

The First Passover

Exodus 12:1-28

MEMORY VERSE

EPHESIANS 2:13

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been made near by the blood of Christ.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Yeast, flour, sugar, lukewarm water, and two bowls.

Unleavened bread or tortillas, and regular bakery bread.

As many sheets of green, tan, and brown construction paper and paper plates as the number of children in your class, scissors and glue.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Observe Yeast

Tell your students about yeast, explaining that it is leaven and in the Bible it represents sin in our lives. Mix a teaspoon of yeast with two tablespoons of flour, one teaspoon of sugar, and four tablespoons of lukewarm water. Also mix the same ingredients without yeast.

Allow your class to observe the leavening process and see what happens over time when dough is leavened. You can refer to the bowls a couple of times through the class time to see their progress (the bowl with no yeast won't really have any "progress").

Explain to your class the concept of "leaven" and how a little sin can lead to a lot of sin.

LESSON TIME!

In this chapter, we have the account of the Passover. It is probably the most important of all of the feasts or celebrations that God told the Israelites to observe in the Old Testament. The Israelites had several feasts that they observed, but this feast was extra special because it portrays Israel's deliverance from Egypt. It also pictures for us our deliverance in Christ (the Passover lamb). Passover is the most mentioned feast in the New Testament.

There is much to be learned in this account of the institution of the Passover, and the beautiful type of Christ, our Redeemer, that we can see in the Passover. **God provides a way of salvation for His people.**

God was ready to send the last of the ten plagues upon Egypt. It was the death of the first-born in the land of Egypt. We know that all the first-born in the land of Egypt did die, and yet the first-born of Israel were delivered from the Angel of Death. Why were the Egyptians killed and the Israelites spared? Here for us unfolds the beautiful illustration of justice and mercy being brought together; and at the same time, we will also see the awesome grace of God. **God provides a way of salvation for His people.**

EXODUS 12:1-2

Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

"This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you."

In verse one; the Lord speaks to Moses and Aaron. The Lord told them that there was to be a change in their calendar. "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you." They had previously begun their year

from the middle of September, but now they would begin in the middle of March.

So we see that what was about to happen was very important. So important that God would have the Israelites change their calendar so that this would begin their year. It would be New Year's Day every year and they would especially remember what God was about to do in their lives. It is important for us to remember times when God works in our lives. **God provides a way of salvation for His people.**

EXODUS 12:3-6

"Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

'And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb.

'Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.'"

On the tenth day of the month, each Israelite family was to select a lamb, but if the family was small and not able to eat an entire lamb, they could share the meal with another family. The lamb was to be a male of the first year, not too old, and not too young. It was to

die when it was at its' strongest. They were to keep the lamb for four days, to make sure it had nothing wrong with it.

We see here a type or a picture of Jesus Christ. As the Passover lamb was singled out from the flock and observed for four days prior to its death, so was Jesus, the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world (John 1:19), observed during His public ministry for 3 1/2 years, and was found to be without spot or blemish. Jesus died not too young and not too old, but in the fullness of His prime age (about 33 years old).

As the Passover lamb had been appointed for death before it was actually slain, so Jesus was appointed for death before He was slain. Remember that nothing except a perfect sacrifice would satisfy God's requirements, for He Himself is perfect.

On the fourteenth day of the month, the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel was to kill the lamb in the evening. The lamb was to be slain by each family of the assembly of the congregation of Israel; it meant that the entire congregation, without any exception, was to kill the lamb at the same time. **God provides a way of salvation for His people.**

Because we are spotted with sin in our lives we could never pass as a sacrifice. Even if we try out hardest we can never be perfect. Only Jesus is a perfect man, without any sin. So only Jesus is the one who can lay down His life as the perfect sacrifice for our sin. Just like God provided deliverance for His people Israel, so He will provide salvation to us when we place our trust in Jesus.

EXODUS 12:7

"And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.' "

EXODUS 12:13

"Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. "

EXODUS 12:22-23

"And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.

"For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you."

Here we will combine these verses to see the Lord's instructions to the Israelites of what to do with the slain lamb's blood. They were to take a bunch of hyssop (a branch from a type of bush), and dip it in the blood in the basin, and strike the lintel and two side posts, and none of them were to go out of the door of his house until the morning.

The hyssop was a shrub which was widely used in Israel's rites of purification. The door of the house was to have the blood on the lintel, or the cross-piece of the door which is overhead, and on the side posts. What a beautiful picture of Christ here on the cross, blood above, where the thorns pierced His brow; blood at the side, from His nail pierced hands.

Why did this innocent lamb have to be killed? All people were guilty of sin. God was going to pass judgment on the land of Egypt that night, and death would come to the guilty unless an innocent

substitute was offered. The Israelites were to put the blood upon the doorposts and lintel of their houses that night. For even if they had selected a perfect lamb and killed it, UNLESS they had applied the blood to the outside of the door, the Angel of Death would have entered his house and killed his first-born.

When the Destroyer saw the blood upon the houses of the Israelites, he passed by, or passed over the house. Why? Because death had already done its work there. The innocent had died in place of the guilty, and justice was satisfied. God's eye was upon the blood, not the house. No matter what type of house, as long as the blood was applied, it was spared from His judgment. **God provides a way of salvation for His people.**

So it is with us. It doesn't matter if we are rich, poor, what color we are or anything, as long as the blood of Christ has been applied to our hearts, we are spared from His judgment. It is not enough that Jesus died on the cross. That doesn't make us saved. But when we believe and trust in Jesus with all of our hearts; asking Him to forgive us of our sins and applying His blood that was spilled on the cross to take away our sins, it is then that we are truly saved.

We also see in Hebrews that by faith Moses sprinkled the blood upon the doorposts (Hebrews 11:28). Let us remember that it is faith in God's promise and provision in Jesus that brings us salvation.

EXODUS 12:8-10

"Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

'Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire--its head with its legs and its entrails.

'You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. '"

Here we see specific directions for the preparation of the lamb. It was to be "roasted with fire, even its head on along with its thighs and entrails." It was to be undivided or whole so that neither head nor thighs were cut off and not a bone was broken. It was to be roasted, in order that it might be placed upon the table undivided and unchanged.

They were to eat it with pure loaves, not fermented with leaven, for leaven which sets the dough in fermentation produces impurity, and it is symbolic of sin and moral corruption, and is always excluded from the sacrifices as defiling.

Unleavened Bread

Bring unleavened bread or tortillas for tasting. Also bring some conventional bread so your students can compare. Let them touch and smell the differences.

They were also to eat bitter herbs with the meal. The bitter herbs were a remembrance of the bitterness of life experienced by Israel in Egypt, and the bitterness was to be overpowered by the sweet flesh of the lamb. Again, we see the picture of Christ the lamb whose bones were not broken. John 19:36 refers to the prophecy of the Messiah in Psalm 34:20; none of His bones were broken.

The sweetness of our Lord Jesus overpowers the bitterness of the world in our lives. The lamb was to be completely eaten wherever this was possible; but if any of the lamb was left, it was to be burned with fire. It was to be eaten the same night it was slain.

The sacrifice was to be completed in one night. So was the work of Christ; Jesus said from the cross, "It is finished." His work is not a

progressive atonement for our sins, but a completed one - once and for all. **God provides a way of salvation for His people.**

EXODUS 12:11

"And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover."

The Israelites were to eat the meal ready for travel. They were to have their "loins girded" that they might not be hindered in their walking because of their long robe; with "shoes on their feet," that they might be ready to walk on hard, rough roads, instead of barefooted. They were also to have "staff in hand," the staff was a sign of pilgrimage.

They were to eat in haste for at any moment they may be called to go out of the land of bondage. They needed to be ready for the call; so must we be ever ready to hear the Lord's call for us. We are also to be "girded about with truth...and have our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace...to take the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Ephesians 6:14-17).

God equips us for our pilgrimage. It is important to note the truth of verse 11, "it is the Lord's Passover." It was appointed by Him, and to be kept for Him. The slain lamb was a substitute for the people so that the children of Israel might live. How it must have been a joy to Him that His people would be spared. Jesus was our substitute on the cross so that the Father could rejoice that His children would be spared His judgment upon sin. Christ's death glorified God, as the Passover also glorified Him.

EXODUS 12:12-13

"For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of

Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.

'Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. '''

Here, God explains the Passover. In that night, God would pass through Egypt, and smite all the first-born of man and beast; execute judgment upon all the gods of Egypt, and "passover" all the Israelites. To the Israelites, on the other hand, the blood upon the houses in which they were assembled would be a sign and pledge that the Lord would spare them, and no plague should fall upon them to destroy them.

EXODUS 12:14

''So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance. '''

That day, Israel was to keep "for a commemoration as a feast to the Lord" consecrated for all time as an "eternal ordinance," for all ages. It is important that we remember times that He is faithful in our lives. God set this up as an annual feast so that the Israelites would always remember His faithfulness. We need to regularly remember God's faithfulness in our lives and thank Him for who He is and what He has done.

The Passover was also a celebration of their birth in the new life of fellowship with the Lord. Being delivered from the destroyer was the beginning of their redemption from the bondage of Egypt and becoming the nation that God had called to be His special treasure. God's work was only beginning for the Israelites, as our life with the Lord only begins when we are saved. God then has a wonderful

plan for our lives. God provides a way of salvation for His people.

EXODUS 12:15-20

"Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.

'On the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat--that only may be prepared by you.

'So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance.

'In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.

'For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land.

'You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations you shall eat unleavened bread.' "

God now gave instructions for the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a national celebration of Israel's redemption from Egypt. The Passover and Unleavened Bread feasts were so closely connected that the two were often considered as one. For seven days, they were to eat unleavened bread. The homes were to be cleansed from any leaven or yeast, which is a type of sin.

The unleavened loaves were symbolic of the new life, as cleansed from the leaven of a sinful nature. Anyone who did eat leavened bread at the feast would renounce his new life, and was therefore to be cut off from Israel.

On the first and seventh day, a holy meeting was to be held, and all work was to be stopped, except what was necessary for the preparation of the food. As the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread was to be a lasting ordinance to benefit all generations. They were an ordinance to be obeyed, and a ceremony to be observed.

EXODUS 12:21-28

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover lamb.

"And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.

"For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.

"And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever.

"It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service.

"And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?'

"that you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.'" So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

Then the children of Israel went away and did so; just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

Moses then gave the elders instructions for the Passover like those that the Lord gave Moses in verses 3-11. In verse 26, when the children of the people ask "What is this all about?" the answer is given in verse 27: "It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover." That is, by the killing and sacrificing of this Lamb, we keep in remembrance the work of wonder and grace which God did for our fathers.

They were to be reminded that it was "the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover," and when dwelling in the Promised Land, they were to explain the meaning of this service to their sons, a fulfillment of God's command. The children were to be reminded that the price of their release from bondage required the death of an innocent lamb, and that the blood had to be applied to the doorposts for them to be spared the judgment of God's wrath. **God provides a way of salvation for His people.**

They were to always tell their children about the Lamb of God sacrificed for them. After hearing God's instructions, the people, represented by their elders, bowed and worshipped; not only to show their faith but also to show their gratitude for the deliverance which they were to receive in the Passover. They then proceeded to obey the command, that through the obedience of faith they might put into practice the blessing of this ordinance. **God provides a way of salvation for His people.**

Paper Passover

Cut out shapes from colored construction paper representing the foods from the Passover. Use green construction paper to cut out bitter herbs, tan to cut out unleavened bread, and brown to cut out lamb. Glue all the colors on a paper plate so each student can have a Passover meal.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for God's provision. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.