

WEEK 16: THE PASSOVER: GOD SAVES BY THE BLOOD

TEACHER BACKGROUND & PREPARATION SHEET | FOR TEACHER STUDY ONLY – NOT READ ALOUD

April 19, 2026 | Exodus 12:1–14; 12:21–31; 12:37–42

LESSON IDENTIFICATION

Week #:	16
Date:	April 19, 2026
Lesson Title:	The Passover: God Saves by the Blood
Primary Scripture:	Exodus 12:1–14; Exodus 12:21–31; Exodus 12:37–42
Supporting Scripture:	Exodus 3:7–10; Exodus 6:6–8; Exodus 11:1; Psalm 105:23–38; Luke 22:7–20; John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Peter 1:18–19; Revelation 5:9–10
Bible Timeline:	After God calls Moses and sends the plagues on Egypt, and before Israel crosses the Red Sea. This is the night God judges Egypt, rescues Israel, and begins to bring His people out of slavery.

PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON

Children should learn that God is holy, God judges sin, and God also makes a way of rescue. In Exodus 12, the Lord does not tell His people to save themselves. He gives them His own rescue plan. A spotless lamb is killed, its blood is placed on the doorframe, and God passes over the homes marked by the blood (Exodus 12:13). This lesson helps children see that salvation belongs to the Lord, not to human effort. It also helps them understand that the Passover points forward to Jesus, the true Lamb of God, who gave His blood so sinners can be forgiven (John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7).

Children should also learn something important about themselves: people need more than good intentions. They need God's mercy. Even the Israelites had to trust God's word and obey His command. This lesson should leave children with a clear and steady confidence: God keeps His word, God provides salvation, and every part of the Bible points us to Jesus.

BOOK & PASSAGE BACKGROUND

Book Name:	Exodus
Traditional Author:	Moses
Date Written:	Traditionally understood to have been written during the lifetime of Moses, after the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt and during the wilderness period. Scripture itself presents Moses as writing down God's words and the journey record in key places (Exodus 17:14; Exodus 24:4; Numbers 33:2).
Original Audience:	The people of Israel, especially the redeemed covenant community learning who the Lord is, how He saved them, and how they were to live as His people.
Purpose of the Book:	Exodus shows that the Lord is the covenant-keeping God who remembers His promises, defeats false gods, redeems His people from slavery, and comes to dwell among them. The book moves from bondage to redemption to worship. Exodus 6:6–7 is a strong summary: God says He will bring His people out, free them, redeem them, and take them as His own.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL CONTEXT

Israel had been living in Egypt for generations since the days of Joseph, but a later Pharaoh oppressed them and enslaved them (Exodus 1:8–14). The Israelites likely lived in the region of Goshen in the eastern Nile Delta (Genesis 47:6; Exodus 8:22; Exodus 9:26). They were forced into hard labor and lived under a ruler who openly resisted the Lord's command.

By Exodus 12, Egypt has already endured nine plagues. Each plague has shown that the Lord alone is God and that Pharaoh is not in control. The tenth plague, the death of the firstborn, is the final judgment that breaks Pharaoh's pride and brings Israel out (Exodus 11:1).

Several ritual and historical details matter in this passage:

Households	The first Passover is organized by family households, not yet by a later central sanctuary system. Each household was to take one animal, or share with a nearby household if the family was too small, according to how much people could eat (Exodus 12:3–4). God's rescue came to real homes, real families, and real people that night.
The Animal	The animal had to be a one-year-old male without defect, and it could be taken from the sheep or the goats (Exodus 12:5). Many teachers simply say 'lamb,' and that is understandable because the passage is commonly summarized that way, but Exodus 12 allows either a young sheep or a young goat. The requirement of being without defect matters because God appointed a fitting sacrificial substitute. This prepares the way for Jesus Christ, who is morally perfect and without sin (1 Peter 1:18–19).
Timing	The household selected the animal on the tenth day of the month and kept it until the fourteenth day, when the whole community of Israel was to slaughter the animals at twilight (Exodus 12:3, 6). This was not an improvised meal. It was a carefully appointed act of obedience under God's command.
Blood on the Doorframe	The blood was placed on the two sides and the top of the doorframe of the house where the meal was eaten (Exodus 12:7, 22–23). Hyssop was used to apply the blood (Exodus 12:22). The blood was not magical. It was the God-appointed sign that the household was under His provision of mercy.
Inside the House	The people were to remain inside the blood-marked house until morning (Exodus 12:22). Safety was found where God said it would be found. The family was not protected by bravery or movement, but by trusting the Lord's appointed shelter.
How the Meal Was Eaten	The meat had to be roasted over the fire, not eaten raw or boiled, and none of it was to remain until morning. Anything left over had to be burned (Exodus 12:8–10). The meal was to be eaten dressed and ready to leave, with cloak tucked in, sandals on, staff in hand, and eaten in haste (Exodus 12:11). This was a rescue meal, not a relaxed feast.
Unleavened Bread	God explicitly commanded that the Passover meal be eaten with bread made without yeast (Exodus 12:8, 15–20). God commanded unleavened bread, and the haste of the exodus gave that command deep memorial meaning. Deuteronomy 16:3 later calls it 'the bread of affliction' and says it reminded Israel that they came out of Egypt in haste.
Bitter Herbs	Exodus 12:8 clearly says the meal was to be eaten with bitter herbs. The passage itself does not directly explain their meaning the way Deuteronomy 16:3 explains the unleavened bread. Many faithful teachers connect them to the bitterness of Israel's slavery, especially in light of Exodus 1:14. It is best to present that as a likely significance rather than as an explanation Exodus 12 itself states outright.
A Memorial Meal	The Passover was not just for one night. God commanded Israel to remember this saving act year after year (Exodus 12:14, 24–27). God intentionally built remembrance into the life of His people.

Teacher Note: The original Passover in Exodus 12 is the foundation of the feast and must be read on its own terms. It is a household meal kept in Egypt on the night of judgment and deliverance. Keep the focus on what Exodus 12 actually says when teaching the first Passover.

IMMEDIATE BIBLICAL CONTEXT

What Happens Before This Passage

God hears the cries of His oppressed people and remembers His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exodus 2:23–25). He calls Moses at the burning bush and promises to bring His people out of Egypt (Exodus 3:7–10). Pharaoh repeatedly hardens his heart through the plagues, refusing to obey the Lord. In Exodus 11:4–8, Moses announces the final plague.

What Happens After This Passage

Pharaoh finally tells Israel to leave (Exodus 12:31–32). The people depart in haste, taking unleavened dough and Egyptian goods just as God had said (Exodus 12:33–36). Then the Lord leads them toward the Red Sea, where He will make a way through the waters and defeat the Egyptian army (Exodus 13–14).

Why This Moment Matters in God's Plan

This is one of the great redemption moments in the whole Bible. The Passover is the night of deliverance that defines Israel's identity as God's redeemed people (Exodus 12:42). It also becomes a major pattern for understanding salvation. Later Scripture keeps returning to the Exodus because it reveals both God's justice and God's mercy. Most importantly, it points beyond itself to Jesus Christ, whose sacrificial death fulfills what the Passover foreshadowed (Luke 22:15–20; 1 Corinthians 5:7).

CMA ALIGNMENT & FOURFOLD GOSPEL CONNECTIONS

Jesus Our Savior	Israel was not rescued by effort, bravery, or moral superiority. They were rescued through God's appointed substitute and the blood He told them to trust (Exodus 12:13). This prepares children to understand the gospel: Jesus died for sinners and rose again so all who trust Him will be saved (Romans 5:9; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4).
Jesus Our Sanctifier	The Lord did not rescue Israel so they could belong to Egypt again. He rescued them to belong to Himself (Exodus 6:6–7). In the same way, Jesus saves believers so they may live as His holy people. Later in Exodus, the redeemed people are taught how to walk with the Lord, and the New Testament teaches that Christ cleanses and sets apart His people (1 Corinthians 1:30; Titus 2:14).
Jesus Our Healer	The Passover shows the compassionate heart of God toward suffering people. He saw Israel's misery, heard their cries, and acted for their rescue (Exodus 3:7). This week the emphasis is that the Lord is not distant from suffering. He sees, hears, and acts according to His wisdom and mercy.
Jesus Our Coming King	The Passover reminds us that history is moving under God's rule. Pharaoh looked powerful, but the Lord was King over Egypt, Israel, and the future. The God who judged evil then will judge evil finally, and the Lamb who was slain is also the reigning King (Revelation 5:12–13; 19:16). This gives children hope: evil will not win forever.

KEY THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS — APPLIED TO THIS WEEK'S LESSON

CORE TRUTH #1: What This Lesson Teaches About God

God is holy in judgment and merciful in salvation. In Exodus 12:12, the Lord says He will bring judgment on Egypt and on all the gods of Egypt. He is not one local god among many. He is the true and living God. Yet in Exodus 12:13, He also provides a way of mercy: 'when I see the blood, I will pass over you.' God's holiness means sin matters. God's mercy means He Himself provides rescue. These truths must stay together. If we remove holiness, children will not understand why rescue is needed. If we remove mercy, children will miss the beauty of grace.

CORE TRUTH #2: What This Lesson Teaches About People

People are helpless to save themselves and must trust God's word. Pharaoh's pride shows how hard the human heart can be against God. Israel's safety did not come from being strong. It came from believing what God said and doing what He commanded (Exodus 12:28). The people had to take shelter under God's provision. This helps children understand that we do not save ourselves by trying harder. We need the Lord to rescue us.

CORE TRUTH #3: What This Lesson Teaches About Salvation

God saves through a substitute. A lamb dies, and the people live. The lamb's blood marks the house, and judgment passes over that home (Exodus 12:5–7, 13). John the Baptist later points to Jesus and says, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!' (John 1:29). Paul writes, 'For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed' (1 Corinthians 5:7). The Passover prepares children to see that Jesus died in the place of sinners.

CORE TRUTH #4: Trusting God's Word

This passage shows that God's word is exact, trustworthy, and unailing. God had already promised to bring His people out (Exodus 3:20–22; Exodus 6:6–8). In Exodus 12:29–31, exactly what God said happens. Exodus 12:41 says that at the end of the 430 years, 'to the very day,' the Lord brought His people out. God says what He will do, and He does it.

CORE TRUTH #5: God as Trinity

The Bible teaches that God is one God in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). Exodus 12 does not yet unfold the Trinity in full New Testament clarity, but it reveals the one true God acting to judge, save, and keep covenant with His people. As the whole Bible unfolds, we see the Father planning redemption (Galatians 4:4–5), the Son becoming the true Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7), and the Holy Spirit applying God's saving work to His people (Titus 3:5–6). Teacher wording should stay simple and faithful: God is one God in three Persons. The Passover is one more step in the Bible's unified revelation of this redeeming God.

RELIABILITY OF SCRIPTURE

Exodus 12 reads like remembered history. It includes names, actions, dates, meal instructions, family structure, and a continuing memorial practice (Exodus 12:1–14, 24–27). The event is treated throughout the rest of Scripture as something God truly did. Joshua speaks of it as history (Joshua 24:5–7). The Psalms praise God for the plagues and deliverance from Egypt (Psalm 105:23–38; Psalm 136:10–15). The prophets and apostles continue to treat the Exodus as a real act of God in history.

Jesus Himself honored the Passover and gave it even deeper meaning at the Last Supper (Luke 22:7–20). He also affirmed Moses' writings as authoritative (John 5:46–47). That matters greatly for Christian confidence. If Jesus trusted the Scriptures, we should too.

External evidence should be handled carefully and honestly. Archaeology does not recover every event from the ancient world, and the exact dating of the Exodus is debated. Evidence from ancient Egypt does show the presence of Semitic peoples in Egypt, which fits the general world described in Genesis and Exodus. That kind of support can be useful, but it must remain secondary. Our deepest confidence rests in the truthfulness of God's Word and in the Lord Jesus, who affirmed it.

APOLOGETICS FOUNDATION

This week's apologetics emphasis should be calm and confidence-building.

First, children can be taught that the Passover is believable because the Bible presents it as a real event that was to be remembered year after year (Exodus 12:14, 24–27). God did not tell His people to remember a made-up rescue. He told them to remember what He actually did.

Second, the unity of Scripture strengthens confidence. The Passover in Exodus 12 connects clearly to Jesus in the New Testament. This is not a random similarity. God planned redemption across the whole Bible. When John calls Jesus 'the Lamb of God' (John 1:29) and Paul says, 'Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed' (1 Corinthians 5:7), Scripture shows one consistent rescue plan.

Third, hard questions should be answered with reverence. Children may ask why God judged Egypt so severely. The answer is not that God is harsh or unfair. The Bible shows that Pharaoh had stubbornly resisted God again and again, and Egypt had cruelly oppressed God's people, even murdering Hebrew baby boys (Exodus 1:22). God's judgment is never evil. He is the righteous Judge of all the earth. At the same time, the Passover also shows mercy, because God gave a clear way of rescue.

A simple line children can remember: We believe this because God says it in His Word, and the whole Bible fits together around Jesus.

ANTICIPATED CHILD QUESTIONS

Why did a lamb have to die?

Because God was teaching His people that sin and judgment are serious, and that rescue would come through a substitute. In Exodus 12, the household animal dies and its blood marks the home so judgment passes over it (Exodus 12:5–7, 13). This points forward to Jesus, who died for sinners (John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:18–19). Teacher note: Exodus 12 allows the animal to be taken from the sheep or the goats, though 'Passover lamb' becomes the common summary wording.

Did the blood have magic power?

No. The blood was not magic. It was the sign God commanded. The people were safe because they trusted and obeyed the Lord's word (Exodus 12:7, 13, 28).

Why did God kill the firstborn?

God is the holy Judge, and Egypt had long sinned against Him and cruelly harmed His people (Exodus 1:22; Exodus 12:12). God had also given many warnings through the plagues. The Passover shows both God's justice and God's mercy.

Were the Israelites better than the Egyptians?

No. Israel was not saved because they were better. They also needed God's rescue and had to trust His provision. Salvation is by God's mercy, not because people are good enough (Exodus 12:13; Deuteronomy 7:7–8).

Is the Passover about Jesus?

Yes, in a forward-pointing way. The Passover happened first as a real rescue in Israel's history, and then God used it to help us understand Jesus. Jesus is the true Passover Lamb who saves all who trust Him (1 Corinthians 5:7).

Why did they eat bread without yeast?

First, because God commanded it as part of the Passover meal (Exodus 12:8, 15–20). Then, when He brought them out quickly, the unleavened bread became a reminder that they left Egypt in haste (Exodus 12:11, 34, 39). Deuteronomy 16:3 says this bread helped God's people remember the day He rescued them.

What about the bitter herbs?

Exodus 12:8 says God commanded them to eat the meal with bitter herbs. The text does not directly explain the meaning there, but many teachers connect them to the bitterness of Israel's slavery in Egypt, especially since Exodus 1:14 uses that language. It is wise to teach that carefully and not claim more than the passage itself says.

Did God forget which houses were Israelite?

No. God knows everything. The blood was not for God's information. It was the sign He commanded, showing that the family was resting under His appointed rescue (Exodus 12:13, 23).

COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS**Misunderstanding: The lamb itself saved the people.**

Correction: God saved the people. The animal was the sacrifice God appointed, and the blood was the sign God gave (Exodus 12:13). Always keep the focus on the Lord as Savior.

Misunderstanding: Israelites were safe because they were God's people, even if they ignored His command.

Correction: The text emphasizes obedient faith. They had to do what God said (Exodus 12:28). Covenant privilege never cancels the need to trust the Lord.

Misunderstanding: God is loving in the New Testament but harsh in the Old Testament.

Correction: The same holy and merciful God speaks in both Testaments. The God who judged Egypt is the God who sent His Son in love (John 3:16), and the cross itself shows both justice and mercy (Romans 3:25–26).

Misunderstanding: Passover in Exodus 12 should be described mainly by later Jewish customs.

Correction: The first Passover should be taught first from Exodus 12 itself. It is a household meal in Egypt on the night of deliverance. Later observance develops further in Israel's life, especially with sanctuary-centered instructions in Deuteronomy 16:1–8. Do not let later customs replace the original text.

Misunderstanding: Passover and the Lord's Supper are exactly the same thing.

Correction: They are closely connected, but not identical. The Passover was Israel's memorial of rescue from Egypt. The Lord's Supper was given by Jesus during Passover to show that His death brings the greater rescue from sin (Luke 22:14–20).

Misunderstanding: The Trinity is missing from the Old Testament.

Correction: The Old Testament clearly teaches there is one true God, and the New Testament gives fuller light that this one God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19). Exodus 12 fits within that one unified revelation.

GOSPEL CONNECTION

The Passover is one of the clearest Old Testament pictures of the gospel. God's people were under threat of judgment, and God Himself provided the way of rescue. A spotless lamb died. Blood marked the place of safety. Those under the blood were spared. This prepares the heart to understand Jesus.

Jesus is greater than the Passover lamb. The lamb in Exodus could only point ahead. Jesus actually takes away sin. He is the sinless One whose blood brings forgiveness and peace with God (Romans 5:9; Ephesians 1:7). When Jesus shared the Passover meal with His disciples, He showed that His death would be the true and final rescue for all who believe in Him (Luke 22:19–20).

Be sure to say this plainly when teaching: We are saved, not by the blood of an animal, but by the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who died and rose again.

TEACHER HEART PREPARATION

Prayer Focus

Ask the Lord to help you teach this lesson with both tenderness and truth. Pray for wisdom as you explain judgment without using fear to control children. Pray for clarity as you show that the Passover points to Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to help the children see that God's rescue is good, personal, and worthy of trust.

Encouragement for the Teacher

This lesson contains weighty truths, but they are beautiful truths. Do not rush past the seriousness of sin, and do not linger there without showing God's mercy. The center of this lesson is not death; it is God's saving provision. Children do not need every difficult detail explained at an adult level. They do need to hear that God is holy, God keeps His word, and God made a way of rescue through the blood of the lamb, pointing to Jesus.

The same Lord who watched over Israel on that night still keeps His promises. Teach with reverence, calm confidence, and joy in Christ.