

# THE PASSOVER

The Israelites are Miraculously Spared from Death by the Blood of the Lamb

## PREPARING FOR THE NEXT LESSON:

### 1. Read Aloud

Choose someone to read the passage aloud to the family. Watch for Word Alerts (over).

### 2. Recount

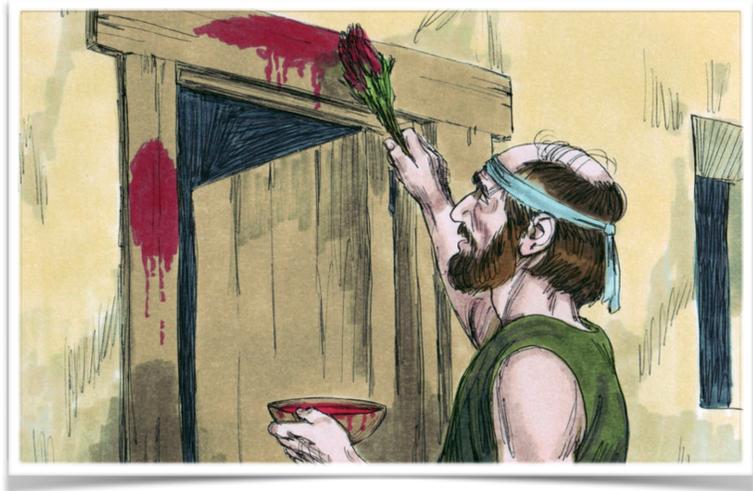
Ask people to explain what they just heard.

### 3. Ask Questions

What do they think about the story? What does it tell them about God? What does it tell them about human beings, and our relationships with one another and with God?

### 3. Help Interpret

Offer some of your own insights from the discussion here, and help develop their understanding by asking questions and gently guiding them toward the answers. They might disregard a lecture, but when they discover a connection on their own, it will be truly rooted in their minds.



## There was a great cry in the land of Egypt

In our last lesson, God sends plagues to Egypt to convince Pharaoh to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt. After some plagues, Pharaoh would seem to relent, but then change his mind. The ninth plague was three days of darkness, and now this is the final plague: the death of the firstborn. (When God's first born, Jesus Christ, died, He spent three days in the darkness of Hades... and became the "firstborn of the dead" when He resurrected!)

We might ask ourselves, are we captive to sin like the Israelites were captive to Pharaoh? God sent Moses and Aaron to help the Israelites. Who does He send to us?

The tenth plague meant that death would descend on Egypt, but the Israelites would be spared. He gave them clear instructions to select a spotless male lamb and to slaughter all of the lambs on the same day together at twilight. The blood of the lamb was to be painted on the doorpost of the home, marking it so that death would Pass Over them. They should eat unleavened bread (which is

## WORD ALERTS!

As we read through the Bible, we'll notice important words that keep coming up again and again, drawing attention to the connections that God uses to teach us. We want to take note whenever we find a Word Alert in the Scriptures!

- The Israelites are instructed to paint **the blood of the lamb** on their doors. When we hear this phrase, we should think of the blood shed by Christ, the Lamb of God, to save us from death. (Note: The Passover lamb was a male lamb without blemish, as Christ is without blemish. Christ's blood is shed on the wood of the cross, while this lamb's blood is used to paint a cross on wood. None of the lamb's bones were broken – just as none of Christ's bones were ever broken.)
- Do you know how to say **Passover** in Greek? The word is "**Pascha**", and we still use it to describe the feast of Christ's death and resurrection, which is the fulfillment of this Pascha or Passover that came before it. We sing, at Pascha "... a new and holy Pascha, a mystical Pascha,... a Pascha which is Christ the Redeemer."

bread without yeast, so that it can be made in a hurry, as you need to wait for the dough to rise) and their lamb, which is roasted over a fire and none of the bones are broken. They should be fully dressed and ready to go while eating — staff in hand, shoes on feet, ready to leave Egypt as soon as possible.

In His instructions, God included that they should do this every year in remembrance, because He did not want them to forget how He saved them... and because He wanted them to recognize the Passover when it happened again! When Christ walked up to John the Baptist at the Jordan River, John called out, "Behold the Lamb of God". Christ was a spotless male, sacrificed so that His followers could be marked by the Blood of the Lamb and spared from death, granted eternal life. God wanted His people to recognize deliverance when it came in its fullness.

The Israelites followed God's instructions, and the next morning when people awoke to find that their firstborn children had died in the night, a great cry arose — and the Hebrews had been spared from death.

## What do we mean by Re-Entry?

On Sunday morning, we gather together for Divine Liturgy, and the priest begins, "Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages." He is announcing and blessing the Kingdom of God, which we are entering together in faith and love. The people respond, "Amen," signifying their agreement, their fervent desire to enter into the Kingdom. In Holy Communion, the faithful receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. We receive the divine, and it transforms us. We complete the Divine Liturgy and then go out into the world, carrying Christ and the Kingdom within us. Let's think about how are we to re-enter the world; how will we guard the grace that we have received? How will we prepare ourselves to go out?