

China: The Message behind the Mooncake Festival

Do you know that the Chinese celebrates the Mooncake Festival?

¹It is also known as the Lantern Festival. You will understand the importance of this festival if you read the Chinese history on it.

More than seven hundred years ago, a Mongol leader named Kublai Khan captured China. Under ²his rule, the Chinese were badly treated. They were not allowed to meet in large groups. Mongol officials were sent all over the city to spy on the rich and influential Chinese people.

Some Chinese leaders met secretly to plot on how to overthrow the cruel Mongols. At last a clever old man had an idea. The idea was on how to pass messages to the Chinese people. ³They wrote their plan to overthrow the Mongols on pieces of paper which they put into cakes. In the middle of the night, men carrying paper lanterns sent cakes with messages to all the Chinese home. In this way, everyone was prepared to fight the Mongols. The Chinese defeated the fierce Mongols from their land. Thus, China was free. After the war, the cakes were called 'Mooncakes' because ⁴they sent to the Chinese homes at night.

From that day, The Chinese have been eating mooncakes on the fifteenth day of the eighth month in the Chinese calendar to celebrate ⁵their freedom. Children carry lanterns to remember how the clever old man with his 'Mooncake' messages helped to free China.

Today, the Chinese all over the world celebrate the Mooncake Festival or the Lantern Festival to remember their freedom from the Mongol rule.

A. Look at the words which are numbered in the passage.

What does each word refer to?

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|-------|
| ¹ <i>It</i> | - | _____ |
| ² <i>his</i> | - | _____ |
| ³ <i>They</i> | - | _____ |
| ⁴ <i>they</i> | - | _____ |
| ⁵ <i>their</i> | - | _____ |

B. Read the passage and answer the following questions

1. Who was the Mongol leader that rule China?

2. How were the Chinese treated under his rule?

3. What did the Chinese leaders plan to do?

4. How did they send messages to the Chinese people about the plan?

5. Who thought of the clever idea of passing messages to the Chinese people?

6. What did the men use to help them see when they were delivering the cakes?

7. When did they send the cakes?

8. Why do the Chinese today celebrate the Mooncake Festival?
