

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ISRAEL (through Moses)
Exodus 11:1–13:10

Memory Verse: *For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed* (1 Cor. 15:7b ESV).

Background Helps:

In keeping with our “covenant” theme we are skipping a detailed look at the ten plagues in Egypt, with the exception of the last plague: the slaying of the firstborn. This final judgment on Egypt caused Pharaoh to free Israel from slavery, so that the LORD could fulfill his covenant promise to Abraham of giving the land of Canaan to Abraham’s descendants (see Ex. 6:1-8).

This last plague also was the occasion of the institution of Passover. The slaying of the Passover lamb in each Israelite household meant that their firstborn was spared from God’s judgment. Israel’s subsequent redemption from bondage in Egypt was to be memorialized annually by their celebration of Passover. It was at just such a Passover celebration 1500 years later that Jesus declared the establishment of the New Covenant (Luke 22:7-20), showing the strong connection between Passover and God’s covenant with his people.

Observe the following:

- Passover was first observed in Exodus 12:1-13, 21-28, leading to the deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt (12:29-42, 50-51).
- At the time of Passover’s institution, God gave Moses explicit instructions on how the feast was to be celebrated in the future (Ex. 12:14-20, 43-49; 13:3-10).
- The Law of Moses includes further instructions on the observance of Passover as an important part of the covenant that God established with Israel through Moses (*we will study the actual establishment of this covenant in our lesson next week*). Notice:
 - Instruction about Passover in the “Book of the Covenant” (Ex. 23:14-17; 24:3-8)
 - Further instruction about Passover observance when Moses renewed the covenant after the incident of the golden calf (Ex. 34:10, 18, 25, 27-28)
 - See also Leviticus 23:4-8; Numbers 9:6-14; 28:16-25; and Deuteronomy 16:1-8. All these instructions about the observance of Passover are part of the covenant that God made with Israel through Moses, sometimes called the Old Covenant (see the next step your covenant chart).
- Instructions about Passover are included in Ezekiel’s vision of the new temple (Ezek. 45:21-24).
- Other Old Testament accounts of Israel’s *actual observance* of Passover include:
 - The second observance of Passover in the wilderness of Sinai (Num. 9:1-5)
 - The initial observance of Passover once Israel entered the land of Canaan under Joshua’s leadership (Josh. 5:10)
 - An unparalleled observance of Passover in Jerusalem (2 Chron. 30:26) as part of the great spiritual revival in Judah in the days of King Hezekiah (2 Chron. 30:1-27)
 - An even more unparalleled observance of Passover in Jerusalem (2 Chron. 35:18) in the days of King Josiah (2 Kings 23:21-23; 2 Chron. 35:1-19). It is important to notice that this Passover occurred as a result of the rediscovery of the book of the

- Law of Moses in the temple (2 Kings 22:8-20; 2 Chron. 34:8-28) and Josiah's subsequent decision to renew Israel's covenant with the LORD (2 Kings 23:1-25; 2 Chron. 34:29–35:19). This renewal of the covenant, along with the unprecedented observance of Passover, occurred in the same year that Josiah rediscovered the Book of the Law (2 Kings 23:21-23; 2 Chron. 35:1-19).
- The observance of Passover immediately upon the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem after the return from exile in Ezra 6:19-22

All the above references show the great importance of Passover under the Old Covenant as an annual reminder to Israel of her redemption through the blood of the Passover lamb. It is no surprise then that Jesus, as a faithful Jew, observed Passover during his life on earth (e.g., Luke 2:41; John 2:13, 23), mostly importantly at his Last Supper with his disciples (Matt. 26:1-2, 17-20, 26-30; Mark 14:1-2, 12-17, 22-26; Luke 22:1, 7-20). At that Passover our Lord introduced the New Covenant (Luke 22:20; Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24). Now today, just as the Jews annually observe Passover to celebrate their redemption (freedom) from Egypt, so we Christians frequently observe the Lord's Supper to celebrate our redemption from sin through Jesus Christ (see the memory verse, 1 Cor. 5:7b) and our place in the new covenant (1 Cor. 11:23-26).

Lesson Helps:

All the above information is simply to provide background on Passover to you teachers. It is not intended that you teach all of this material this week! Some of it will come up in later lessons. Your emphasis this Sunday will be on the institution of Passover in Exodus 11–13, linking this event to the slaying of our Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ.

A possible lesson aim: My students will learn about the institution of Passover under the Old Covenant, so that they will trust in Christ as their Passover Lamb under the New Covenant.

Hook: Pictures of lambs, readily available on the internet. Great for showing to the kids!

Book: In your Bible study, you will want to accomplish three things: (1) dramatically tell the story of the first Passover; (2) show how the subsequent celebration of Passover was part of the Old Covenant; (3) look for parallels between the Passover in Exodus and the death of our Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ. Include the memory verse.

Look: Show how the Israelite families, in faith, had to apply the blood to the doorframes of their homes in order to save the lives of their firstborn and to be freed from slavery in Egypt. Similarly, we each must trust in the blood of our Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ, in order to be saved from eternal death and freed from our bondage to sin.

Took: Invite students to “apply the blood of Christ to the doorframe of their heart” in order to be saved from their sins; that is, invite them, in prayer, to trust in Christ's blood to save them.

Home Assignment:

 Read Exodus 19–24; 31:12-18.

 Memorize Galatians 5:14 ESV.