festival get its name?
4. How long were they to remember the event by acting out the ritual?
5. What reasons for the event were to be told to their children

### **Jesus celebrated the Last Supper at the time of the Passover.**

Jesus was an Israelite/ Jew/ Hebrew. (These names all mean the same thing). God gave His law to the Israelites. He chose these people specially and taught them how they should live with God and with each other. We learn many lessons from the things God taught to the people of Israel.

Read Luke 22:14-19 and John 1:29

Jesus, along with all other Jews, celebrated the Passover every year. The last time He ate the Passover was just before He died. However, much to the disciples’ surprise, He gave the

ceremony a new meaning and told them God would now have a new 'covenant' or 'agreement' with his people. The wine now represented the blood, not the blood of a Passover lamb, but of Jesus, who was the Lamb of God. (Read John 1:29). The bread (which was flat like roti, not like the bread we buy from the bread shops), represented the body of Jesus.

Jesus told us to eat bread together and drink the wine together when we come to worship him. We are to keep doing this year after year until Jesus returns to earth.

Some churches allow the children to take this special food, called Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper, Mass or the Eucharist. Some churches, such as the Methodist Church, ask children to wait until they are confirmed, so they can be very sure that they are promising to enter into an agreement with God that they will love and obey Jesus all their lives.

## **2. The Festival of Unleavened Bread**

### **Bible references: Leviticus 23:6-8**

Immediately after the Passover came this second memorial feast, so the two were celebrated together. The children of Israel had left Egypt at night in a hurry. There had been no time to wait for leaven (yeast) in the dough so that their bread would rise. Therefore, for their final meal as slaves, the people had eaten 'unleavened' bread, (Exodus 12:34).

Wanting His people to remember this important aspect of deliverance, God had made it a feast, (Exodus 12:17-20)

In this celebration too, we can think of Jesus as He is the 'Bread of Life', (John 6:35). Leaven is often used in the Bible as a picture of sin. But there is no sin in Jesus. As our Bread of Life, Jesus allowed his body to be broken for us on the cross, (Matthew 26; 17, 26; I Corinthians 11:24). And once we receive him, he becomes our 'Living Bread. "The Lord gives us spiritual life and daily strength for our journey through life to heaven, (John 6:48-51), just as the unleavened bread gave the Israelites strength during their journey.

# God is Provider

## Week 2

### Giving thanks for God's provision

#### 1. The Feast of the First fruits

##### **Bible references:**

Leviticus 23:9-14 and Deut 26:1-11

Psalm 107:1 Give thanks to the Lord for He is good; His love endures forever.

Psalm 34: 10 Even young lions go hungry, but those who obey the Lord will not lack any good thing.

Malachi 3:10 Bring all your tithes into the storehouse (temple)

##### **Brief Overview**

**What's it about?** Bringing the first of the harvest to God. This was an offering to the priests. The priest would wave a sheaf of barley before the Lord as part of the ceremony. A new born male lamb, without defect, was also offered.

##### **Go Deeper**

The Israelites were instructed to give the first portion of their harvest to God.

By giving God the first fruits, the people of Israel were reminding themselves that all good things come from God and that everything belongs to God. Giving the first fruits was also a way of expressing trust in God's provision; just as He provided the first fruits, so He would provide the rest of the crops that were needed. This celebration was held on the Sunday at the end of the Passover week.

##### **What does this feast mean to Christians?**

This feast pointed ahead to the resurrection of Christ, which would occur hundreds of years later on the first day of the week. In overcoming death, Jesus became the 'first fruits' of the new everlasting life that would be given to all who believed in Him, (1 Cor. 15:23). The first sheaf was a sure sign that many more sheaves would soon be harvested. In the same way, Christ's resurrection is the guarantee that all those who belong to Him will also rise from the dead.

**Harvest Thanksgiving celebrated today:** (first Sunday of March for Methodists). Harvest Sunday was an important Christian festival in early times; people thanked God for a good crop and enough food to last through the cold winters in the North and Southern continents when snow covered the ground and nothing grew. Fiji's climate grows food all through the year, but we still celebrate Harvest Sunday and people bring food from their gardens to church. This service reminds us to thank God for what has been grown and harvested.

## 2. The Feast of Weeks (Shavuot)

### Bible references

Leviticus 23:15-22

Deut 16:9-10

### Brief Overview

**Hebrew name:** Shavuot means 'weeks', because the Israelites were told in Deuteronomy 16:9-10 to count seven weeks, (50 days), from Passover and this feast.

**What's it about?** Shavuot celebrates time when God gave Ten Commandments to Moses.

**Pronounce it:** Shah-vo-oat

**Foods:** Dairy foods are traditional on Shavuot. No meat is eaten.

**Activities:** Reading the Ten Commandments and readings from the book of Ruth.

### Go deeper

This festival is also known as the Feast of Pentecost, ('Pentecost' is the Greek word for 'fifty'), or the Feast of Harvest. During this festival each family in Israel was to bring "two loaves of bread and present them to the Lord as a special gift," (Lev 23:17).

### What does Pentecost mean to Christians?

Pentecost was fifty days after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. When the day of Pentecost came, (Acts 2:1) the Holy Spirit came to live in believers. The two loaves can be a symbol of Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews) in the early church.

Readings from the book of Ruth is a symbol of non-Jews becoming one of God's people. Ruth was a non-Jew who married into the Jewish race. Gentiles are non-Jewish believers who choose to become one of God's people.

### Activity:

Today we can give God thanks for all that He has provided by:

1. Saying thank you to God before we \_\_ \_\_ \_\_. (eat)
2. S \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ our provision with others. (Share)

Write a prayer of thanks to God for the things He has provided.

# God is Provider

## Week 3

### God provides forgiveness

#### 1. The Feast of Trumpets

##### Bible references

Leviticus 23:23-24

##### Brief overview

**Hebrew name:** Rosh Hashanah, meaning the Jewish New Year

**What's It About?** It is a solemn holiday beginning the calendar year with repentance from sin and the hope of renewal. The Feast of Trumpets announced the coming of the yearly ceremony when the nation's sin was covered.

**Foods:** Apples and honey, honey cake, pomegranates, pumpkins and other round foods, sweet foods and foods that are gold-colored, like carrots and pumpkin.

**Activities:** The sounding of the shofar, or ram's horn. Families gather for a festive meal. Apple slices dipped in honey represent a 'sweet year'. Honey cakes are also served.

**Greeting:** "May you be inscribed in the Book of Life"

##### Go Deeper

It is a time for celebrating God's goodness, so there is much festive food.

It is a time of recognizing that God is ruler the whole world, as King of Kings. It is therefore a joyful celebration with the blowing of the shofar (ram's horn) to announce the commencement of the festival.

##### What does the Feast of Trumpets mean to Christians?

We too will celebrate the sound of a trumpet. Scripture tells us that we will hear that exciting trumpet sound when the Lord Jesus returns for all who belong to Him, (1 Cor.15:52; 1 Thessalonians 14:16)

#### 2. The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)

##### Bible reference:

Leviticus 23:26-32

##### Brief overview

**Hebrew name means:** Day of Atonement.

**What's It About?** A fast day of prayer and confession

**Pronounce it:** Some say yom kee-poor, and some yom kipper.

**Foods:** None. It's a fast day so there is no food! Children under age 13 and other people whose health might be harmed don't fast.

**Activities:** Traditional prayers and readings.

##### Go deeper

The Day of Atonement was the most sacred day of Israel's year. In their Hebrew language, 'atonement' means 'to cover.' Each animal sacrifice covered the sin of the one who offered it and secured God's forgiveness. The Day of Atonement pictured Christ's once-for-all payment of sin (Heb. 10:10-12).

Unlike the other feasts, which were times of joy, this was a day of sorrow. On this day the high priest laid aside his beautiful robes and dressed in simple robes of white linen (Leviticus 16:4; Exodus 28:40, 42). In so doing, he provided a picture of the coming High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, who laid aside His glory, taking on human form to make atonement for our sins (Philippians 2:6-8).

First, the high priest offered a bull for his sins and the sins of his family. Only then could he offer a goat for the sins of the people. Our sinless High Priest, Jesus Christ, needed no offering for Himself. He never sinned (Hebrews 7:26-28). As the perfect Son of God, He came to earth ready to make an offering for His people. The Lord Jesus offered Himself to die for our sins on the cross (1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

Once the animals had been killed, the high priest took the blood into the Most Holy Place in the tabernacle and sprinkled it on the mercy seat, the lid of the Ark of the Covenant. Beneath this lid were the tablets of stone on which God had written the Ten Commandments. The blood on the mercy seat was a sign that God had forgiven them for breaking His laws.

After Jesus' death, He rose again and ascended to the real Most Holy Place, heaven. There He presented Himself to God the Father as the sacrificial Lamb (Hebrews 9:12, 23, 24). Now when we receive Jesus as Saviour, God no longer sees our sin; instead he sees the blood shed by his beloved Son and accepts us in Him (Ephesians 1: 6, 7).

Throughout the Old Testament times, only the high priest could enter into the Most Holy Place. But when Jesus died, God tore the veil in the temple from top to bottom (Mat. 27:51) to show that through His Son we may now come directly into His presence (Heb. 10:19,20). We no longer need a human priest; we now pray directly to God in Jesus' name (1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 4:16-16).

To finish the ceremony on the Day of Atonement, the high priest laid his hands on the head of a live goat and confessed the sins of the people as if he were placing their sin on the goat. This goat was then taken far away into the wilderness where it was set free and never seen again. The Lord Jesus has taken care of our sins so completely that they are gone forever, we will never have to face them again, (Psalm 103:12; Colossians 2:13, 14).



# God is Provider

## Week 4

### Giving thanks for our land and our homes

#### The Feast of Tabernacles

##### Bible reference

Leviticus 23:33-43

##### Brief overview

**Hebrew name:** *sukkot* meaning booths, shelters or tabernacles. The singular is sukkah. It comes from the name of the place where the Israelites first stopped after leaving Egypt: Sukkoth.

**Pronounce it:** Some say *sue coat* and some say *sukkiss*.

**What's it about?** A celebration of the harvest at the end of the agricultural year, and also remembering when the Israelites made temporary shelters at a place called Sukkoth after they left Egypt.

**Foods:** No specific special food, just big sumptuous meals.

**Activities:** Before the holiday, communities and some individual families build a sukkah or hut in the back yard or on the back porch. The sukkah is open to the elements. During the holiday an important activity is eating in the sukkah.

##### Go deeper

The purpose of this feast was to remind the children of Israel of the tabernacles or tents they had lived in for forty years in the wilderness as they waited to enter the Promised Land. For this celebration the people were to gather together and build shelters or “booths” from tree limbs and palm branches. They were to live in these temporary shelters for a week. This festival was a time of joy and rest, a time to remember God’s deliverance and to thank Him for blessing them with their own land and homes.

In this feast we are reminded that our homes on earth are as temporary as were the Israelites’ shelters. We are on our way to a perfect, permanent home (Hebrews 13:14, John 14:1-4).

The Feast of the Tabernacles is also the celebration of God releasing His people from the slavery in Egypt, under the Pharaoh (Lev 23).

The Jews had been sheep farmers in Egypt, and when they left, they had to move swiftly, taking very little of their possessions with them. They had to travel through a large desert area and had to put together a hut whenever they stopped at a place to rest. Life was on a very temporary basis. After they fled from Egypt they finally stopped and built temporary huts. Each family built one from trees and branches they found around them. It was called a sukkah.

To remind them of God’s goodness and provision of their needs for the 40 years in the wilderness families now build a temporary extra room made out of palm branches. It is built

onto the outside of their house. The walls are decorated with pictures of fruit because it is harvest time in Israel. They hang flowers and decorations and streamers on the walls and from the roof. The roof is only thinly covered with branches as you have to be able to see the stars through it at night. For eight days they eat their meals in the sukkah. Some even sleep out in it.

# God is Provider

## Week 5

### God is with us

#### Hanukah (Festival of Lights)

##### Scripture references

Daniel 8: 22 – 25; 11: 20 - 45

Psalm 27:1-4 The Lord is my light and my salvation

##### Overview

This festival is celebrated November to December.

“Hanukah” the word means “Dedication” in Hebrew and is a celebration of God’s faithfulness and deliverance. The events it celebrates took place during the time between the end of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament, around 165 BC. It is not recorded in the Bible but is recorded in history books. It tells of the time when God saved His people from destruction, and made it possible for them to worship in their temple once again. God performed a miracle of keeping the oil burning for eight days, when there was only a one-day supply.

##### Going deeper

The story behind this festival begins when much of the world was over-run by Greece under Alexander the Great (336BC). Upon his death, the Holy Land was ruled by Antiochus Epiphanes the 4<sup>th</sup>. He wanted all the Jews to become Greeks and wouldn’t allow them to worship at the temple and follow the laws that God had given to them. He did awful things in the temple so that the Jews wouldn’t be able to continue going there for services and placed a very large statue of Zeus (a Greek idol/god) there so that they would worship him, and not God. The Jews had to completely abandon their religion. Those who refused to obey his commands were killed. Mattathias, a Jewish priest and his five sons refused to bow to Antiochus’s commands and with Judah Macabee started a revolt against the Greek tyrant leader. After 3 years of battle, Judah Macabee’s army won, and immediately went to cleanse the temple so they could again worship God. It was a mess, but they found a small bottle of oil for lighting the temple lamps called the menorah. It would only last for about one day. They wondered whether to light the menorah or wait until they could make new clean oil before lighting it. They chose to go ahead and light it. To everyone’s amazement the lamp was still alight the next day, and the next and the next. The oil miraculously burned

for 8 days. Every one rejoiced and thanked God for what He had done for them, saying: 'A great miracle happened here'.

Today Hanukah is celebrated with a branch of nine candles, called candelabra. Eight of them stand for the eight days the oil miraculously burnt while the ninth (middle one) is the servant used to light the others. Jewish people often exchange gifts during Hanukah as we do at Christmas.

### **What does Hanukah mean to Christians?**

Jesus was in the temple on the Feast of Dedication when he told the people surrounding Him, that those who love and follow Him are His sheep, and He cares for them, protects them from the enemy and keeps them safe because He and God the Father are one and He is 'The Light of the World'. Psalm 27 tells us not to be afraid because God is our light and our salvation.

Hanukah celebrates the deliverance of the Jewish people from those who would try again and again to destroy God's Covenant people. In recent history, we have two horrible examples of this – the anti-Jewish Pogroms of the Russian Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and the Holocaust of the Second World War. Yet the Lord's people are alive today and back in their own land against unbelievable odds. But the enemy has not given up and he is trying and will try to destroy them again. Christians need to continue to pray for God to protect and deliver His people, the Jews, and that they may come to know Jesus.

### **Discussion**

What miracles occurred in the Bible where God provided by multiplication, (making more of only a little?) *e.g. Elijah and the multiplication of oil and flour; Elisha and multiplication of oil; Jesus and the multiplication of loaves and fish*

### **Celebrations of our church today**

The early believers in Jesus celebrated the Jewish Sabbath and festivals for some time after Jesus died. However, the Jewish religious leaders were not happy with the way the Christians continued to believe in and talk about Jesus, and eventually told the Christians they could no longer worship in their temple and synagogues. The Christians then began their own calendar of special days.

Ask the students to remember what these are. (They probably won't know them all.)

- Advent (four Sundays of preparation for Christmas);
- Christmas Day;
- Ash Wednesday
- Lent (about 6 weeks leading up to Holy week - Easter);
- World Day of Prayer (first Friday of March)
- Harvest Thanksgiving
- Palm Sunday
- Good Friday

- Easter Monday
- Ascension
- Pentecost

## **The Sabbath – a day of worship**

(Ex 20:1-2; 8-11; 31;12-13 & 17)

The Jewish Holy Day (Sabbath) is from Friday evening until Saturday evening. Students can answer the following from the Scripture passages above.

1. Who gave the commandment about the Sabbath?
2. To whom was it given?
3. How was the day to be spent?

On the seventh day of Creation God rested. The seven-day creation was a pattern for us. God worked on six days and rested on the seventh. The Sabbath is therefore a day of rest.

### **Sunday, the Lord's Day**

Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week and so Christians began to meet on that day for prayer and celebration of Holy Communion. Twenty years later this was their regular worship day and by the time the Apostle John wrote the book of Revelation it was called The Lord's Day, (Rev 1:10).

It is important not to argue about whether Saturday or Sunday is the right day for worshipping God. The important thing is that we do set aside a day to spend worshipping and resting.