

# JESUS' LAST SUPPER

## Self-Study on the background, history, customs and meaning of Jesus' Last Supper

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You need a Bible, a notebook and a pen to do this study. Each day you will be asked to write some things down. These will help you learn and remember. They will be important for you to keep for future use and reference, and will be invaluable if you some day teach about Exodus and Jesus' last supper. You can do this on your own or with your family. There are some parts specifically done for families and children. You can read either the "Suggested Passage" or the "Focus Verses" for the day. "For Further Study" is optional for those who want to go into more detail about the daily topic.

If you want to send me your answers I would be glad to read them and offer comments or suggestions that might help you. If you don't send them to me that is fine as well. You can write me at [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net). If you have any questions or prayer requests please feel free to write to me. Always pray for insight and understanding before you start your devotions.

May God bless you as your begin studying this very important time in Jesus' life.

# **BIBLE MEMORY VERSES**

**SUGGESTED BIBLE MEMORY VERSES TO USE** are listed below. Review them once or twice a day, or say them before or after each meal. Children and adults can quickly learn them. In future years whenever they hear these verses they will associate them with the Last Supper meal and all its teaching. (A copy to cut and use is in the back of these pages.)

## **YOUNG CHILDREN:**

Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. I Corinthians 5:7b

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29

## **ELEMENTARY AGE CHILDREN**

Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast -- as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. I Corinthians 5:7

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. I Peter 1:18-19

## **OLDER CHILDREN**

All the ones above and/or Exodus 12:1-11

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, "This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs. That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. Do not eat the meat raw or cooked in water, but roast it over the fire -- head, legs and inner parts. Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it. This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the Lord's Passover. Exodus 12:1-11

## **DAY 1**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Exodus 1

FOCUS VERSES: Exodus 1:8-14,22

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: God had established Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph in the land of Palestine which He gave to them and their children forever. However because of their failure to love and obey Him, He moved them to Egypt during Joseph's time. The Egyptians would have nothing to do with them, so they had to marry only among themselves. In Palestine they were marrying Gentiles and the nation of Israel would soon have been absorbed into the other nations. After almost 400 years in Egypt, though, the Jews still hadn't learned to love and obey God. Therefore God allowed the heat to be turned up hotter and hotter until they wanted to leave Egypt and follow God. First came slavery, then the death of boy babies. Unfortunately that still wasn't enough. Can you think of times in your life when God allowed the heat to be turned up until you turned to Him? Can you see this happening to you or someone you know? How should you pray for yourself or others going through this?

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** Pharaoh "made their lives bitter" (v. 14). This fact is commemorated in the Passover meal, which was eaten "with bitter herbs" (12:8) as a reminder of this time. At our meal we will eat horseradish as well as parsley dipped in salt water to remember this.

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** What is the difference between PUNISHMENT and DISCIPLINE? Which works best in changing behavior? Which of these was God doing to the Jews in Egypt? Which should a parent have with their children? Which does God have for His children? What does God say about punishing His children in Romans 8:1? What does God say about disciplining His children in Hebrews 12:4-11?

**WEEK-LONG STUDY PROJECT:** Focus on Moses as a baby and child.

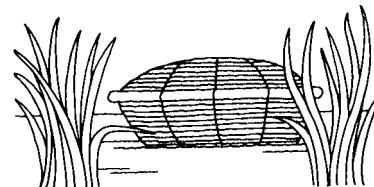
### ROLE PLAYING (DRAMA)

Have the children pretend they are SLAVES. Have them pick up toys, move chairs, clean, etc., as slaves would have. Be stern (but don't frighten them). Relate this to the Jews in Egypt. Ask them how they felt when treated as slaves. Talk to them about the Jews in slavery.

Children can act out other parts of the devotions and STORY OF THE JEWS IN EGYPT as you go through it. Someone can be Moses, another Miriam, Pharaoh, etc. You can speak God's part.

### ARTS AND CRAFTS

Give everyone a piece of aluminum foil. Instruct them to tear or sculpt an object that illustrates something they can do because they are free people and not slaves who have to do whatever someone else tells them. Have each one show what they made and tell about it.



### BABY MOSES IN THE BASKET

Color the picture, cut it out, hang it up. You can make green grass to glue around it. Children can hide it and watch for the princess to come, acting out the story. If you need more than one copy children can trace it or draw it free-hand looking at this one. Use your imagination! You can weave a basket for Moses, too, out of strips of brown paper (or use a basket you have at home).

### **PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:**

Search your heart to make sure you love and obey God 100% in everything. If things are happening that are unpleasant, consider it could be God allowing it so you'll love and obey Him better.

Pray for others you know who are going through difficulties. Instead of just asking God to remove the trial, pray that the person would be brought closer to God through it.

## **DAY 2**

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** Exodus 2

**FOCUS VERSES:** Exodus 2:1-10

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** Instead of the Nile being the means of Moses' death, God used it to be the instrument of his deliverance. Not only did his family get to keep and raise him for the next several years, but they did it under Pharaoh's protection and with his money. God took a 'basket-case' situation and turned it around for His honor and glory because Moses' parents trusted in God. Read Romans 8:28. How does this apply to Moses' family in their situation? How does it apply to YOUR LIFE at this time?

Too often the second part of Romans 8:28 is ignored, "for those who love the Lord." This is a condition that must be met for the first part to be in effect. Did Moses' parents love and obey God? (Read Hebrews 11:23) What proof is there of this in their lives? Do you love and obey God? What proof is there of this in your life?

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** Moses spent the first 40 years of his life learning the world's wisdom in Pharaoh's home. He spent the next 40 years in the desert caring for sheep. Killing a lamb for the Passover deliverance from Egypt would be especially meaningful to a man who spent 40 years raising and caring for sheep.

FOR FURTHER STUDY: Read Hebrews 11:24-26. Moses spent about 4 years with his Jewish slave family and then 36 years being raised and trained in the leading home of the leading nation of the day. Why do you think he chose a slave people over the opportunity to be Pharaoh over Egypt? How does Proverbs 22:6 apply to this? In what ways can you claim this promise for your family?

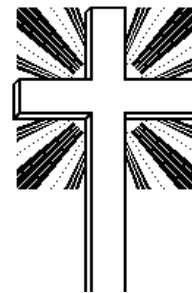
PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Claim Proverbs 22:6 as God's promise to you for your children or children you know. Claim it in the lives of adults you know who were taught God's word when young but have now gone away from it.

## **DAY 3**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Exodus 3

FOCUS VERSES: Exodus 3:1-10

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: After 400 years God is going to keep His promises to return the Jews to Palestine and bless them there. It must have seemed to them that God forgot and things would never change, but that was not the case. God never forgets His promises. He will keep every one in His proper timing. Are there any promises of God that you have given up on in your life or in the lives of those you love? It may be a child in rebellion, a financial or health need that is unmet, a relationship that isn't right, or a sin you can't seem to get victory over. Could it be that He hasn't forgotten but has a reason for waiting to fulfill His promise? What reason might He have for not fulfilling His promise yet? How should you respond until He does fulfill it?



PASSOVER TIE-IN: Moses had his doubts that the deliverance of Israel from Egypt would go smoothly. He was right. Things would have to get much, much worse for Israel and for Egypt before each would submit to God's will. In fact, death had to come. It was only the innocent blood of the Passover lamb that would keep the Jews from being killed as the Egyptians were. After all, the Jews weren't any more righteous or deserving of God's care than the Egyptians. It was God's grace that chose Israel and then delivered them. This will be fully seen in the Passover lamb as the means of deliverance.

FOR FURTHER STUDY: List Moses' five objections to God's direct order (Exodus 3:11 - 4:17). After each one put the answer God gave to Moses to assure Moses. Which of these five excuses do you use to keep from serving God and telling others about Him? How does God's answer to Moses' objections apply to you? What should you do starting today to better obey and serve Him?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Ask God to forgive you for doubting His promises just because He hasn't fulfilled them as quickly as you would like. Reaffirm your faith in Him no matter how long He takes, trusting in His sovereign love to do what is best.

## **DAY 4**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Exodus 4

FOCUS VERSES: Exodus 4:18-23, 27-30

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: God warned Moses that Pharaoh would not listen and let them go, but God also gave Moses what he needed to ultimately prevail. God could have forced Pharaoh's heart to respond right away but didn't. Still, warning Moses about what he will face must have really helped. God didn't want Moses surprised at the opposition or thinking God wasn't in control. God warns us that when we follow Him things won't be smooth and easy. He wants us to not be surprised and to remember that He is still in control of it all. Is anything happening in your life that you thought would be smoother because you were doing it in obedience to God's direction (like home schooling your children, turning your finances over to God, witnessing to loved ones, etc.)? How did God want Moses to respond to the opposition he would face? How should you respond?

PASSOVER TIE-IN: Again we see that death must come before Israel could be delivered (Exodus 4:22-23). Only God's provision of innocent blood (Passover lamb) will spare the Jew's death. It is nothing they can

do. Sin brings death (as seen in Moses almost dying for sin (Exodus 4:24) and only God's grace shown in the Lamb of God makes provision to escape death.

FOR FURTHER STUDY: Moses himself was almost killed by God on the way back to Egypt because he hadn't fully obeyed God and had his sons circumcised (Exodus 4:24-26). Leaders (in church as well as family) must make sure that they are fully following God no matter what. A sad sidelight to this event is that his wife went back to her home and took her sons with her. Moses only saw them one time after that, and they were never reunited. Obviously Satan was trying to use Zipporah to keep her husband Moses from fully obeying God (the same thing he tried with Eve and Job's wife). Satan will hit us at our most tender spot to get us to compromise ever so slightly. Where is he most effective in hitting you? In what ways are you compromising for the sake of loved ones? What would God have you do about it?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Request perseverance in faithfully serving God no matter the opposition. Reaffirm your trust in God despite the opposition, trusting that He knows what is best.

Ask God to show you where you may be compromising due to pressure from a loved one. Confess it as sin and ask for courage to not give in. As soon as you are done praying write out a plan of action to change the compromise.

## **DAY 5**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Exodus 5

FOCUS VERSES: Exodus 5:1-9, 19-23

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: Again we see things getting worse for God's people when they obey Him (no straw for bricks). Instead of trusting God, the Jews blamed Moses (v. 20-21) who in turn blamed God (v. 22-23). Who do you usually blame when things don't go right (be honest)? Do you silently blame God inside because your life isn't as smoother than it is?

PASSOVER TIE-IN: God is testing the Jews to show them how weak their love and obedience is. He wants them to learn to trust Him no matter what. Until they learn to trust Him with their very lives, by putting the innocent lamb's blood on their door, they won't have victory over their enemies.

FOR FURTHER STUDY: The Jews asked Pharaoh if they could go into the desert to sacrifice. This was before the law requiring sacrifices was given. Read the following passages and write what it says about innocent animal sacrifices being offered. This is what the Jews in Moses' day know about sacrifice.

Genesis 3:21

Genesis 4:3-7

Genesis 8:20; 12:7; 13:18

Genesis 22:1-14

Genesis 26:25; 35:1

SACRIFICES THROUGHOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT When the Jews left Egypt they went to Mt. Sinai. There God gave them many regulations about offering sacrifices: who, when, why, where and how. Much of Exodus and most of Leviticus cover this. All this was to cover sin until God's stain-remover came. For 1400 years this picture continued, then came the Lamb of God.

JESUS THE LAMB OF GOD It was prophesied that the Messiah would be the Lamb of God (Isaiah 53:7-8). John recognized Jesus as the fulfillment of this (John 1:29, 36), as did Paul (I Cor 5:7), Peter (I Peter 1:19) and Philip (Acts 8:32).

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Confess your sin of blaming others when things go wrong. Confess any sin of blaming God that things in life aren't always the way you want them to be. After praying ask those you have been blaming to forgive you, too.

## **DAY 6**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Exodus 6

FOCUS VERSES: Exodus 6:1-8

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: God's various names reveal different aspect of Himself. "God" (Hebrew 'El') is the generic name for God the creator. He first revealed Himself to His people as "God Almighty" (Hebrew 'El Shaddai' meaning 'God, The Mountain One,' highlighting His invincible power). Job especially uses this name many times. Now He is revealing Himself as "LORD" (Hebrew YHWH, often written Yahweh or Jehovah). It means "He is" or "He will be" and is the third-person form of the verb translated "I Am." When Jesus claimed this name as His own the Jews tried to kill Him for blasphemy (John 8:58). The Jews before this weren't totally ignorant of this name but God had never revealed its full implications as the name of the One who would redeem His people. Now, as He delivered His people from Egypt by blood (Passover lamb) and power (Red Sea) they and their descendants would see a new aspect of God. Thus "LORD" is God's covenant name with His people, promising their victorious deliverance. It is an entirely different name than that translated "Lord" which means "Master." The Jews of Moses' generation were to experience God's deliverance. When has God been "LORD" in your life (how have you experienced God's deliverance in the past)? What is your favorite name for God and why? If you could make up a name for Him, describing Him as you see Him, what would it be?

PASSOVER TIE-IN: For God to be "LORD" and deliver His people innocent blood had to be shed to cover the guilty. This is what the Passover meal celebrates. This is a type of Jesus, Whose innocent blood was shed for our deliverance from sin, Satan and eternity in hell. The Passover shows God as "LORD".

FOR FURTHER STUDY: They Jews didn't hear God's promises because they were discouraged because of their difficult circumstances (6:9). The only antidote to that is trusting in God's promises (6:2-8). Count the promises God makes to the Jews in this passage. When are you most apt to get discouraged? List some Bible promises to claim when you get discouraged.

WEEK-LONG STUDY PROJECT: (World History) Do a special study of Egypt during this time (1500 - 1440 BC). The date of the exodus of the Jews is 1440 BC. What was happening in other parts of the world? Reading about Egypt during this time can be a good way of tying in world history with the Bible.

Or (Geography) Study the Sinai Peninsula this week. Learn what you can about the geography, weather, climate and history of the area. This will help you understand where Moses spent the last 40 years and where the Jews will go when they leave Egypt.

### **READ ABOUT THE PASSOVER**

Historical Celebrations: Old Testament Times: The children of Israel began the keeping of the Passover in its due season according to all its ordinances in the wilderness of Sinai (Num 9:5). In the very beginning of their national life in Palestine we find them celebrating the Passover under the leadership of Joshua in the plains of Jericho (Josh 5:10). History records but few later celebrations in Palestine, but there are enough intimations to indicate that it was frequently if not regularly observed. Thus Solomon offered sacrifices three times a year upon the altar which he had built to Yahweh, at the appointed seasons, including the Feast of Unleavened Bread (1 Kings 9:25 = 2 Chron 8:13). The later prophets speak of appointed seasons for pilgrimages and sacrifices (compare Isa 1:12-14), and occasionally perhaps refer to a Passover celebration (compare Isa 30:29, bearing in mind that the Passover is the only night-feast of which we have any record). In Hezekiah's time the Passover had fallen into such a state of desuetude that neither the priests nor the people were prepared for the king's urgent appeal to observe it. Nevertheless, he was able to bring together a large concourse in Jerusalem during the 2 nd month and institute a more joyful observance than any other recorded since the days of Solomon. In the 18 th year of King Josiah, however, there was celebrated the most memorable Passover, presumably in

the matter of conformity to rule, since the days of the Judges (2 Kings 23:21; 2 Chron 35:1 ff). The continued observance of the feast to the days of the exile is attested by Ezekiel's interest in it (Ezek 45:18). In post-exilic times it was probably observed more scrupulously than ever before (Ezra 6:19 ff).

Historical Celebrations: New Testament Times: Further evidence, if any were needed, of the importance of the Passover in the life of the Jews of the second temple is found in the Talmud, which devotes to this subject an entire tractate, Pecachim on which we have both Babylonian and Palestine gemara'. These are devoted to the sacrificial side and to the minutiae of searching out and destroying leaven, what constitutes leaven, and similar questions, instruction in which the children of Israel sought for 30 days before the Passover. Josephus speaks of the festival often (Ant, II, xiv, 6; III, x, 5; IX, iv, 8; XIV, ii, 2; XVII, ix, 3; BJ, II, i, 3; V, iii, 1; VI, ix, 3). Besides repeating the details already explained in the Bible, he tells of the innumerable multitudes that came for the Passover to Jerusalem out of the country and even from beyond its limits. He estimates that in one year in the days of Cestius, 256,500 lambs were slaughtered and that at least 10 men were counted to each. (This estimate of course includes the regular population of Jerusalem. But even then it is doubtless exaggerated.) The New Testament bears testimony, likewise, to the coming of great multitudes to Jerusalem (John 11:55; compare also 2:13; 6:4).

At this great festival even the Roman officers released prisoners in recognition of the people's celebration. Travel and other ordinary pursuits were no doubt suspended (Compare Acts 12:3; 20:6). Naturally the details were impressed on the minds of the people and lent themselves to symbolic and homiletic purposes (compare 1 Cor 5:7; John 19:34-36, where the paschal lamb is made to typify Jesus; and Heb 11:28). The best-known instance of such symbolic use is the institution of the Eucharist on the basis of the paschal meal. Some doubt exists as to whether the Last Supper was the paschal meal or not. According to the Synoptic Gospels, it was (Luke 22:7; Matt 26:17; Mark 14:12); while according to John, the Passover was to be eaten some time following the Last Supper (John 18:28). Various harmonizations of these passages have been suggested, the most ingenious, probably, being on theory that when the Passover fell on Friday night, the Pharisees ate the meal on Thursday and the Sadducees on Friday, and that Jesus followed the custom of the Pharisees (Chwolson, Das letzte Passahmal Jesu, 2nd edition, St. Petersburg, 1904). Up to the Nicene Council in the year 325, the church observed Easter on the Jewish Passover. Thereafter it took precautions to separate the two, condemning their confusion as Arianism.

The Jewish Passover: After the destruction of the temple the Passover became a home service. The paschal lamb was no longer included. Only the Samaritans have continued this rite to this day. In the Jewish home a roasted bone is placed on the table in memory of the rite, and other articles symbolic of the Passover are placed beside it: such as a roasted egg, said to be in memory of the free-will offering; a sauce called charoceth, said to resemble the mortar of Egypt; salt water, for the symbolic dipping (compare Matt 26:23); the bitter herbs and the matstsoth. The cedher (program) is as follows: sanctification; washing of the hands; dipping and dividing the parsley; breaking and setting aside a piece of matstzah to be distributed and eaten at the end of the supper; reading of the haggadah shel pecach, a poetic narrative of the Exodus, in answer to four questions asked by the youngest child in compliance with the Biblical command found 3 times in Exodus and once in Deuteronomy, "Thou shalt tell thy son on that day"; washing the hands for eating; grace before eating; tasting the matstzah; tasting the bitter herbs; eating of them together; the meal; partaking of the matstzah that had been set aside as 'aphiqomen or dessert; grace after meal; Hallel; request that the service be accepted. Thereafter folk-songs are sung to traditional melodies, and poems recited, many of which have allegorical meanings. A cup of wine is used at the sanctification and another at grace, in addition to which two other cups have been added, the 4 according to the Mishna (Pecachim x.1) symbolizing the 4 words employed in Ex 6:6-7 for the delivery of Israel from Egypt. Instead of eating in haste, as in the Egyptian Passover, it is customary to recline or lean at this meal in token of Israel's freedom.

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Thank God for all He has delivered you from. Name as many things as you can. Also thank Him for delivering you from many more things that you aren't even aware of, and preventing countless disasters from overtaking you. Thank Him for being "LORD" in your life.

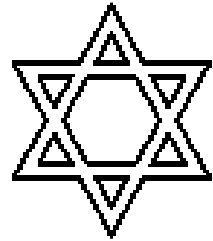
Pray for any people coming to the Last Supper meal who haven't accepted Jesus as their Savior. Especially remember any Jews who may be coming. Ask that God would start now to open their spiritual eyes to His truth. Pray that nothing would interfere with their coming or being open to God's word. Pray, too, that they would come to accept Jesus as their Savior through this.

## **DAY 7**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Exodus 7

FOCUS VERSES: Exodus 7:8-13, 19-22; 8:6-7

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: It seems each time God performed a miracle through Moses and Aaron that Satan performed the same miracle through his magicians. Satan is a counterfeiter. He loves to counterfeit the things of God but in such a way that he steals God's glory. He does it today, too (Mark 13:22). Why does God allow this? Why doesn't He put an end to it immediately? How can we know the difference between God's work and Satan's counterfeits? What counterfeits of Satan's in your life do you have to watch out for?



PASSOVER TIE-IN: Again we see blood as a picture of judgment. Here it is on Egypt, warning them of the blood of the firstborn that will soon cover the land if they don't repent. Our blood won't be spilled in judgment because Jesus shed His for us.

FOR FURTHER STUDY: II Timothy 3:8 names the two magicians who opposed Moses as Jannes and Jambres. What else does that passage say about them?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Ask God to give you wisdom to see Satan's counterfeits for what they are. Ask for spiritual discernment in your life and for your family and loved ones. Ask God to reveal any counterfeits or deception that Satan may be doing in your life. Ask also for the strength and courage to face and change these things.

## **DAY 8**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Exodus 8

FOCUS VERSES: Exodus 8:20-24

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: As God steps up His judgment on Egypt, He exempts His people Israel from the consequences of that judgment. From now on no plague will touch God's people (8:22-23; 9:4,6,11,26; 10:6,23; 11:7). God preserved Noah from judgment in the worldwide flood, and Lot from judgment in Sodom and Gomorrah. He will preserve us from the tribulation judgment by rapturing us before it. Eternally He preserves us from the judgment of hell by taking us to be with Him in heaven forever. What does this teach us about God? Think about this in detail and spend some time worshipping Him for this.

PASSOVER TIE-IN: The Jews didn't do anything to earn or deserve their preservation from judgment (death on each firstborn). All that stood between them and judgment was the innocent lamb's blood. All that stands between us and eternity in hell is the innocent blood of the Lord Jesus Christ - but it is enough!

FOR FURTHER STUDY: In the plagues that Satan counterfeited he could only make things worse, not better. He could make more blood, but not fresh water (7:24), and he could make more frogs but not remove them (8:6-8). Before long even the magicians recognized God's power as greater than theirs (8:19) but Pharaoh would not. Why was Pharaoh so prideful and stubborn? Why wouldn't he submit to God? Do you have a problem with pride and stubbornness? Is there any area of your life that you haven't submitted to God, or that you submitted but have taken back? Do not harden your heart.

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Thank, praise, worship God for the promises of His future preservation of you for all eternity. How would your life be different now if you weren't going to heaven? Thank Him for that.



Pray for those you know who have hardened their hearts against God. Pray that God would do whatever is necessary to soften their hearts so they are open to Him.

## **DAY 9**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Exodus 9

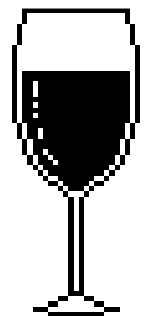
FOCUS VERSES: Exodus 9:13-26

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: Even in the midst of judgment there is mercy provided for those who will take it (9:19). God is ever a God of mercy. Unfortunately many then did not avail themselves of God's merciful warning (9:20-21). They suffered the consequences. Where would you be without God's mercy? In what ways do you not avail yourself of His offered mercy and therefore suffer consequences (for example: not accepting His forgiveness and forgiving yourself after you sin, being too hard and perfectionistic on yourself, expecting more of yourself than God expects, not coming to Him for help with 'little things', etc.)? What can you do about this NOW?

PASSOVER TIE-IN: The Egyptians had a chance to avail themselves of God's mercy by bringing their animals inside. Only a few did so. They will also be given a chance to put blood on their doors so their first-born don't die. Some have learned from this experience with the hail and apply the blood and thus are saved. God is using this to show them that He will preserve ANY, Jew or Egyptian, who pass under the blood. It is the blood that matters, not the nationality of the person.

FOR FURTHER STUDY: Notice how often you read "Pharaoh hardened his heard" and "God hardened Pharaoh's heart." How could both be true? This is the age-old question of God's sovereignty versus man's free will. Paul used Pharaoh as an illustration of this in Romans 9:17. How can we reconcile these two? The answer is that we can't. It can't be done by human minds. There is an answer, but it is far beyond our ability to understand it. These limited 'computers' of our brains just don't have the capacity to run God's deep programs. This is true of other things like the Trinity, what was here before God, and what is at the end of the universe. We must just accept sovereignty and free will as both being true. They are mutually exclusive, each one 100% true. We can't try to put them together or reconcile them. Pharaoh is 100% responsible for hardening his heart and will readily admit so when He stands before God. It is also 100% true that God is in total sovereign control of it all. How can both be true? I don't know. No one does, but they are. Don't let something like this be used by Satan to be a distraction to you. Don't let him keep putting it into your mind in such a way as to doubt God's power or love. The enemy loves to use things like this to take our focus off God and put doubt in our minds. Beware! Submit your limited understanding to God's great wisdom.

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Thank God for His mercy in your life, in little ways as well as large ways. Name as many as come to mind. Ask Him to forgive you for turning down His mercy from time to time. Ask Him to help you humble yourself so you will always turn to Him for mercy and not let your pride get in the way.



## **DAY 10**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Exodus 10

FOCUS VERSES: Exodus 10:21-29

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: This plague was a direct affront to one of the main Egyptian gods, Ra the sun god. It shows how powerless any other gods are compared to God. Darkness is always associated with evil and sin. Light is a picture of Jesus. Darkness is always used to describe hell, and light (Shekinah glory) is a picture of heaven. God's people will never be in darkness (v. 23). This is all by his grace and mercy, it is not anything we earned or deserve (Ephesians 2:8-10). Imagine how the Jews appreciated light when it was total darkness everywhere else. Often we, too, presume on God's blessing and light in our lives and don't appreciate it as we should. Make it your goal today to thank God over and over that you can live in His light instead of darkness.

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** The plague of darkness was the last warning before the final judgment of death. Hell will be darkness (II Peter 2:17; Jude 6, 13). Man without God sees death as darkness. God is giving a final warning and chance to the Egyptians to avoid eternal darkness and isolation by giving them a taste of temporary physical darkness and isolation. While the Jews are partaking of the Passover meal, under the protection of the blood of the innocent lamb, the oldest son in each Egyptian home without the blood was experiencing the eternal darkness of hell.

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Compare (what is similar) and contrast (what is different) light and darkness (John 1:4-9; 3:19-20; 8:12; 9:5; 12:35, 46). Why is darkness used to picture sin, evil, and hell? Why is light used to picture Jesus, joy and heaven? Think carefully, don't just quickly put down the first things that pop into your mind.

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Thank God for shining His light on you so you don't have to walk in darkness. Think for a moment about what your life would be like in darkness, if you never had Jesus' light. Apply that to this world as well as eternity.

## **DAY 11**

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** Exodus 11

**FOCUS VERSES:** Exodus 11:4-8

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** All the plans and dreams of a father were bound up in his firstborn son, who received a double share of the family estate (Deuteronomy. 21:17). They were the strength and the future of the nation. Judgment on the firstborn represented judgment on the entire community. Still, grace can be seen in that all the rest of the Egyptians were left alive to repent and ask for mercy. Even in judgment God shows grace and mercy. You may think that you are going through a particularly bad time, but think how many ways you can still see God's grace in it. How could things be worse?

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:22). It seems unreal to think that a red, sticky substance smeared on the frame of your front door could mean the difference between life and death. It wasn't the chemical mixture called 'blood,' it was faith in the One who was showing that innocent blood must be shed to cover a guilty man's sin. Is your faith in Jesus alone?

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Read Hebrews 9:11-28. What do these verses say about Jesus's blood? Make a list of as many truths, facts, observations and principles as you can from this passage. Read it slowly and prayerfully.

**WEEK-LONG STUDY PROJECT:** (Animals) Study lambs and sheep this week. Be reading about their habits, needs, characteristics and weaknesses. The Passover Lamb will be better appreciated and understood.

## **SHEEP MINI UNIT STUDY**

### ***Bible***

Discuss the figurative uses of the words sheep and shepherd: Jesus is our Passover Lamb. Sheep are also figurative of believers who follow the shepherd. One without a leader is like a sheep without a shepherd. Jesus is our Shepherd. Discuss the responsibilities of a shepherd: protect, feed, shelter, etc. Read aloud *A Shepherd Looks at the Psalms*, by Phillip Keller.

### ***Life Science or Biology***

**Research:** Some of a sheep's characteristics includes hoofs, cud-chewing, four-compartmented stomach. They are also placentals. Find out about these and other characteristics and write a definition of each.

**Classify:** Make a list of several types of sheep and classify by breed. Include wool breed, hair breed, and merino strains.

**Write a Report:** Choose one of the following sheep behaviors to research and write about: life cycle, lambing; breeding; gestation; and life span.

READ THE FOLLOWING Sheep are mentioned more frequently than any other animal in the bible - about 750 times. This is natural since the Jews were wandering herdsmen, a occupation well suited for Palestine's dry plains. The sheep were used for food (milk, cheese, butter and mutton) and clothing (wool, skins). By nature sheep are helpless and depend on the shepherd for water, pasture, guidance and defense. They are often used as an example of how God takes care of us (John 10:1-18; Psalm 23).

**'LAMB OF GOD'** It is no coincidence, then, that the first descriptive name used of Jesus was LAMB. It happened when He first went public in His ministry. He wasn't seen as King, Lord or even God, although He was all these things. He was seen as "the Lamb of God" (John 1:29, 36). That's what John called Him when Jesus came to where John was baptizing. Why 'lamb'? Because that describes Him and why He came. Sure, He was called Jesus, Savior and Christ/Messiah, but all of these refer to what He did as the Lamb of God. Jesus means 'saves,' Savior means 'deliverer,' and Christ/Messiah' refers to His being 'anointed' for death. By calling Him the 'Lamb of God' the people would all understand that He was the one come to pay for the sins of all. How would they know this? Because they knew all about the Passover Lamb.

**ANIMAL SACRIFICES** When Adam and Eve sinned innocent blood had to be shed to cover their sin. It was God Himself (God the Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, is the One who appears to man in both Old and New Testament). This picture of covering sin by innocent blood continued through Able, Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

This is clearly seen when Abraham took Isaac to offer to God as a sacrifice (Genesis 22:7-8). God provided a ram to die in Isaac's place, as a substitute. This very rock became the spot where the temple was built, and the blood poured each year on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) to cover the nations sins. It was on this same mountain that Jesus was crucified and died. Ultimately Jesus was Abraham's substitute for Isaac, so he didn't have to kill his son. God, however, had no other Substitute, for Jesus was the only One who could pay for our sins, so Jesus Himself died there as our substitute. The analogy is beautiful and striking.

## ***Animal Husbandry/Agriculture***

Agriculture is the science and industry of managing the growth of plants and animals for human use. Agriculture includes the breeding and raising of livestock and dairying, under the science of Animal Husbandry.

**Brainstorm and List:** What would it be like to have a commercial sheep farm? Think about what is involved with purchasing, raising, and caring for sheep (feeding, lambing, shearing, sheltering, etc.).

**Discuss:** What are the advantages and disadvantages of animal supplements such as hormones, antibiotics, vitamins, and other substances used to increase growth or productivity? What are the health risks to humans that consume meat grown with such additives? Find out how much of the meat in a grocery store has been raised with additives?

**Discover:** Research the sheep dog and its relationship with the sheep and with the master (a fascinating study!), necessary training, innate ability, and dog shows. Read Phillip Keller's Lessons From a Sheep Dog.

**Chart Statistics:** Research the number of breeds; how many in the world; and the number in the United States. Make a chart recording your findings.

**Investigate:** Find out about the sheep industry and products: Research wool manufacturing. Include different types of wool; textiles, production; clothing, manufacturing, labeling, pelts, carpeting, and sheep skins. Research sheep in the food industry. Include lamb and mutton; food processing; preservation, or the world food supply. Sheep also provide milk for drinking and making cheese. Sheep are also used to make parchment.

## **Geography**

**Explore a Country or State:** The leading sheep producers in the world are: 1.) Australia 2.) United States 3.) China. In the United States, the leading sheep-producing states are Texas, California, Wyoming, South Dakota, and New Mexico. Choose one each of these countries and states to study.



## **Language Arts**

**Learn to Research:** Research involves the generation, collection, organization, retrieval, and reporting of recorded knowledge. Look up in the encyclopedia: sheep, sheep farming, animal husbandry, zoology, shepherds, and wool. Include these periodicals in your research: Ranger Rick and National Geographic Magazines.

**Books and Stories:** Bible stories of Jesus, Moses, or David, are sources of references to sheep. You can also find references to sheep in many nursery rhymes, like “Baa, Baa, Black Sheep,” “Mary had a Little Lamb,” and “The Little Lamb,” (Random House Picture Book). Again, look to Phillip Keller’s A Shepherds Look at the Psalms for fiction stories about sheep, or you could find other fictional works. Nonfiction works about sheep and sheep farming include M. B. Goffstein’s The First Books (includes Brookie and Her Lamb).

**Creative Writing:** Write about a shepherd and his relationship with his sheep, or sheep and sheep farming. Or write an allegory, a folktale, or a story for children. Then write a poem about a lamb. Find out about different types of poetry (figurative, narrative [epics, ballads], dramatic, or lyrics). Younger children can dictate their stories or draw illustrations and explain it.

**Add to your Vocabulary:** Record all the new words you have heard during this unit. Discuss the meanings or look them up and write the definitions.

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Spend some time sincerely thanking God, from the bottom of your heart, for Jesus' innocent blood shed for your sins. Remember, His blood stood for His life which He gave up for you. If you would have been the only one who ever sinned He still would have come to earth and done the same thing just for you! Thank Him for that.

## **DAY 12**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Exodus 12

FOCUS VERSES: Exodus 12:1-13, 29-30

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: This Passover deliverance, culminating with their escape through the Red Sea, is the main event in the Old Testament. Everything before this points to it, from here on everything looks back to it. In fact, this



is so important God started their calendar over making that Passover meal day one! The New Testament equivalent, of course, is the death and resurrection of Jesus. Everything in the New Testament before that points to it, and after that looks back to it. Our calendar, too, dates from the life of Jesus. Our weekly calendar starts with Sunday as the first day for it was the day of resurrection. In the Old Testament God delivered by blood (Passover) and power (Red Sea). The same in the New Testament. The blood (Jesus on the cross) and power (resurrection) is shown giving the ultimate victory. The Old Testament event is just a picture -- but what a picture! You know, His blood and power are available for each one of us who ask. Blood (salvation) and power (Holy Spirit [Acts 1:8] to help us live victorious Christian life) are available for each one of us now. If you aren't availing yourself of what God so freely offers don't put it off any longer!

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** This is it! Please take time to carefully read the whole chapter. Even read it again in a different translation. Exodus 12 is too key a chapter to skip over lightly.

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Take a little time and read Exodus 13-15 to see how the Jews were delivered from Egypt. Pharaoh again changed his mind and decided to make them stay so God ... well, you better read it for yourself.

Exodus 12:24 says the Passover celebration is to be "a lasting ordinance" for Israel. It still is celebrated today. You'd find it very interesting and informative to learn about how Jews today still celebrate the Passover (they call it a Seder because they cannot sacrifice and eat a lamb since the only place they can kill it, the temple in Jerusalem, is in Arab hands). Ask a Jewish friend or call a local synagogue for information. Find a book in the library (children's or adult sections), read about it in the paper or watch a program on TV as the time gets closer. Be alert to what is going on in Jewish homes the same time as we will be having our Last Supper meal.

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Thank God for revealing His plan and purpose so carefully in the Old and New Testament. Thank Him for the Bible, for without it we wouldn't know about the Passover, Last Supper, or salvation in Jesus. Thank Him for preserving it and keeping it true for us to read and trust today.

## **DAY 13**

In order to understand Jesus' Last Supper you have to understand 1) the meaning and purpose of the Passover in the Old Testament (Exodus 1 - 12) and 2) the meaning and purpose of the life and death of Jesus in the New Testament (John 1 - 21). These two great strands of truth meet at the Last Supper, forming one new, greater river of truth. Having completed the Old Testament portion of this study, we now move on to the New Testament portion.

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** John 1

**FOCUS VERSES:** John 1:29-36

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** The Jews knew a lamb was the main sacrifice on the Passover. They studied, memorized, and lived Exodus 1 - 12. It was like the American Revolution is to us. The Passover lamb was like our Liberty Bell. They knew all about the lamb when John used the term to refer to Jesus. Why do you think John used this term to refer to Jesus? What similarity was there between Jesus and the Passover lamb? Why was this term used for Jesus' first public introduction instead of "king" or "lord" or "God" or something like that?

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** The Passover lamb couldn't remove any sin. It was just a picture of the coming true sacrifice which could and would remove sin. Jesus as the lamb was already marked and labeled for slaughter. I'm sure hearing Himself called the "lamb" brought the whole reality of what He would have to go through home in a very real way. That's why the very next thing He did was get alone with God for 40 days to fast and pray so He could go through with being God's lamb. That, too, is why Satan hit him so hard during that time about this very thing. All the temptations were the same in that they tempted Jesus to set up His throne without being a 'lamb' and dying for mankind's sin.

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** The Jews in Jesus' day and John knew what the Old Testament said about the sacrificial lamb from passages like Isaiah 53:7, Jeremiah 11:19 and Genesis 22:8. Read each one and write down what John would have learned from them.

John and Jesus were related (distant cousins). I wonder how much he knew about Jesus and His coming ministry. How did he know at this time that Jesus was the Lamb of God (Messiah)?

#### READ THE FOLLOWING:

**THE PASSOVER LAMB** The most complete and detailed picture of this, though, is given in Exodus 12. The Jews were in slavery and bondage in Egypt and, after a year of plagues, God is about to redeem them by killing the firstborn in all of Egypt. The problem, though, was that the Jewish firstborn was as deserving of death as the Egyptian firstborn, maybe more so because he was more accountable to God. How could God just overlook their sin? As a just and holy God, He couldn't. What He could do, though, was provide a substitute. The Passover lamb was the substitute, a picture of the ultimate Substitute which would one day die for all of our sins.

The blood of animals only 'covered' sin. Only Jesus' blood removed it. It would be like having a grape juice stain on a nice white rug. Without any way of cleaning the rug, all you could do was put a throw rug over it and 'cover' it up. Then one day someone shows up with a stain remove that will get the stain out. The throw rug is no longer needed. Animal sacrifices are like that throw rug. The blood of Jesus is the only cleanser for sin

**THE LAMB CHOSEN** (Exodus 12:3, 5b) Lambs were innocent, gentle, meek, helpless animals, a picture of Jesus as a man. The lamb had to be unblemished (perfect, spotless Jesus) and a male (the strength and energy of Jesus). It had to be 1 year old (in the prime of life).

**THE LAMB KILLED** (Exodus 12:6a) The lamb alive did no good, though. It had to die. It's blood had to be shed. Jesus' perfect life only condemns us, showing that a perfect life can be lived. It is only His death that saves us.

The person owning the lamb would place his hands on the animal's head and confess his sins, thus making the lamb accountable for the sin. Thus the animal had to die, for sin brings death. It was killed by having its throat slit and the blood caught in a bowl.

The lamb to be the Passover substitute was chosen and set aside on 10 Nisan to make sure it was spotless and unblemished. Four days later, on 14 Nisan, it would die. For almost 4 years Jesus ministered in public, under the careful eye of all who watched, showing He was perfect and without sin. Then He died on 14 Nisan. Both died at 3 PM – same time on the same day. Jesus was the fulfillment of the Passover lamb.

Killing a lamb you had raised from birth was a good picture of the wastefulness and death that sin brings. Innocent blood must be shed to cover the guilty. The whole sacrificial system was built on this premise. Within the next year the Jews would be putting the finishing touches on the Tabernacle, where sacrifices would continue until the time of Jesus. The tabernacle, then the temple, were designed by God to show that innocent blood must be shed to cover sin.

**THE LAMB'S BLOOD APPLIED** (Exodus 12:7) The living lamb couldn't save, neither could the lamb killed. It was only as the blood was applied personally that sin was covered. If the blood was on the door, the family was safe. If there was no blood then death entered. Nationality didn't matter, or how well educated, or how rich – only the blood mattered.

"Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins" (Hebrews 9:27). "The life of the flesh is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11). Our good works are like "filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6) or a "dung heap" (Phil 3:8). Only the blood counts, because it stands for Jesus' life.

The blood had to be applied in such a way that it was publicly visible. It was applied to the front door by the person responsible for the house. Hyssop was used. It was used in rituals of purification and cleansing. The lamb was slain on the door stoop and the blood painted on the top and sides of the door. Actually this formed a cross, with the blood being at the same places where Jesus bled on the cross: head, hands and feet.

After the blood was applied the people had to enter into the house, 'through the blood' as it were. When they entered there was blood above, below and on both sides of them. Then they had to stay inside all night to be safe. Outside was death, inside was life. When the angel of death saw the blood he would "Pass over" and not stop to bring death to that home. The blood was sufficient. "When I see the blood I will pass over." It was a 'sign' – to the angel of death, to neighbors (believers and unbelievers

alike), to angels and to Satan and his forces. It was a 'brand' of security. Jesus' blood is our security, our 'sign' of eternal life (Eph 1:7; I John 1:7; I Peter 1:19; Mt 26:28; Heb 9:12; Rev 1:5; Rom 5:8-9).

**THE LAMB'S BODY EATEN** (Exodus 12:8-10, 46) After the lamb died the blood was applied, and the body had to be used in it's way, too. The body was eaten. The lamb didn't die just to be looked at but to be personally identified with by eating. This would give them nourishment and sustenance for the coming journey. Jesus died for our sins, but He also provides the nourishment and strength we need to go on after salvation (John 6:53-57). The Jews had to feed on the lamb that same night, we can't put off partaking. There was nothing to be left over so it didn't decay (Jesus' body didn't decay). It was to be eaten roasted, not raw or boiled. This was to be a picture of Jesus facing not just death but also fire – hell judgment on the cross. It couldn't eaten raw, it had to go through the fire. Jesus had to go through our hell to redeem us. It couldn't be boiled in water, for there was no water to slacken Jesus' thirst. No bone was to be broken, a common practice to eat the marrow within. This was prophesied of Jesus.

Thus the lamb had to be chosen (Ex 12:5) as Christ volunteered to die for our sins in eternity past (I Pt 1:20). It has to be kept (Ex 12:5), a picture of Christ in life (Mat 3:17; 17:5). Then it was slain (Ex 12:6), Christ sacrificed (I Cor 5:7). Then it was roasted (Ex 12:8), a picture of Christ's sufferings (Ps 88:7; 89:46). Then it had to be fed on (Ex 12:5, 8) as we feed on Christ, pictured in the Lord's Supper (I Cor 5:8).

**INSIDE** The Jews were to eat standing up, dressed, with outdoor traveling clothing on, sandals on their feet and walking staff in one hand. This was a reminder that Egypt was not their home, they weren't to settle there, they were there temporarily and just passing through. That must be our approach to life in this world as well.

**UNLEAVENED BREAD** Along these same lines, they were to not take time to let their bread rise. There was to be no leaven in it. Leaven is a picture of sin. It is a yeast (fungus) which grows and decays. It will destroy the whole batch unless stopped (by cooking). Sin is like that (I Cor. 5:6-8). For 7 days they were to eat unleavened bread. This pictures Jesus' sinless life and body, and why we are to make sure there is no sin in our lives when we partake of the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:23-32).

**DEATH OUTSIDE** While those with blood on their door were inside, safe, feeding on the lamb, the others were facing God's judgment of death. They were not safe. In the early days of this country those crossing a prairie were in danger of fires out of control traveling rapidly to where they are and beyond. The Indians showed them a way to be safe. When they saw a fire coming they would start a fire near where they were, then when it burned itself out move into that area with their possessions. Thus when the main fire came roaring through they were safe. As the Indians said, "Where the fire has been, the fire cannot come." When we enter through the blood, and place ourselves at the foot of the cross, we are in God's 'burnt-over' area. Jesus took our judgment so we have no danger of ever being under judgment (Romans 8:1).

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Thank Jesus for not giving in and setting up His throne without first being the innocent Lamb of God sacrificed for sin on the cross. What would life be like for you if He had given in? Thank Jesus for willingly being the lamb, set apart before the foundation of the world.

## **DAY 14**

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** John 2

**FOCUS VERSES:** John 2:12-19

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** The temple, like the tabernacle before it, was the special place where sacrifices were offered to God. This was to be done in worship and thanksgiving to God. The religious rulers were just using this to take advantage of the people and extort ("bleed") huge amounts of money from the poor people. Jesus, who was to fulfill what the temple and the whole sacrificial system stood for, was quite sensitive to this and tried to correct it. This was the prophesied sign to show who was the Messiah (Malachi 3:1-3; Psalm 69:9,17). By doing this Jesus claimed to be

God's Messiah. He knew and foretold His coming death and resurrection (v. 19). The Jews remembered what He said, but didn't believe it. Three years later they used these very words to condemn Jesus to crucifixion (Matthew 26:60-61; Mark 14:57-59) and mock Him on the cross (Matthew 27:40; Mark 15:29). Already Jesus had set His focus on God's will, not His own pleasure.

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** From the very beginning Jesus was committed to being the sacrificial Lamb for our sins. He knew it and didn't turn from it. He wasn't just caught up in some power-play that went sour, as some would say. Everything in His first coming was focused on being the Lamb of God. When He comes again, however, it won't be as a lamb to die but as a lion destroying all who oppose Him (Rev. 5:5). What an event that will be! There will be NO mercy then, though?

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Matthew, Mark and Luke record a cleansing of the temple by Jesus just before He was crucified. Evidently He did it at the very start and very end of His ministry. Why two times? Why spread out as they were? Read Matthew 21:12-17 and compare (what is similar) and contrast (what is different) the two events.

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Thank Jesus for volunteering to be our sacrificial lamb even before the world was created, and then sticking to that commitment. Thank Him for coming in mercy the first time, so we won't have to fear his second coming in judgment.

## **DAY 15**

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** John 3

**FOCUS VERSES:** John 3:1-5, 16-18

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** The Jews, even the religious leaders, were so into their 'religion' God that they missed having a relationship with God. Everything had degenerated into externals: do this, don't do that. They were just going through the motions and missed the real essence of a personal relationship with the living God. That's why Nicodemus didn't understand what Jesus was talking about. Today that can happen, too. Even we who have been 'born again' can get so caught up in the outer actions that our inner closeness to Jesus fades and we just 'coast.' Jesus called this hypocrisy. That's a danger today for those who are involved in church and a Christian family. We, like Nicodemus, can focus more on what we do and don't do than on personally staying close to Jesus. Our children can pick that up from us, and they can grow up learning the do's and don'ts without the inner reality behind it. Make sure you don't just go through the motions and play 'Christian' today. Make sure you feed your personal relationship with the creator of the universe.

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** The whole sacrificial system in the temple, which was patterned after the tabernacle, had also become just a series of external observances void of real meaning. God never intended it for that (Hosea 6:6). Even the Passover celebration then, like today, was external and void of real meaning and significance. Most of the people just went through the motions out of habit.

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** In Hosea 6:6 God says "I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings." What does He mean by that? What does God want first and foremost from us? Sacrifice apart from faithfulness to the Lord's will is wholly unacceptable to Him. Also read I Samuel 15:22-23; Isaiah 1:11-20; Jeremiah 7:21; Amos 5:21-24; Micah 6:6-8; Matthew 9:13; 12:7.

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Ask God to clearly show you any and every area in life where you are just going through the motions in your relationship with Him. Ask Him to convict you of any hypocrisy, focus on externals, or legalism in your life. Confess that as sin and ask Him to point it out every time it happens so you can turn from it. Thank Him that all He wants is our love and devotion, a personal relationship with us, and not empty outer conformity.



## **DAY 16**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: John 4

FOCUS VERSES: John 4:4-13, 25-26

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: This is the only time before His trial that Jesus openly and specifically said He was the Messiah. Even the Samaritans understood that a Messiah was to come. Actually, Jesus couldn't have used this term of Himself with the Jews for they misunderstood it to refer to a military deliverer who would defeat Rome. Thus among the Jews Jesus used the title "Son of Man" (referring back to Daniel 3:25, where He was with Daniel's 3 friends in the fiery furnace) to identify Himself as God. What name or title do you most prefer to use for Jesus when you think about Him? When you pray to Him? When you talk about Him to others? Why do you use the titles and names you do?

PASSOVER TIE-IN: All peoples know inside there is something missing in life and that only God can meet that need. It is a God-shaped vacuum inside each one of us. Many deny it and deaden it, but God puts it in everyone. Even this immoral Gentile woman was looking for something more in life. She, too, knew God was going to reach out to man in the Messiah. In Egypt many Egyptians killed a lamb and put its blood on their door. They, too, were delivered by blood and power. The Last Supper wasn't just a Jewish event, it was a mankind event. It was open to all and included all who will come -- Jews, Egyptians, Samaritans, Gentiles today, and anyone.

FOR FURTHER STUDY: Use a concordance and look up references to Jesus as the "Son of Man." When and how does He use the title of Himself? How do His listeners respond to it?

It is very interesting to compare John 3 (Nicodemus) and John 4 (woman at the well). How do they compare as people? Compare (what is similar) and contrast (what is different) how Jesus spoke to them. Make a chart if that will help. Carefully draw some conclusions from this that can help you in presenting the gospel to different kinds of people that you meet today.

WEEK-LONG STUDY PROJECT:( Science - Biology) Research blood this week: exactly what is it? How is it produced? What all does it do? This can be an interesting and informative way of tying science in with the Passover lamb and also the blood of Jesus.

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Thank God that He has revealed Himself to you so you can have a meaning and purpose in this life and beyond. Thank Him that Gentiles, too, are welcome to come.

Slowly repeat as many names of Jesus as you can think of, remembering their significance. Use this as a way of worshipping and developing your personal relationship with Him.

## **DAY 17**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: John 5

FOCUS VERSES: John 5:19-24, 45-47

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: When Jesus refers to Himself as God's 'Son' He isn't referring to Himself as less than, under, or inferior to God in any way (as some cults infer from this relationship). To the Jews a son was equal to a father because they were one essence. Jesus as God's Son was part of, equal to, in the same family as God. When we accept Jesus as our Savior we are born into that family, too. God is our Father, Jesus our elder brother, and we are all brothers and sisters with each other. It is only because Jesus welcomes us in as His brothers and sisters that we can be part of God's family. When my son brings home a friend that he loves and is important to him I likewise welcome and accept him. The same is true when Jesus brings us home to His father. In fact, He doesn't just welcome us as a friend, He adopts us as an equal part of the family. We don't become 'God' as Jesus was, but because we are "in Christ" He shares all His rights and blessings with us. What a tremendous privilege that is!

PASSOVER TIE-IN: Jesus says that "Moses wrote about Me" (v. 46). Moses wrote Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and probably Job. The highlight of Moses' life and writings was the Passover -

Red Sea event. Nothing more clearly teaches about Jesus' work than the Passover lamb, that's why John the baptizer used that as the title to introduce Jesus to the world for the first time.

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** On the day of His resurrection Jesus appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus and showed them all Moses and the rest of the Old Testament had taught about Him (Luke 24:25-27, 44). This would include appearances before His birth, prophecies and types (pictures, like the tabernacle and Passover lamb). Get a paper and pencil and, without using any reference books, from memory write all you can think of in the Old Testament that in any way teaches about Jesus. These are the things Jesus was referring to in John 5:46 and which He taught the disciples in Luke 24:25-27,44.

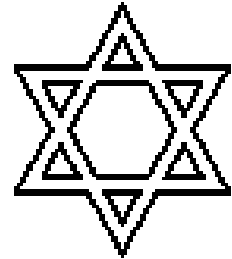
**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Thank God for the privilege of being part of His family and united with His Son. Quietly pause and meditate on all that it means to you to be a Son of God.

## **DAY 18**

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** John 6

**FOCUS VERSES:** John 6:25-37, 48-51, 58

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** Just as Jesus had told the woman at the well that He was Living water, now He says He is Living bread. Each is essential for life. Bread is nourishment. It gives health and strength. That is what Jesus is to each one of His followers. He showed this by the feeding of the 3,000 and the 5,000. In every way, though, God's provision through Jesus is superior to God's provision of manna through Moses. Jesus gives us the sustenance we need to live: wisdom, encouragement, guidance, comfort, conviction, teaching, courage, insight, strength, etc. Whatever we need for our spiritual health, a diet of 'Jesus' provides. What are you in need of for this day? Turn to Jesus as your bread of life and be nourished in Him.



**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** The bread the Jews took with them when they left Egypt didn't have leaven, for there was no time to let it rise. Unleavened bread pictures Jesus in His purity. Leaven is a picture of sin in the Bible because it decomposes and decays and, unless stopped, spreads and ruins everything. Bread was essential for life. After crossing through the Red Sea, God provided another kind of bread - manna. This was perfect, also speaking of Jesus. Jesus says it is a picture of Himself. How many ways can you list that Jesus is like the unleavened bread or manna from the time of Moses?

There is a true story about how a stolen bucket started a war and ended a career. One day long ago a soldier took an attractive bucket from a public well, just for the fun of it. The bucket got passed on from one person to another until it was given to prince Henry of Sardinia. A great fuss was made over it, ending in a war to get it back. Prince Henry himself was captured and put in prison. His father, the king, offered a golden chain 7 miles long to get him back. The offer was refused in anger. The prince lay in prison for 20 years until he died. The war continued until most of the governments of Europe were involved. Thousands of lives and much property was lost, and all because of such a 'little thing' like taking a bucket! It was just a little thing, but look at the consequences.

Now think for a moment. Is there such a thing as a 'little' sin? Maybe in our sight some sin has more serious consequences and brings greater guilt, and other sin seems to be beneficial and pleasurable – but is there really any difference in God's sight? "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet offends in one point is guilty of breaking the whole law" (James 2:10). It doesn't sound like God thinks ANY sin is small, does He?

**SIN IS SIN** 'Sin' means 'to miss the mark.' "For all have sinned (missed the mark) and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Our target is to be like Jesus, as holy as God. It doesn't matter if we miss by 1 inch or 1,000 miles, we still miss. A pass is incomplete in football if it is off the fingertips, or 20 yards over the receiver's head. All sin is sin. In fact, 'little' sin can be said to be worse than other sin because it is more subtle and dangerous. We are more apt to commit 'little' sins, as our enemy knows. That's why we are tempted in that way more often. Often we get so used to them we don't realize they are really sins. Actually victory in the Christian life doesn't come so much from winning the big battles as the little battles, for if the little battles over sin would be won, there wouldn't be any big battles. Big

battles mean sin has been left go and not defeated when 'little.' The only way to win big battles is to start winning some of the 'little' ones related to that area of life, then the big battles will be won. Thus avoiding 'little' sin is a very key truth for God's people. It is an important lesson to learn.

In fact, it is so important, it is the very first lesson God teaches His people after salvation (Passover blood on the door). The first truth He teaches them is not prayer, knowing God's will, or spiritual gifts. It is about the deadliness of 'little' sin. God uses leaven as an illustration of this point, making His point clear.

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** This is the first of seven self-descriptions of Jesus introduced by "I Am". In claiming this name Jesus was admitting it was He who appeared to Moses in the burning bush (Exodus 3:14). That the Jews understood this connection is show by the fact that they tried to kill Him for blasphemy when He said it (John 8:58). These seven are: 8:12; 9:5; 10:7,9; 10:11,14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1,5. Make a list of these on a piece of paper. Circle the one or ones that you appreciate most at the moment.

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Thank Jesus for being your nourishment and health. Ask Him to supply what it is you need for nourishment today. Name everything specifically (patience, endurance, joy, wisdom, etc.).

## **DAY 19**

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** John 7

**FOCUS VERSES:** John 7:37-44

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** The Feast of Tabernacles was one of the three great feasts in the Jewish Year. It is similar to our Thanksgiving. It commemorated the recent fall harvest as well as God's goodness to the people during the desert wanderings. Part of the ceremony focused around bringing water into the temple. Fresh, cool, clean water was scarce and valuable in Jerusalem. It was in connection with this ceremony that Jesus made His claim to satisfy and fulfill as good water fulfills. Water is a basic need for life, as is Jesus. Both refresh when tired. Both cleanse when dirty. Both comfort, bring enjoyment and pleasure, and heal. There's nothing like a gurgling stream running through a forest. There's something about moving water that fascinates and relaxes everyone. All this is true of Jesus, too. Can you think of any other parallels? What 'spiritual water' do you need at this time in your life (cleansing, healing, nourishment, refreshment, pleasure, strength, etc.)? Jesus will provide it if you come to Him.



**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** There were three great feasts each year when Jewish men who could were required to travel to Jerusalem to worship. They were Passover, Tabernacles, and Dedication. The whole Jewish social calender revolved around these most important times. The life of the nation revolved around them. The most popular and important one was Passover.

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Learn more about the Feast of Tabernacles from Leviticus 23:33-43; Deuteronomy 16:13-15; Zechariah 14:16-19 and a Bible dictionary.

Note the similarities between what Jesus says here about being the Living Water and what He said in John 4. One was given to a Gentile, the other to Jews. List as many ways as you can that Jesus is similar to fresh, pure water.

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Thank God for being your 'spiritual water' to meet any and all needs you may have. Specifically ask Him to meet whatever needs you have at the present, naming them one by one. Then trust Him to meet them and don't worry about them during the day.

## **DAY 20**

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** John 8

**FOCUS VERSES:** John 8:31-41, 58

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** There is nothing so sad as a person in bondage who does not recognize that he is in bondage. The world is full of such people today. It has always been full of

such people. In today's passage Jesus tried to show the people in His day that they were slaves to sin. A slave does not have freedom to do as he pleases, his every moment is directed and controlled by an outside force. This is what sin does to man. The worst thing a person can do is to convince themselves they are free when they are not. Spiritual blindness is one of Satan's best tools, for without seeing a need man will never be open for a solution. Those who don't realize they are sick will never go to a doctor. Unfortunately we, too, can be guilty of this same thing. Is there a sin in your life that you try to justify, to block out and ignore, to pretend isn't there, to convince yourself is OK? If so, you are in the same kind of bondage to it. The first step is to admit it is sin, then go to the One who frees from slavery to sin - Jesus. He and He alone can help you!

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** The Jews in Jesus' day denied they were slaves to anything or anyone -- or ever had been (v. 33)! Despite their constant celebration of the Passover and its reminder of their deliverance from slavery, they claimed to never be slaves. No wonder they didn't appreciate their deliverance from Egypt! They had 'rewritten' their history to make it more politically correct to what they wanted to believe about their past, and thus had stopped giving God any thanks for they had eliminated His work for them. They did this despite God's clear commands to keep the Passover as a reminder of His deliverance provided for them! How similar this is to the USA today!

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Not only were the Jews slaves in Egypt, they also were slaves in Babylon and Medo-Persia. Currently they were ruled and controlled by Rome, although they had more freedom than slaves. Still, many were taken into slavery. From a history book or Bible dictionary read about Rome's rule over the Jews at this time in their history (33 AD).

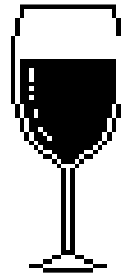
**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Ask God to show you any sin you have hidden. Confess (admit) it as sin. Ask Him to free you from bondage to it.

## **DAY 21**

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** John 9

**FOCUS VERSES:** John 9:1-7, 35-38

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** Jesus performed miracles for several purposes. They weren't only done to alleviate suffering, but also to teach truth. In general they were to show He had God's power so people would listen to what He had to say. Specific miracles such as this one of restoring physical sight were to show He could also restore spiritual sight to those who were spiritually blind (v. 39-41). At least the physically blind knew their state and could ask for healing. Those who are spiritually blind, then as well as today, seldom recognize it. They think they are the ones seeing clearly. That is one of Satan's major deceptions among unbelievers today. Make sure Satan hadn't blinded your spiritual sight in any way.



**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** Satan's purpose is to blind and deceive (John 12:40), this is especially true of the Jews today. Thus they go through the motions of the Passover at this very time but miss the real meaning. They just don't 'see' the spiritual truths we do. They are blinded to them. Pray for them.

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** While Israel is spiritually blinded even to today, this will not continue forever. Read Romans 11:7-31. Summarize in your own words what Paul is saying about Israel's blindness and future.

**WEEK-LONG STUDY PROJECT:** (Science - Chemistry & Biology) Study leaven and yeast this week. What kind of plant is it? How does it work? What good does it do? What harm can it do? How is it used in cooking? Try some experiments making things with and without leaven. Try some other experiments letting dough rise a long time compared to a short time. This will be very helpful in seeing how and why the Bible equates leaven with sin.

Make 2 balls of dough. Put leaven in one but not the other. Let them set for awhile, then bake them. How are they different? How does the taste compare? Which do you prefer?

Search your house for leaven and put it all in one box to be set aside and not eaten while you are celebrating this feast.

**FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD** During the time of darkness God had told Moses all about eating bread without leaven (Exodus 12:15-20). Moses passed this on to the people (Exodus 13:3-10) and the people obeyed God's instructions (Exodus 12:34, 39). On the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the new month, Nisan, they were to set aside an unblemished male lamb one year old and then on the 14<sup>th</sup> kill it and eat it after applying the blood to the door posts. They were to eat the meal standing and ready to leave Egypt, so there was no time to let dough rise and then bake it. They were to mix dough and take it with them to cook along the way, but to not put any leaven in it. For 7 days they were to eat bread with no leaven, Nisan 14 to 21. This became called the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

**LEAVEN** Everything focused on the leaven – or lack of it. Yeast is a microscopic plant invisible to the naked eye which is placed in a substance called leaven. It is actually a fungus which can be dried for long periods of time which springs to life when it comes in contact with moisture and warmth. The cells will multiply with tremendous rapidity. Starch and sugar turns into carbon dioxide gas and alcohol. This causes the dough to 'rise' as the air bubbles in it expand. This process would continue and turn the dough sour if the yeast wasn't killed by high temperatures at the right time. This is where the baking comes in. The heat kills the growing cells and stops the fermentation (decomposition). Thus unleavened bread is flat, more solid, lacking in air bubbles. For this reason leaven is a picture of sin.

**LEAVEN = SIN** Nothing in the world spoils like sin. It ruins whatever it touches unless stopped by confession and cleansing by the blood of Christ. Leaven must be destroyed before bread can be eaten. Sin must be destroyed before a Christian can become like Jesus. Paul, in I Corinthians 5:6-8, uses leaven as a picture of sin. He says it is little and hidden, but grows and spreads to destroy everything unless stopped.

Recently a huge tree in Colorado fell to the ground with a resounding crash. It was over 400 years and had just started growing when Columbus came to America. It had been struck by lightning 14 times, stood through winds, earthquakes, fires and storms. Yet it was killed by a little beetle which bored under the bark and chewed away the mighty fibers of the tree, one tiny bite at a time. That's how sin works. That's what leaven pictures.

Paul takes this leaven analogy a step further. He equates leaven to Christ, referring to Christ's sinlessness in order to be our sin sacrifice. Just at the unleavened bread was 'sinless' (no leaven), so Christ Himself was sinless. The unblemished Lamb of God was also the unleavened Bread of God. Thus when Jesus said 'this is My Body' about the bread, it truly applied for it was a picture of His sinless body.

Try having a special unleavened dessert or snack that you only serve during this feast. This can be something.

#### **SWEET CORN BREAD**

1 cup whole wheat flour  
1 cup corn meal  
4 T honey  
1/3 cup butter  
1 egg  
1 cup milk

Grease cookie sheet. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Mix flour and corn meal in plastic bowl. Add honey and butter, then microwave until melted. Mix, then add milk and egg mixture. Beat until smooth. Spread onto cookie sheet. Cook ten minutes. Cut while warm.

#### **WHOLE WHEAT FLAT BREAD**

4 cups finely ground whole wheat flour  
1 1/2 t salt  
3 T butter  
2 egg yolks  
2 T olive oil

1 cup milk or water

Make the dough – sift flour, then add salt. Cut the butter into flour mixture. In another bowl, beat egg yolks, adding oil slowly. Pour this mixture into dough and stir with spoon or fork until it forms a ball of dough that comes away from the side of the bowl. Knead lightly on a floured board for about a minute to shape dough into soft ball.

Lightly flour the board again, pinch off about one-third cupful of dough and with the hands pat it as thin as can easily be done, then roll it thinner with rolling pin. Keep working the dough and rolling it until dough is so thin it just holds together without breaking when handled. Place rolled dough on ungreased baking sheet and mark into squares of any desired size with a knife or make bread sticks. Bake in preheated oven at 400 degrees for 8-12 minutes until puffed, or very lightly browned.

#### APPLE BETTY CRISP

4 sliced apples

½ teaspoon cinnamon

¼ teaspoon salt

¼ cup water

1/3 cup butter

1 ½ teaspoon lemon juice

½ cup whole wheat flour

½ cup rolled oats

1 cup brown sugar

Put apples in 9" pan, sprinkle with salt and cinnamon. Pour in water. Drizzle with lemon juice. In separate bowl, mix flour, sugar, and oatmeal. Sprinkle over apples, then drop butter over apples. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour.

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Thank Jesus for opening your eyes spiritually so you can perceive the great truths about Him revealed in the Bible. Pray by name for those you know who are in spiritual darkness. Pray their eyes would be open to God's truth so they can be aware of their need of Him. Bind up the spiritual blindness that oppresses them and ask for God's light to shine through giving them sight.

Pray for unbelieving Jews, too, that God would open their eyes and remove their blindness so they can see the truths conveyed in the Passover celebration this year.

## **DAY 22**

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** John 10

**FOCUS VERSES:** John 10:1-18, 25-29

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** Jesus is not only a sheep (Passover lamb), He is also a shepherd, the Good Shepherd. As such He leads and feeds His sheep. He protects them with His life, and even disciplines them out of love. Sheep are totally unable to find water or food on their own. They can't even find their way back home like other animals can. They have no defense (speed, camouflage, horns, wings, strength, shell, etc.) and are totally helpless animals. It seems God created them just so He'd have an animal to use to show us what we are like! The worst part of all this with sheep is that they tend to get stubborn and think they can take care of themselves. This is very dangerous. We, too, are very much like that. Isn't it great we have a patient, merciful Shepherd?

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** Sheep and shepherding were common in Jesus' day. Sheep could be seen most everywhere, and many young boys started earning money by watching sheep. Thus the analogy of Jesus as a lamb was well understood by all. We today are much further removed from sheep than they were. They got personally involved with their sheep, like we do with our pets. They had names for their sheep and knew their special needs and habits. When they had to kill a young one because of their sin it really showed them the awfulness and waste of sin. If it was that way for a lamb, how much more for the Lamb of God. Suppose you had to kill your pet as a picture of innocent blood covering sin?

FOR FURTHER STUDY: Read Psalm 23 in light of John 10. Think of Psalm 23 as Jesus Himself speaking directly to you today. What would He say to you and your situation? What promises can you claim? How does it make you feel to think of Jesus as your personal Shepherd all day?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Ask God to help make real to you the awful price that was paid for our sins, the terrible waste of God Himself having to suffer and die because of what each one of us did. Thank Him. Thank Jesus for being your personal Shepherd today. Thank Him for His patience and mercy with you. Pray specifically about what you need from Him. Also pray about your responsibility to Him as shepherd (trust, obedience, thanks, etc.).



### ***Mary Had The Little Lamb***

Mary had the little Lamb, who lived before His birth;  
Self-existent Son of God, from Heaven He came to Earth.  
Micah 5:2

Mary had the little Lamb; see Him in yonder stall —  
Virgin-born Son of God, to save man from the Fall.  
Isaiah 7:14

Mary had the little Lamb, obedient Son of God;  
Everywhere the Father led, His feet were sure to trod.  
John 6:38

Mary had the little Lamb, crucified on the tree  
The rejected Son of God, He died to set men free.  
1 Peter 1:18

Mary had the little Lamb—men placed Him in the grave,  
Thinking they were done with Him; to death He was no slave!  
Matthew 28:6

Mary had the little Lamb, ascended now is He;  
All work on Earth is ended, our Advocate to be.  
Hebrews 4:14-16

Mary had the little Lamb—mystery to behold!  
From the Lamb of Calvary, a Lion will unfold.  
Revelation 5: 5,6

When the Day Star comes again, of this be very sure:  
It won't be Lamb-like silence, but with the Lion's roar.  
Psalm 2:12  
Revelation 19:11-16

## **DAY 23**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: John 11

FOCUS VERSES: John 11:38-53

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: There is a story about a little girl in Sunday School who, when asked why Jesus said, "Lazarus, come out!", replied that if He didn't call Lazarus by name everyone in the graveyard would have come back to life! That's true, you know. Jesus is here showing His power over death, and even a not-so-recent death. If He can bring Lazarus back to life who has been dead and decaying for four days (v. 39), wouldn't He be able to bring Himself back to life after three days? He is trying to show them His resurrection power (v. 25). How about you? Does death scare you? Read, even memorize I Corinthians 15:26,55 and you will see that we have nothing to fear from death after we accept Jesus as our Savior.

PASSOVER TIE-IN: Jesus is about to go to Jerusalem for the Passover (v. 55-57) -- His final one. The stage is set for His arrest and crucifixion because He brought Lazarus back to life right outside Jerusalem. This forces the religious rulers to take action. They can no longer ignore Him. Jesus knows the timing of this all and is setting things up so He will be arrested and killed. A lamb went ignorantly to its slaughter, but the Lamb of God is arranging for His own death. That's why He came to earth.

FOR FURTHER STUDY: Jesus didn't go to heal Lazarus right away, but let him die first (v. 6). He had a good reason for it, so He would be glorified by bringing Lazarus back to life. It wasn't that He didn't care about Lazarus, it was that He knew Lazarus was willing to do whatever was necessary for his Lord to be glorified. When have you thought Jesus waited too long to come to your aid and help? As you look back, can you see some reasons why He may have done that? Are you willing to go through whatever He thinks is necessary for HIM to be glorified?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Thank God that you have nothing to fear in death because death is under the power and control of Jesus. Ask Him to take away any fear you may have of death.

Tell God you are willing to go through whatever is necessary for Jesus to be glorified in your life. Trust that He knows what is best and will never give you too much or desert you.

## **DAY 24**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: John 12

FOCUS VERSES: John 12:23-36

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: When God became man (Jesus) He voluntarily laid aside the divine attributes that would have made it easier for Him to face what lay before Him (Philippians 2:6-8). He faced life and death as a man, just as we would. He relied on God's power, the same as we can. In John 12:27 we see that anticipation of the cross (suffering what we would suffer for all eternity condensed and concentrated in a few hours) was more than He could take as a man. Still, He refused to ask God to save Him from this death, but instead recommitted Himself to go through with it for God's glory. He put God's glory before His own comfort, something we must do if we are to be like Jesus. We know the story of the crucifixion so well it can easily lose its impact on us. We can become cold and hard to the awful suffering it brought Jesus, even in anticipation of it. Be realizing what it really meant to Jesus even at this time we can better praise Him for going through with it for our sake. That should motivate us to see sin for the awfulness it is and to obey and please Jesus for what He did for us.

PASSOVER TIE-IN: Jesus knew it would soon be over, He knew people had to make a decision one way or the other. With Jerusalem expanded from 100,000 people to about a million for the Passover, He wants to reach as many as possible. Jesus speaks about His coming death (light to darkness - v. 35-36) and resurrection (kernel planted to produce more - v. 24). He is using the Passover celebration that is on everyone's minds to show it is going to be fulfilled in Him!

FOR FURTHER STUDY: Many were believing in Jesus during this time, but because of fear of what people would think of them kept it quiet (v. 42-43). Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea are just two. How they



must have regretted it when it was too late! Do you have a problem with fear of what people will think of you because you are 'different' as a Christian? Do you sometimes not speak out for Jesus because of fear of rejection or criticism at home or work? Use this time of the year to tell others about Jesus the Passover Lamb and His resurrection from the dead for them!

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Thank Jesus for going through with His work on the cross. If He would have turned from it no one could have blamed Him. In fact, no one would have know about it. We'd spend this life separated from God and then eternity in hell. Thank Him for going through with it!

Confess your sin of fear in speaking out for Jesus when you know you should. Ask His forgiveness. Ask Him to give your courage and boldness to speak for Him as He wants you to.

## **DAY 25**

John 13 through 16, along with the chapters in Matthew, Mark, and Luke about the Last Supper, will be covered verse by verse at our Last Supper meal. Reading them now will help you better understand and appreciate what we will be learning and doing then. Please do this prayerfully.

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** John 13

**FOCUS VERSES:** John 13:1-9

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** Luke tells us that Jesus started the Passover meal by saying, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." Jesus knew what would be happening that evening (John 13:1-3) and, frankly, He was a bit shook at what was coming. Could He withstand the pain of eternity in hell? Could He endure the rejection and judgment of God? As a man He would surely fold. Only in God's strength could He go through with it. Thus He needed the support of His disciples at this time. But, like when He asked them to pray with Him in Gethsemane, they totally left Him down. Instead of them being able to minister to Him in His need, He had to minister to them in their sin (not washing each other's feet). When He needed them most, they let Him down. Still He loved them and patiently taught them. When we let Him down, and we do more often than we realize, He continues to love and teach us. What a wonderful, patient, loving Savior we have!

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** The meal started with hand-washing for cleansing. The disciples had clean hands, but their feet stunk with the grime and refuse of the streets (which also served as their sewers). Jesus knew they could not begin such a special time with dirt on their bodies that symbolized the uncleanness in their hearts (pride, lack of humility, not wanting to serve others by washing others' feet, etc.). Make sure you cleans all sin in your heart as soon as you are aware of it in anticipation of our Last Supper meal.

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Mark 14:12-16 and Luke 22:7-13 tell about the events of the day that prepare for the Passover meal that evening. Read them and think through (or let children act out) what was done that day. You will be getting a handout that explains in detail the preparation of this day. You will be instructed in how to do many of the same things they did. This will add special meaning to your evening.

Every year since He was 12 Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Passover and Unleavened Bread. The events of His final days and hours on earth center around these feasts. In fact, Jesus changed the meaning of the juice from the blood of the Passover lamb to His blood. He also changed the meaning of the unleavened bread from being a reminder of their quick flight from Egypt to be a reminder of His sinless Body broken for us (Luke 22:14-22).

When Jesus had the Last supper with His disciples, He took the matzo that represented the Jews leaving Egypt and said that it now applied to His body. "Take, eat; This is my body" (Mt 26:26). The cup of grape juice that they drank was a picture of the lamb's blood. When the Jews left Egypt and were living intents they didn't have door posts to paint with blood, so they used the blood of the grape as the same picture. By drinking it they were identifying with the lamb's blood, applying it to their lives. Jesus said this way now to picture His blood. "This is My

blood of the covenant" (Matthew 26:28). Thus Jesus was saying that the Passover no longer applied to the lamb of Exodus 12 and the physical deliverance from Egypt, it now pictured the Lamb of God and the deliverance from sin and death.

The number one miracle in the Old Testament was the Passover and Red Sea deliverance. This was a picture of what would be done by Jesus and was the focal point of the Old Testament and Jewish history. The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus was, of course, the number one New Testament event. In fact, it was the number one event of history of all time.

Paul passed this significance on in I Corinthians (11:23-32). He enlarged the analogy to show that we, too, must be sinless when we partake of the Lord's Supper. Like unleavened bread, we must not have sin we hold onto in our lives. We must remove all leaven/sin from our lives. If not, God will discipline us to remove it. It is a serious contradiction to partake of that which symbolizes Jesus' work for us on the cross while still having sin in our own lives.

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Ask God to forgive you for the times you let Him down. Thank Him for His mercy and patience. Ask Him to reveal any sin in your life so you can come before Him with a clean heart.

## **DAY 26**

For the Jews in Jesus' day, preparation for the Passover started months in advance. Roads were evened, bridges repaired, and the city cleaned and readied. Graves and grave markers were whitened so no one would accidentally touch one and thus be 'unclean' and unable to partake of the Passover. Travel plans were made months, sometimes years in advance (especially if a Jew was coming from a far-away country, as thousands always did). Travel by foot took days or weeks, depending on the distance. Ships weren't much faster. Passover was actually seven days long, the last six days also being called the Feast of Unleavened Bread. To the Jews it was Thanksgiving, Christmas and July 4th rolled into one!

The city swelled from 100,000 to one million people. There were no hotels or motels. Everyone in the city opened their home and roof. When all this space was taken people simply camped on the Mount of Olives or on the streets. A trip to Jerusalem was the highlight of the year for those living in Palestine. For those from foreign countries it was the highlight of their lifetime, the highest privilege a Jew could experience on this earth.

In each home the women were cleaning all week in preparation for the Passover celebration. Food was prepared in advance. Excitement was in the air everywhere!

**IF YOU WANT TO HAVE YOUR OWN LAST SUPPER AS JESUS HAD IT**

**TABLE CENTERPIECE** for this week could be a lamb. Find a stuffed one in your home, or make one from an empty thread spool, pipe cleaners and cotton. Look at it and treat it like a pet, keeping in the back of your mind that at the end of the week it will have to die as a picture of innocent blood needing to be shed to cover your sin. By placing it on your table you can remember what this week is leading up to. It can keep your conversation on this, too.

**BIBLE MEMORY VERSE.** If you haven't been working on the memory verses at the end of the "Daily Devotionals" packet, pick one or more to really work on this week. Put it on a banner, bulletin board, or black (or white) board. Go over it each day, even each meal.

**DAILY DEVOTIONALS** for this week are included in the "Daily Devotionals" packet. Even if you haven't been doing them up to this point, make sure you do them this week.

**FOOD PREPARATION** You will probably be assigned food to bring to the Last Supper meal. Include your children and whole family in the making and preparation of it. Let them all take part so it means more to them. Make some extra for yourself. Try some Jewish kosher recipes this week (they are available in the newspaper, library, or from cookbooks). Make sure you make some matzo to enjoy. We make it to use with soup, beans, as a bread substitute, or for an afternoon snack. It is easier than bread because it doesn't have to rise. Experiment with your favorite recipe. Just leave out the leaven. It gets better if you add extra sweetening (like honey) and even some salt. Experiment and see what you like! Its easy for children to make. They can make it in any shape they want: lamb, manger, gingerbread man, etc. Our favorite recipe for matzo is: 3 1/2 cups flour (we use whole wheat for at least half of it), 1 1/4 cups milk, 1/4 cup sugar or equivalent in honey, 1/2 cup shortening, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1 egg. Mix, kneed for 10 minutes, divide into 4 pies or whatever shapes you would like, put in oven at 400 degrees for about 15 minutes (brown and crispy).

## **DAY 27**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: John 14

FOCUS VERSES: John 14:1-6

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: Again Jesus puts their need for comfort before His own. His prediction of crucifixion (John 13:33,36) has shaken them up. Jesus' need for support and encouragement still isn't met by them, and instead He needs to keep giving to them and their needs. With love and patience He continues to do so. The way He tells them to handle the painful present is to think of the perfect future (v. 3). His message is the same for us, too. Present difficulties and trials can be born much better when we keep them in an eternal perspective. Spend more time today thinking about heaven and your eternal life with Jesus than about today's problems and pains. It'll make a difference!

PASSOVER TIE-IN: The Passover had its solemn moments, especially when remembering the bondage and slavery in Egypt. However as a whole it was a joyful, upbeat occasion because it celebrated God's deliverance by blood and power. This celebration with Jesus and the disciples was quite somber, however. Jesus was distracted by the upcoming crucifixion. The disciples started by arguing about who was best (Luke 22:24) and not washing each other's feet, then they denied they would betray Jesus, and are shaken by His prediction of death. For all He'd been telling them this over the last year, this seems to be the first time it really sunk in. All in all, it was a very subdued celebration in that Upper Room on MARCH 13-14, 33 AD.

FOR FURTHER STUDY: Jesus says He is the "WAY" (v. 6). Later the disciples picked up on this and it became their name before they were called "Christians". Read Acts 9:2 and 19:9,23. Why do you think this was chosen as their title? What does this tell you about Christ? What does it tell you about Christians? Think of yourself as a follower of the "Way." What difference should that make in your day?

WEEK-LONG STUDY PROJECT: (History) Study crucifixion: who started it, how was it done, what happened to a body as it died by crucifixion, how it compared to others means of capital punishment, etc. Use a Bible dictionary, encyclopedia, library, etc., to help. This will be a study you will never forget!

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Spend some time in quiet meditation, thinking about when Jesus returns and about what it will be like spending all eternity in heaven with Him.

Ask Him to help you live His "Way," follow Him as the 'Way,' and point the 'Way' to others today.

## **DAY 28**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: John 15

FOCUS VERSES: John 15:1-8

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** "Abide" and "remain" are the key words in this passage. How many times does Jesus use them? Why does He repeat them so often? What happens to a branch if it isn't in close contact with a vine? It doesn't have to be a mile away from the vine, even a thousandth of an inch separation means the branch will wither and not produce fruit. A branch doesn't produce fruit, it just bears (holds) the fruit the vine produces. As Christians, when we remain/abide in Jesus (no unconfessed sin, staying close to Him, etc.) He will produce fruit through us. Sometimes we think it is up to us to produce and then He'll come close to us. The order is really reversed. Our job is to abide in Him, He will produce the fruit. Are you abiding in Him today? What is the major thing that keeps you from constantly abiding in Him?

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** Vineyards were plentiful everywhere in Israel. The analogy of a vine and its branches was known to all. Each disciple at one time or another had pruned and cared for vines. The Mt. of Olives was covered with figs, olives and grapes. In fact, "Gethsemane" means "Olive Press," for it was where workers would bring olives or grapes harvested there to have them crushed so the juice could be removed. This is what happened to Jesus there when the anticipation of bearing our sin was so crushing that blood started to come out of His skin. The juice of the grape is called its 'blood', and was used at the Passover instead of lamb's blood. Instead of identifying with the lamb's blood by putting it on a door frame, the Jews in the wilderness (in tents with no door posts) started drinking grape juice (or wine) as a way of identifying with the Passover blood. It was this grape 'blood' that Jesus would say was a picture of His blood and no longer the Passover lamb's blood.

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Some of the fruit we are to bear is described in Galatians 5:22-23 as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Other fruit would include good works and those we lead to salvation. What fruit are lacking in your life today? Ask God to produce that fruit in you as you remain/abide in Him.

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS:** Ask God specifically to produce the fruit in you that you need most today. Make sure you remain/abide in Him for Him to produce it in you. Pray for those close to you, asking for the fruit you sense they could most use in their life today, too.

## **DAY 29**

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** John 16

**FOCUS VERSES:** John 16:5-16



**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** Not only does Jesus comfort the disciples by making sure they keep the present in an eternal perspective, He also encourages them by giving them hope for the present, too. Although He will be physically gone, He will be spiritually present through the Holy Spirit (v. 5-16). Things the Holy Spirit will do include: counsel (7), conviction (8), guidance (13), revelation of spiritual truth (13), and glorification of Christ (14). This is what we have when we "abide/remain" in Christ. Sin grieves and quenches the Holy Spirit's work in us. By letting Him minister to us from the inside as Jesus did to the disciples from the outside, we will be able to make it through the days ahead until we are in heaven with Jesus forever. If you are trying to live by your own power and not relying on God's Holy Spirit to work within and through you, you'll be discouraged and defeated for sure. Plug into God's free power source - the Holy Spirit!

**PASSOVER TIE-IN:** Meal time is always a good time for conversation. Some of our best family talks have come while eating. Often we talk about family matters and future plans. Jesus is using the time of eating with the disciples to talk and instruct them about their family matters and the future. Obviously it made an impression on them. Even John, who was quite young at the time, remembered it 50 years later. Jesus' words were important to him, and they are important to us. Through the Bible we can be present at the Last Supper, hearing the exact words Jesus spoke. What a marvelous gift the Bible is!

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Give some thought to the Holy Spirit. Read about Him in your Bible dictionary or reference book. You can use a concordance to look up references to the Holy Spirit and read about Him there. He is the connecting link between us and God. Often we totally ignore Him and His ministry.

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Ask God to fill (control) you with His Spirit so you can live for Him today in His power. You can only be like Jesus with Jesus working inside you by His Spirit.

## **DAY 30**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: John 17

FOCUS VERSES: John 17:1-5

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: In His time of need Jesus turned to the father in prayer. If He needed to rely on God for help to carry out God's will, don't we also? What makes us think we can live in victory without being in close communication with God? In His prayer Jesus simply poured out His heart to God, honestly expressing what He was going through. There was no complaining, nagging, bargaining or boasting. It was simply a Son talking with His Father. Often we make prayer out to be something much more complicated and difficult than it is. We, too, need to turn to God in prayer about every need, concern, joy and blessing in our lives.

PASSOVER TIE-IN: The Passover always ended in prayer. The Jews especially would pray that before the next Passover the Messiah would come. They kept a vacant seat at the end of the table for 'Elijah', whose coming would precede the Messiah as prophesied by Malachi. Jesus didn't set an empty place for Elijah, for the prophecy of his coming had already been fulfilled in John the Baptist. His closing prayer wasn't for the future coming of the Messiah, but for His own present work as the Messiah and what that would mean to His followers.

FOR FURTHER STUDY: Jesus' prayer is a fine example of how to pray. First Jesus prayed for Himself (v. 1-5), then for His disciples then (v. 6-19), and finally for His disciples throughout history, including us (v. 20-26). Look closely at each section to see what Jesus prayed. Make notes to help you pray better for yourself and others.

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Pray John 17:20-26 for yourself, remembering that Jesus prayed (and still prays) this very prayer for you. Also pray for any needs, concerns, joys or blessings in your life at this time. Just hold a close, intimate conversation with your Heavenly Father. Take time to listen, too, for that is part of true communication.

Pray that all those involved in the preparation, teaching, and coming to the Last Supper meal will be protected from the attacks, distractions and interferences of Satan. He and his forces seek to do anything possible to keep Jesus from being honored and glorified.

### **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:**

All week Jewish women cleaned for the Passover. Their dietary and kosher laws were very hard and exacting. At Passover the very difficult task of food preparation got much harder. They could not eat or even possess any leaven (anything that would ferment) during the whole seven-day festival (called the Feast of Unleavened Bread). Yeast, baking powder, baking soda and anything that could ferment on decomposition, as well as all food or drink derived from them had to be removed. This included wheat, rye, barley, oats and spelt. Even rice, peas, maize, peanuts and beans were forbidden even though they didn't ferment to make sure no fermenting foods that looked like them accidentally be overlooked. Matzo was traditionally made from wheat. The smallest amount of leaven or potential fermentation could not be present in the home. Even today Jews bag up all such food, including all cooking, eating and storage containers and take them to a non-Jewish home until after the Passover. The only way cooking utensils used for food with leaven could be used for Passover was if they were cleansed in the prescribed manner. This involves immersing in boiling water those utensils in which leaven had been cooked or boiled, and heating over an open flame until red-hot those utensils that have been used over an open fire. Glassware must be soaked in water for three days, the water being changed every day. Porous earthenware cannot be made ceremonially clean, since it is thought to retain traces of whatever has been cooked or served in it. Because of the radical measures

necessary to render these fit for use, many Jewish homemakers than (and now) own a separate set of dishes and utensils for use only at Passover. The rest are removed from the house, too.

It is the man of the home's responsibility to make sure all the leaven is gone. On the night before Passover a ceremonial search for any remaining leaven is made. Known as **BEDIKAT CHOMETZ**, this rite consists of a room-by-room search for any leaven that may have been overlooked during the routine cleaning. A candle is used, because according to the Talmud, candlelight will penetrate even the darkest corners. In order to make the search ceremony valid, a few bread crumbs are placed where they will be easily found. There is another ritual for disposing of them.

This is what you can do the evening before the Last Supper meal if you are going to have one with your family. While no one is watching the mother is to place some rather large pieces of bread of other leaven-bearing substance in easy-to-find places. Gather the family and read Exodus 12:15,19,42. Explain that leaven represented sin (Matthew 16:6; I Corinthians 5:8). The Passover bread described in Exodus was to become a symbol of the sinless Christ. The instructions are clear. Unleavened bread is to be used exclusively for the full seven-day celebration. Jews treated leaven during this time like doctors treat AIDS today. Turn off the lights and light the candle. With it look for any leaven left in the house (that which the mother placed around earlier). When you find it use the feather to push it into the wooden spoon and the put it into a small paper bag. Tie the bag shut with a piece of string. It will be disposed of in a ceremony tomorrow morning.

#### **SUPPLIES NEEDED**

1. Bible
2. Bread to hide
3. Wooden spoon
4. Feather
5. Candle
6. Matches
7. Small paper bag
8. Piece of string

As you search for the leaven, make this a teaching time for your children. Leaven represents sin. Sin, like leaven, is everywhere and impossible to remove. The pieces found remind us that there is not a person in the world who does only good. "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Talk about the spiritual truths taught in what you are doing. For example:

1. You can't go off alone in the dark, you need the light of Christ to find your way.
2. The light (Jesus) is what exposes the bread (sin), as He does in our lives.
3. Mother may forget where she put some of the pieces of bread. Some sins in our lives are forgotten until Christ's light shines on them.
4. Some pieces are hard to find. Some of our sins are very well hidden, too!

Talk together as you do this. Express what you are feeling, share your impressions. You may be surprised at how much you are learning just having fun!

While still in the dark, conclude the time in prayer together, asking God to shine His light on sin in your life so you can remove it before the Last Supper meal, too. Paul clearly warns about the danger of partaking of the Lord's Supper with unconfessed sin (I Corinthians 11:27-32), just as the Jews warned against partaking of the Passover with leaven in the house.

Turn the lights back on and read Psalm 103:12. Keep the bag overnight for use in the morning.

## IN PREPARATION FOR A LAST SUPPER MEAL OF YOUR OWN...

The Jews fasted the day before the Passover meal. The firstborn males especially were required to fast, since it is they who were spared death when the first-born males of the Egyptians died. Please consider fasting until our meal tomorrow evening. Do drink water or other fluids, though. If you don't think this would be possible then consider at least a partial fast. For example eat only one meal, or eat only half the usual portion at each meal, or eat only bread, or whatever. This will help make your Passover experience much more valuable.

## **DAY 31**

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: John 18

FOCUS VERSES: John 18:1-8

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION: As Jesus left the upper room, went through Jerusalem, and to Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives, He had to cross the Kidron River (v. 1). A small stream, dry much of the year, would at this time have had a little water mixed with lots of blood. There was a drainage system from the altar to the Kidron to carry away the blood of the tens of thousands of lambs that were being killed there for the people of Jerusalem. Imagine, one million people and a lamb for every 10 or so! The killing of the lambs had started hours ago or they wouldn't have all them butchered in time for the people to get them the next day. What must have been going through Jesus' mind as He saw the blood, reminding Him of His own blood which would soon flow on the cross. All that blood from lambs did absolutely no good, but the blood of Jesus cleansed from all sin.

PASSOVER TIE-IN: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so He did not open His mouth." (Acts 8:32; Isaiah 53:5). Now that the Passover meal was over, the fulfillment of it could begin. The Lamb was being led to the slaughter, and as prophesied He was silent and submissive. If anyone had a right to complain and fuss, it should have been Jesus. If anyone didn't deserve what was happening, it was Jesus. If anyone faced something totally unfair, it was Jesus. If He faced it trusting God, what right do we have to fuss, complain and feel sorry for ourselves? Follow Jesus' example this day. No matter what, don't indulge in feelings of self-pity.

FOR FURTHER STUDY: Read Isaiah 52:13-53:12 and Psalm 22. What do they say about the Messiah? The Jews knew these passages well. Jesus must have been very aware of them this day as He began to fulfill them. What do you think was going through His mind at this time?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS: Ask God to forgive you for your complaining, thinking things aren't fair, and feeling sorry for yourself. Confess that as sin and ask God to forgive you.

Pray for those who will be fasting today or tomorrow in preparation for the Last Supper. Pray for all the last-minute plans and preparations being made. Ask that it would all go smoothly and not distract from the main focus of this time - Jesus being glorified.

Pray also for Jews around the world who begin their Passover celebration tonight but do not see Jesus the Messiah in it. Pray God would remove the blindness and open their eyes to His truth, and that they would have the courage and humility to accept that truth and respond to Jesus as Savior.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY:

**A DAY FOR FASTING...** The Jews fasted the day before the Passover meal. The firstborn males especially were required to fast, since it is they who were spared death when the first-born males of the Egyptians died. Please consider fasting until our meal tonight. Do drink water or other fluids, though. If you don't think this would be possible then consider at least a partial fast. For example eat only one meal, or eat only half the usual portion at each meal, or eat only bread, or whatever. This will help make your Passover experience much more valuable. It will bind you in a special way to the others who are doing the same thing this day. If you have any questions or health-related issues call me, Jerry Schmoyer, at 215-348-8086.

This morning, before everyone goes their separate (or group) ways, gather together with the bag of bread crumbs and some matches. The most common way of disposal of the leaven was burning, although there were three other acceptable means of disposal. It also could be crumbled and scattered to the wind; it could be crushed and thrown into the sea; or its owner may simply renounce it as being void as the dust of the earth. Burn yours if possible, but only if you have a safe place inside or outside. Burning the leaven ('sin') shows that sin deserves the eternal hell fires of God's judgment. That is what Jesus took for us on the cross. Before you burn it read I Corinthians 5:6-8. The father says (as Jews have done for centuries): "All leaven that is in my possession, that I may have seen or may not have seen, that I have destroyed or not destroyed, let it be nullified, and let it be ownerless as the dust of the earth." The burn the bag. All together say, "Christ our Passover has made us unleavened. Thank you, Jesus."

## **CHRIST OUR PASSOVER**

### **CHRIST WAS A LAMB**

Exodus 12:3; Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29,36; I Peter 1:18-19

### **CHRIST WAS WITHOUT BLEMISH**

Exodus 12:5; Isaiah 11:5; 53:9; Jeremiah 23:5-6; 33:15-16; I Peter 1:18-20; 2:22; I John 3:5; II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 7:26

### **CHRIST TESTED, FOUND PERFECT**

Exodus 12:5-6; Hebrew 2:17; John 12:1, 12, 13; Matthew 3:17; 27:4; Mark 1:24

### **CHRIST KILLED BY WHOLE CONGREGATION**

Exodus 12; Acts 4:24-27

### **CHRIST BLED**

Hebrews 9:12, 22; Matthew 26:28; Romans 5:8-9; I Corinthians 15:3; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 2:24; I John 1:7; Mark 10:45

### **CHRIST ENDURED GOD'S WRATH**

Psalms 89:46; Jeremiah 4:4; Psalm 22:14-15; Lamentations 1:12-13; Galatians 3:13

### **CHRIST DIED 14 NISAN, ABOUT 3 PM**

Mark 15:33-34, 37

### **CHRIST REMOVED JUDGMENT**

Exodus 12:7; II Peter 2:1; I John 2:2; I Timothy 2:6; 4:10; Titus 2:11; II Corinthians 5:19; Hebrews 2:9; John 3:16; Luke 19:10; Romans 5:6

### **CHRIST ESTABLISHED REDEMPTION**

Exodus 12:12-13; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-9; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:12,15; I Peter 1:18; Revelation 5:19

## **DAY 32**

**THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION OR DISCUSSION:** Think and/or talk together about what you did and learned at the Last Supper meal. What stands out to you? What have you learned that you didn't know before? What difference do you think this will make in your life? Don't let all you felt and experienced just be gone in the rush of your daily life. Meditate on it. In fact, it's good to journal your recollections and impressions. Write down what you experienced. Younger children can dictate their thoughts for parents to write or type. This is an excellent





way of reinforcing what you learned and also having something to read in the future to remind you of this special time. In fact, I'd really like a copy of what you write. It will help me as I do these in the future.

THE REST OF THE STORY: read below for the rest of the story!

**THE LAMB AROSE** In the Old Testament, when the Passover lamb died it stayed dead. However when the Lamb of God died, He came back to life!!! Imagine a dead lamb, blood applied and body eaten, come back to live and run and jump around – not with a physical body but with a new, eternal body! It's amazing, but it's true! The Lamb still lives today, that's why we worship and praise Him. Dying paid for our sins, coming back to life assures us of eternal life.

**THE LAMB TODAY** The Lamb continues to live today, in heaven. In fact, "The Lamb" is the title given to Jesus throughout Revelation. Thirty three times He is called the 'Lamb'! As the lamb, He is in the position of sovereign glory and honor (Rev 7:17). He shares glory and grace equally with the Father (Rev 22:1, 3). He is the leader and shepherd of His saints (Rev 7:17; 14:4). Angels and believers are worshipping the Lamb (Rev 5:6,8,12,13; 15:3) singing "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise." 'Lamb' is more than a title, it is the description of Him. When we see Him we will see gentleness and purity which was slain for us. The marks of crucifixion will be on Him. We will worship Him, not because of His sovereign power, but because of His work for us as the Lamb of God, which took away the sins of the world.

**THE LAMB IN THE FUTURE** One day soon the Lamb will return for His bride – us. Then we will together share in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:7,9) while the Tribulation rages on earth. Many of those who come to salvation during this time will be martyred and will gather around the throne praising the Lamb in heaven (Rev 7:7-14; 13:8; 15:3).

Then the Lamb, to whom all judgment is committed (Rev 6:1,16; 13:8), will come and do war against the dragon (Satan - Rev 17:14; 12:11). This return will end the Tribulation (Rev 14:1) with a marvelous victory (Rev 19:11-16). No one will escape the wrath of the lamb (Rev 6:16). The Lamb will return as a lion. When Satan and sin are gone, the Lamb will reign on the throne forever, with all worshipping Him forever. Truly, "worthy is the Lamb!"