

# SABBATH SCHOOL

Level 4 • Unit 8 • Week 2

## THE NEW TESTAMENT PASSOVER

### OBJECTIVE:

To teach the student about the New Testament Passover service. This lesson covers when we keep the Passover service, the foot washing ceremony and the taking of the bread and the wine.

### ATTENTION GETTER:

Supplies: Bible, dishpan, towel

Say: The Passover service observed by the members of the United Church of God is quite different from the Passover festival observed by the ancient Israelites and the Jewish religion of today. Remember what the ancient Israelites were to do:

- On the 10th day of Abib every man was to take a \_\_\_\_\_ for his household (Exodus 12:3).
- On the 14th day of Abib the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel will \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ at twilight (Exodus 12:6).
- They shall take some of the \_\_\_\_\_ and put it on their \_\_\_\_\_ (Exodus 12:7).
- Then they shall \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ with unleavened bread (Exodus 12:8).

Option: Assign each student a topic of what the Jewish religion of today does to observe the Passover. They may want to compare what traditions today are the same as ancient Israel's. What traditions are different? (Make the assignments ahead of time if possible. If not, cover the topics in the next class.)

Say: When members of the United Church of God go to Passover services, they usually carry with them a Bible, a dishpan or other similar pan and a towel. [Show those items.]

Ask: Why do they take these items with them? Why isn't the Passover the same today as in ancient Israel? This lesson will try to explain the New Testament Passover.

## **BIBLE LESSON:**

### **A REVIEW OF THE FIRST PASSOVER**

Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go free to worship God. So God brought 10 plagues on the Egyptians. The last plague was the worst—the death of all the firstborn of man and beast in the land of Egypt. God had a plan to protect the Israelites. The Israelites had to do just what God said, or they too would suffer under this plague.

God told the Israelite people to take a young lamb without blemish on the 10th day of the first month (Abib) and pen it up until the 14th day of the month. The family was to then kill the lamb and roast it. They were to eat the lamb with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. Whatever part of the lamb that was uneaten was burned. That night all the Israelite people were dressed as though they were leaving on a long journey.

When they killed the lamb, they were to take some of the lamb's blood and smear it on the top and sides of their house's front doorposts. God was going to send His death angel throughout the land. The houses with the blood on the doorposts would be protected. When the death angel saw the blood, the angel would PASS OVER the house. This is where the term "Passover" comes from. All others would suffer the 10th plague, the death of the firstborn of both man and beasts.

The Israelites put the blood of the lamb on their doorposts. About midnight, the death angel came through the land. Indeed, the firstborn inside houses without the lamb's blood were killed. There was a mighty cry throughout the land of Egypt. Finally, Pharaoh let the people go.

### **THE PASSOVER—STEP ONE IN GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION**

The Passover pictures the death of Jesus Christ as our Passover lamb. Without His death and resurrection, we could not be in God's Kingdom. Jesus never sinned while He was on earth. God's law, or the Ten Commandments, defines sin. Sometimes we make mistakes and break God's law. Without the sacrifice that Jesus made, our sins would keep us out of God's Kingdom. Because of this great sacrifice of God's only Son, we have the opportunity to be in God's Kingdom!

When and how we observe the Passover is important to God and also to us. God's festivals give us the keys to His plan of salvation. If we chose to observe the Passover at some other time of year, the steps of the plan would be out of order. This would cause confusion and we wouldn't understand God's plan. If we decided on our own what symbols to use during the Passover service, they would have a completely different meaning. God has given us instructions through His Word, the Bible, for a purpose. To change them ourselves would lead us down the wrong road, and we would never find His Kingdom!

### **WHEN DID JESUS DIE?**

One key to understanding when Jesus died and when we observe the Passover is to remember that God's days start at sunset and end at sunset.

As we see from the above review of the observance of Passover, ancient Israel killed the Passover lambs at the beginning of the 14th day of the first month (Abib) just after sunset, before darkness had fully set in. Today, we observe the Passover at the same time.

Jesus came to Jerusalem for His final Passover as a human. He knew that soon He would die. God had planned the timing of Jesus' death from the beginning—so the final events were no secret to Jesus. Jesus died at about the ninth hour, or about 3:00 in the afternoon on the 14th of Abib (Mark 15:34, 37). This was the afternoon before the First Day of Unleavened Bread started at sunset (Mark 15:42).

Joseph of Arimathea wrapped Jesus' body in linen cloth and placed Jesus in a tomb just prior to the start of the Days of Unleavened Bread that year (Matthew 27:57-60).

In Matthew 26:17-20, Jesus commanded the disciples to go and prepare the Passover supper. This would occur the evening of the 14th of Abib. They obediently did as Jesus commanded. Jesus kept this final Passover as a memorial of His death. Jesus is the creator of the Passover and is our example for all things.

By His example, we always observe the New Testament Passover on the evening of the 14th of Abib, just as Jesus did. Jesus gave us some powerful lessons and new symbols on His final Passover. Each year these lessons and symbols are a major part of the baptized member's relationship with God.

#### JESUS SETS AN EXAMPLE OF LOVE AND SERVICE

John 13:1-17 describes an event from that evening where Jesus gave us an example of love and service. Jesus washed the feet of His disciples.

At the time that Jesus lived, people wore sandals and walked on dirt roads. Their feet became quite dirty! When a person entered someone's house, a servant would take the guest's sandals off and wash his feet. This was a task performed by the servant or usually the lowest person in the house.

The night of His last Passover, Jesus washed His disciples' feet. In John 13:14-15, Jesus tells us that we should wash one another's feet. This is an act of love and service. It also shows an attitude of humility. God loves those who are humble (Matthew 5:5).

Members of the United Church of God take pans and towels with them to Passover services each year. During the services, the members wash each other's feet, just as Jesus set the example. This act of love, service and humility helps bring the members closer to one another. The Bible describes God's people as brethren or brothers. When we do as Jesus commanded, our lives become more meaningful and happy.

#### JESUS GAVE HIS LIFE FOR US

The New Testament Passover service also includes two major symbols—unleavened bread and wine. Jesus gave us these two new symbols: unleavened bread to picture His body, wine to picture His blood (Matthew 26:26-29). The Passover is kept each year as a memorial of Jesus' death (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). As a memorial to Jesus' death, the Passover is a very solemn or serious service. It is observed much like a funeral is observed—with respect, seriousness and a sense of sadness—a sadness as we remember Jesus' death. But we know that Jesus' death was all planned, so we can also have great joy in God's plan for salvation!

## THE BREAD—JESUS' BODY

On the night of Jesus' final Passover as a human, He had supper with His disciples. Following supper, Jesus taught the disciples another lesson. "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take eat; this is My body'" (Matthew 26:26). Jesus gave unleavened bread to His disciples as a symbol of His body. The next day, Jesus would be beaten, spit upon and whipped. His body would be hurt so badly that He was unrecognizable. Jesus suffered an incredible amount of pain to die for us.

At Passover services, the minister prays and asks a blessing on the unleavened bread. He then breaks the bread into small pieces, and then each member takes a piece and eats it. This is a symbol of Jesus giving His life for us (1 Corinthians 11:24) and our willingness to suffer for righteousness sake just as Jesus did when He allowed His body to be scourged and crucified.

## THE WINE—JESUS' BLOOD

"Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins'" (Matthew 26:27-28). Before Jesus was crucified, the Romans whipped Him and placed a crown of thorns on His head. Jesus was then crucified on a stake. Nails were pounded into His wrists and feet. As Jesus hung on the stake, a Roman soldier stuck a spear in His side. Jesus literally bled to death. When we drink the wine, which symbolizes His shed blood, we are showing that we accept Christ as our Savior. Without Jesus' death and resurrection, we could not have eternal life in God's Kingdom. "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

## FINAL SONG

"And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives" (Matthew 26:30) It was there that Jesus was arrested and taken away. He would eventually be tried and sentenced to death.

Passover services end each year with a song sung by the members.

## PASSOVER MEANING

This lesson has covered many important lessons and symbols included in the New Testament Passover. To quickly review and summarize these:

- The New Testament Passover is a memorial service remembering the death of Jesus Christ. It is a solemn or serious event.
- It is important when and how we keep the Passover. Jesus gave us the time and the symbols. To understand the Passover, we must observe it the way Jesus set the example for us.
- Foot washing is an act of love, service and humility. We can become closer to one another when we love and serve each other.
- The Passover bread symbolizes Jesus' broken body. Jesus suffered a great deal.

- The Passover wine symbolizes Jesus' blood. Jesus established the new covenant through His shed blood. Through His blood we are forgiven.
- The Passover is the first festival in God's plan of salvation. Passover shows how we have the opportunity to be forgiven of our sins. Without this forgiveness, we could not be in God's Kingdom.

**LESSON APPLICATION:**

Activity—tic-tac-toe (needs at least two players).

Make a tic-tac-toe board out of white construction paper. Make six Xs and six Os out of black construction paper. On the following page are questions. Cut the questions into strips and place them in a hat. Have the students divide into two teams. One member from each team draws a question and tries to answer. If they get it right, they get to place one of the Xs or Os. If they miss the question, the other team gets a try at the question (except the true-or-false questions). Continue the game until someone wins following the normal rules for tic-tac-toe (three in a row).

Discussion Activity—Discuss the foot washing ceremony. Questions to talk about:

- How do you think the foot washing creates an atmosphere of love, service and humility?
- What other daily activities are a sign of love?
- What other daily activities are a sign of service?
- What other daily activities are a sign of humility?
- Which activities are included in all three areas?

What does the Passover wine symbolize?

What does the Passover bread symbolize?

Who is the true Passover Lamb?

What was the 10th plague?

True or False? The bread symbolizes Jesus' blood.

True or False? The wine symbolizes Jesus' blood.

True or False? The bread symbolizes Jesus' body.

Where does the term "Passover" come from?

What was smeared on the doorposts of the Israelites' homes for Passover?

Who died for our sins?

True or False? Jesus and the disciples sang a song at the end of the Passover meal.

True or False? Jesus was arrested on the Mount of Olives.

What defines sin?

True or False? We can observe Passover on any day, it's just important that we observe it.

What nation did God punish using the 10 plagues?

True or False? The disciples washed Jesus' feet.

True or False? Jesus' death was quick and easy—He didn't suffer.

How should we conduct ourselves at Passover services?

True or False? The Passover is a memorial of Jesus' death.

**Music:**

Sing the following to the tune of "Old MacDonald Had a Farm."

Jesus Christ created us.  
S - I - N - MUST - GO  
And we all want to live His way.  
S - I - N - MUST - GO  
We shall not lie.  
Shall not steal.  
Love our father.  
Love our mother.  
Jesus Christ, He died for me.  
S - I - N - MUST - GO

Jesus loves both you and me.  
S - I - N - MUST - GO  
Just like Him, we want to be.  
S - I - N - MUST - GO  
Have no idols.  
Shall not kill.  
Keep the Sabbath.  
Do God's will.  
Jesus lives for you and me.  
S - I - N - MUST - GO

**MEMORY VERSE:**

John 13:17 "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."



## ANSWERS

What does the Passover wine symbolize? **JESUS' BLOOD**

What does the Passover bread symbolize? **JESUS' BODY**

Who is the true Passover Lamb? **JESUS**

What was the 10th plague? **DEATH OF THE FIRSTBORN**

True or False. The bread symbolizes Jesus' blood. **FALSE**

True or False. The wine symbolizes Jesus' blood. **TRUE**

True or False. The bread symbolizes Jesus' body. **TRUE**

Where does the term "Passover" come from? **THE DEATH ANGEL PASSED OVER THE HOUSES WITH BLOOD ON THE DOORPOSTS.**

What was smeared on the doorposts of the Israelites' homes for Passover? **LAMB'S BLOOD**

Who died for our sins? **JESUS**

True or False. Jesus and the disciples sang a song at the end of the Passover meal. **TRUE**

True or False. Jesus was arrested on the Mount of Olives. **TRUE**

What defines sin? **THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**

True or False. We can observe Passover on any day, it's just important that we observe it. **FALSE**

What nation did God punish using the 10 plagues? **EGYPT**

True or False. The disciples washed Jesus' feet. **FALSE**

True or False. Jesus' death was quick and easy—He didn't suffer. **FALSE**

How should we conduct ourselves at Passover services? **SOLEMN AND SERIOUS**

True or False. The Passover is a memorial of Jesus' death. **TRUE**

Secret Decoder: **JESUS IS THE LAMB OF GOD!**

Message hidden in Word Search: **BREAD AND WINE**