



God Ordains the Passover

Exodus 12–13



LESSON GOAL

Students will see God's power and sovereignty.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- God warned Pharaoh many times.
- God judged Egypt by killing all the firstborn sons.
- The Israelites were sent out of Egypt with great riches.
- God started a special day called Passover.
- At Passover, the Jews remember how God delivered them from Egypt.
- Jesus is the Passover lamb for Christians.

KEY VERSE

"So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance" (Exodus 12:17).

APPLICATION

- Praise God for His awesome power and tender mercy.
- Trust Christ as the final Passover lamb.
- Tell others about Christ's death for sin.

NEXT WEEK

God Parts the Red Sea
Read Exodus 13–15.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

Although Egypt had been decimated by nine plagues, Pharaoh refused to obey God and let the people of Israel go. God had hardened Pharaoh’s heart and sent the plagues so that both Egypt and Israel would know that Yahweh is God (Ex. 7:5; 10:1–3). All God’s actions in Egypt would be remembered by Israel, but none would be more significant than the last plague. The last plague meant devastation for Egypt, but for Israel it meant redemption.

Redemption refers to buying something back. While *deliverance* and *redemption* often are used interchangeably, *deliverance* means setting free and *redemption* entails returning something to the original owner. From the very first encounter with Pharaoh, God had commanded Pharaoh, “Let my people go” (Ex. 5:1). Israel was God’s possession. With the tenth plague, God finally redeemed his people from Egypt. In Exodus 11–13, Moses both narrates the events surrounding the redemption and teaches the people to remember its significance.

Events of Redemption

After the ninth plague, Pharaoh warned that Moses would be killed if he saw his face again (Ex. 10:28). Moses then spoke his last words to Pharaoh. He told Pharaoh that at midnight all the firstborn of Egypt would die, whether the son of Pharaoh, the son of a servant, or the firstborn of an animal (Ex. 11:4–5). God would kill the Egyptians by going “into the midst of Egypt” (11:4). Yahweh Himself would be among the people.

Moses told Pharaoh that a cry would go up from Egypt, but not even a dog would bark among the Israelites (Ex. 11:7). God was going to have mercy on the Israelites. He gave them a sign so they could know He would pass over them (Ex. 12:13). A few days before, God had commanded each Israelite family to take for themselves a year-old lamb or goat without blemish (Ex. 12:5). They were told to keep it for four days, and on the fifth day they were to kill it at twilight (12:6). Each family was to eat as much of the lamb as possible. If the lamb was too large for one family, they should eat it with another family (Ex. 12:3–4). They were commanded to take the blood and put it on the doorposts and the lintel of the houses (12:7). Then the animal was to be cooked over a fire and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs (12:8). They were commanded to not leave any leftovers (12:10), to be dressed, to eat in haste (12:11), and to not leave the house until morning (12:22).

The people of Israel obeyed God (Ex. 12:28). That night at midnight, when the Lord saw the blood on the doorframes, He passed over their houses. The firstborn sons of all the Egyptians died. “Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead” (12:30).

Additional Reference Materials

*Moses and the Gods of
Egypt: Studies in Exodus*
by John J. Davis

*The MacArthur Study
Bible* by John MacArthur

God chose to pour out His wrath upon the hard-hearted Egyptians. The Egyptians were not the only ones judged; God also executed judgment against all the gods of Egypt (Ex. 12:12). In doing so, He made known to the Egyptians, the Israelites, and the ancient Middle-Eastern world that Yahweh was the God of Israel. Pharaoh's gods were smashed, and his reputation as a god was discredited. He could not even save his own son! Finally, Pharaoh let the Israelites go. Because the Egyptians were afraid that they would all die (12:33), they urged the Israelites to leave.

Following God's command, the Israelites asked the Egyptians for gold, silver, and clothing (Ex. 12:35). God gave the Israelites favor, and "they plundered the Egyptians." God had told them to be ready to leave; now they did not even have time to let their dough rise (12:34). Six hundred thousand men, along with their families, left Egypt with great numbers of livestock. Exodus 12:40 says that the time the "children of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years." After 400 years, Israel left the place where they had been afflicted, just as God had promised Abraham (Gen. 15:13). They even came out with great possessions (15:14)!

Remembrance of Redemption

God wanted Israel to never forget His passing over them. The first Passover occurred in the month of Abib (March/April). From then on, God told the Israelites to reckon Abib as the first month of the year. Every year on the tenth day of Abib, they were to select a spotless lamb or goat. On the fourteenth day, they were to sacrifice the lamb, eat the Passover dinner, and brush the lamb's blood on the doorposts and lintel (Ex. 12:3–11). To commemorate the quick exit from Egypt, the Israelites were told to eat only unleavened bread (bread that has not risen) for one week after Passover (12:3–10, 14–20). The Israelites were to follow these ordinances forever (Ex. 12:24). When the children asked what their parents were doing, the parents were to embrace the opportunity to tell them what God had done in Egypt (Ex. 12:26–27; 13:8).

Another remembrance God instituted was that every firstborn son and every firstborn animal was to be "set apart to the LORD" (Ex. 13:12). When the Passover lamb was sacrificed in Egypt, God allowed the lamb to redeem the lives of the firstborn Israelite men and animals. God redeemed them for His own service; their lives were redeemed so they would belong to God (Ex. 3:13). Just as those firstborn men and animals belonged to God, God decreed that every subsequent firstborn male would also belong to Him. The firstborn clean animals, such as lambs and goats, would be sacrificed; a firstborn son (whom God, of course, did not want to be sacrificed) could be redeemed through sacrifices (Ex. 13:13). Both the consecration of the firstborn and the Passover dinner were reminders of whom Israel belonged to and what God had done for them.

Significance of the Passover

The Israelites had been redeemed from cruel Egyptian slavery. They were redeemed to be God's people, but sadly, they continually lived as their own master. They followed the ordinances of Passover, the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, and the Consecration of the Firstborn, but they forgot their Redeemer. The lambs had been sacrificed and the blood smeared so that they might serve God. But for the most part, their hearts were still in bondage to sin.

In describing the work of Christ on the cross, the New Testament writers joyously compared the work of Christ to the Passover lamb. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 5:7, "Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us." Peter refers to Christ as "a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:19). These references would not have been lost

on any members of their Jewish audience. The Passover lamb was a reminder of the highlight of Jewish history. But Peter and Paul knew of a much better Passover lamb! The sacrifice of those first Passover lambs redeemed the Israelites from physical death, but Christ has redeemed believers from spiritual death and eternal hell. The blood of the first lamb led to Israel's escape from slavery to the Egyptians, but the death of Christ has redeemed believers from slavery to sin. The Israelites were physically free to worship God, but the Passover lamb did not rectify their hearts' condition. The sacrifice of Christ has truly atoned for believers' sins; the believer is a new creature, created in His image. By the time of Christ, the Jews rigorously observed Passover. They loved that they were God's chosen people. But their hearts were so hard that when the true Passover brought true redemption, they would not accept it. Praise God for His grace that brings repentant faith! Although the tenth plague and God's passing over Israel is a highlight of human history, our wonder should be infinitely greater for the redemption won through the sacrifice of Christ!

The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were established to remind the people of the exodus. They were unmistakable signs on their hands and memorials between their eyes of what God had done (Ex. 13:9). True believers, who know Christ as their Passover lamb, must never forget what Christ has done for them. The church must be faithful to its Passover celebration, the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper should not be easily dismissed. It should be a time of rejoicing because the worthy Lamb is exalted.

The church also must not forget what redemption means. Redemption means being bought back. The Israelites were commanded to bring a sacrifice to redeem their firstborn sons. The sacrifice would die in the son's place so that the son could live to serve God. Christ has died in the believer's place so that he can serve God. The believer has been set free from sin so that he can be a slave to righteousness. True joy over redemption will always lead believers to present their bodies as "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is [their] reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1).

POINT TO THE TRUTH

"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth" (Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.

What did God ask Moses to tell Pharaoh?
God said, "Let My people go."

What did Pharaoh say?
Pharaoh said, "No, no, they cannot go."

What were the nine things that God did to show His power?
God turned the water into blood and sent frogs, gnats, flies, disease to animals, boils, hail, grasshoppers, and darkness to Egypt.

Why did God send plagues on the Egyptians but not on the Israelites?
God wanted everyone to know that He was the Israelites' God and they were His people.

Who has power over all things?
God.



Protection

Use puppets to talk about "protection." Baby ducks could tell how their moms protect them by swimming near them and scaring off anything that might harm them. The same could be discussed regarding kittens and puppies. Talk about God being our protector and giving us moms and dads to protect us from harm. God protected the Israelites in a special way. In today's lesson, God wanted His people to leave Egypt so that they could worship Him.



Hidden Pictures

Hide pictures that show something the students will hear about in the Bible lesson today. Some papers will have words that you will need to read. Include the following: Israelite slave, Pharaoh, No, plagues, lamb, fire, doorframe, blood, person praying, palace, calf, sad face, crying, suitcase, and Israelite walking.



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Packing Relay

Using two suitcases and a few items to pack inside, let two teams compete to see who can fill a suitcase, empty it, and run back with it for the next person to do the same. Talk about the Israelites getting ready to pack to leave Egypt quickly.



Celebrations to Remember

Using a calendar as a visual aid, talk about the various celebrations we observe during our year. As you talk to the students about their favorite holidays, ask them what their families do to celebrate special times. Perhaps their families do things that their parents did as students. In today's Bible lesson, we will learn about a special event in the history of God's people, an event that Israelites continue to celebrate even today.



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Play-Doh Center

Make various bread and roll shapes with Play-Doh, and pretend to bake and eat them. Today's Bible lesson tells that when the Israelites were finally allowed to leave Egypt, they took their bread dough with them so they would have food for their long journey.



Treasure-Box Review

Pull past items from the treasure box to review the book of Exodus.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

“Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done” (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students’ understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

In the Bible lesson last week, we learned that Pharaoh kept saying to Moses, “No, no, Israel cannot go!” but it was time for God to say, “Yes, yes, now they go.” God said to Moses, “Tonight is the night for My people to leave Egypt. I will punish the Egyptians who did not listen to Me, but I will take My own people to their own land. I am their God, and tonight is a very special night.”

God said to Moses, “This is what I am going to do. I am going to bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt so that Pharaoh will send you away from Egypt. He will send you away—tonight!” [Build anticipation in your voice.] God said, “This is what I want you to do. Tell each Israelite man to kill a lamb for his family to eat. Each man must dip a branch into the lamb’s blood and brush the blood on the top of the doorframe and on the sides of the door. [Make a sign with your arm as though following a doorframe up one side, across the top, and down the other side.] Tell My people not to leave their houses the whole night. They must stay inside their houses.”

Moses called the Israelite elders together and told them what God had said. He said, “Tonight is the night for God to take us out of Egypt. God wants each of you to kill a lamb and roast it on a fire for your own family to eat. Eat the lamb with your coats on, with your shoes on, and with your staffs in your hands. Eat quickly because it is the Lord’s Passover.”

All the Israelite elders bowed down and worshiped the Lord. They thanked God for this special night. They got up and obeyed God; they did exactly as He said.

The Israelite men killed their lambs, roasted the meat over a fire, and ate it quickly, knowing that they would soon leave their homes. They ate with their coats on, with their shoes on, and with their staffs in their hands. They dipped their hyssop branches in the lambs’ blood and put it around their doors. [Make a sign with your arm as though passing over the door.]

All the Israelites stayed in their houses that night and waited for God to take them out of Egypt. It was the special night of the Lord’s Passover. [Make a sign with your arm as though following a doorframe up one side, across the top, and down the other side.]

[Turn out the light and pretend that it is night. Have the students keep their coats ready, or wear them.] At midnight, when everyone was in bed, the Egyptians found out about the last plague that God said would happen. The oldest boy in each Egyptian family died at midnight, and each of the firstborn animals of the Egyptians died, just as God had said. The Egyptians were very sad in their houses and cried loudly.

Throughout Egypt, loud wailing and crying were heard, but not even a dog was barking in Goshen, where the Israelites lived. God’s people were safe in their

houses, just as God had promised. God passed over the houses that had blood around the doors, and no Israelite children died. [Make a sign with your arm as though passing over the door.]

Pharaoh called Moses to the palace and said, "Go! Take your people out of Egypt! Leave! Now!"

The Israelites were ready to go. They had already packed their clothes and food. The Egyptians gave the Israelites gifts of gold and silver to take with them. They wanted the Israelites to leave as fast as they could before any more plagues came to Egypt.

The Israelites walked and walked away from Egypt. They were happy to be going to their promised land of Canaan. God told Moses to help the Israelites remember what God did for them on the Passover night. The Israelites were to celebrate the Passover for one week during the first month, Abib.

During the Passover week, the Israelites eat only unleavened bread because that is what the Israelites ate the night they left Egypt. God wanted the Israelites and their children to remember how He passed over their houses when He saw the blood around their doors. Each year, the Israelites would tell their children and grandchildren about how God had taken them out of Egypt.



Lesson Questions

What instructions did God give Moses for the Israelites to follow on their last night in Egypt?

God told the Israelites to kill and roast a lamb, put the blood around their doors, and stay in their houses.

What was the name of the special night when God took His people out of Egypt?
Passover.

What happened at midnight on the night of Passover?

God sent the tenth plague to Egypt. All the firstborn sons of the families in Egypt who did not have blood around their doors died at midnight. Pharaoh told the Israelites to leave Egypt quickly.

Why did the Israelites eat their Passover meal with their coats on?

They were obeying God so that they would be ready to leave Egypt quickly.

Why did God keep the Israelites safe in their houses?

They were His chosen people.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.



Treasure-Box Object

The object for the treasure box for this lesson is a "doorframe" made from wooden craft sticks with red paint on them.



Memorizing Moses

Explain to the students that Moses wrote five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Help them to continue memorizing the names of the books.



Dressed and Ready

Bring a suitcase and a jacket to class. Bring in various props and pictures (sheep, herbs, branches, etc.). Lay them in front of the suitcase as you teach. Put them in the suitcase one by one as you tell the story. Wear a jacket as you teach today, emphasizing that Moses and all the Israelites needed to be ready to go right when the Lord told them.

Praise and Worship

Awesome God

Go Down, Moses

God Is So Good

I Will Sing of the Mercies

My God Is So Great

Praise the Name of Jesus



The Passover

What final plague made Egypt cry?

(Hold up 10 fingers.)

All firstborn men and beasts would die.

(Hold up one finger.)

What was God's Passover plan?

(Point up.)

Protection by the blood of a lamb.

(Stroke hand up, to side, then down, as if brushing a doorframe.)

What happened to Israel on that day?

(Hold hands at sides, palms up.)

They marched from Egypt; God led the way.

(March in place and point up.)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



Following Orders

What do you think would have happened if an Israelite decided he was not going to exactly follow God’s orders concerning the Passover? What if he did not want to kill one of his good lambs and instead sacrificed a sick one? Would God have accepted this offering? What would have happened if the lamb was not killed but was simply tied up at the doorstep and offered as a living sacrifice? We can come to God only according to God’s will and plan. We cannot save ourselves our own way. Think back to Adam and Eve. Did God accept the fig leaves they made for themselves? What did He do instead? And with Cain, was God pleased with his offering? Noah also had to build the ark exactly as God instructed him, and in the same way, the Israelites had to perform the Passover exactly as God had instructed Moses.



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Unleavened Bread

Here is a simple recipe for unleavened bread. Serve with grape juice. Discuss the correlation between the Passover and Communion. (Note: This snack should not be considered Communion.)

Cream together

¼ cup sugar

¾ cup shortening

Mix in

1 tsp. salt

1½ cups buttermilk

½ tsp. baking soda

Add 4–5 cups flour.

Divide the dough into four balls. Roll out the dough on a floured surface until it is wafer thin. Place the dough on a greased cookie sheet. Prick it to prevent shrinkage. Bake at 450 degrees until it is light brown, approximately 15–20 minutes.



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God’s Perfect Timing

Materials: copies of clock craft sheet, crayons, scissors, brads

Directions: Use this craft to review the last three weeks and this week. Copy the clock sheets from the back of the lesson. Cut out the clock hands, the clock, and the labels. Punch a hole through the clock hands and the center of the clock. Use a brad to fasten all three together. Cut out the pie shapes with the pictures from the lessons. Glue them in order inside the clock. As you work on the craft with the children, talk with them about God’s timing. In today’s lesson, God sent the last plague at midnight. God waited for just the right time to free the Israelites so He could show His great power to the world.



Passover Stained-Glass Painting

Copy the "Passover Lamb" coloring page at the back of this lesson. Have students color the spaces according to the color code. When they are finished, turn the papers over. Dab a rag in vegetable oil, and rub oil all over the backs of the pictures to make them transparent. Wipe off excess oil with a paper towel. Students may tape their "stained glass" to a sunny window so that the light shines through.



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Marking the Doorposts

Materials: half sheets of construction paper, glue sticks, black markers or crayons, wooden craft sticks, paintbrushes, and red paint or crayons

Directions: Instruct students to glue three craft sticks on the construction paper, creating the doorposts and the lintel of a door (Ex. 12:7). Carefully cut inside the sticks, along the bottom of the lintel and along the inside of the right doorpost to create a door that opens. Glue a reduced-size coloring picture of the family eating the lamb to the inside of the door. Instruct students to draw a doorknob on the outside of the door and color the family eating inside. Last, have the students use red paint or crayons to paint "blood" on the lintel and doorposts of the house.



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Making Moses Memories

If your students are making the scrapbook discussed in the first lesson, reduce a coloring sheet to about 4 x 6 inches. Make enough copies for the class. Have each child color the picture, cut it out, and glue it to the next page of his scrapbook.

Coloring Sheets

Give each student a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of the lesson. The students can color the pages in class or at home.



MEMORY VERSE

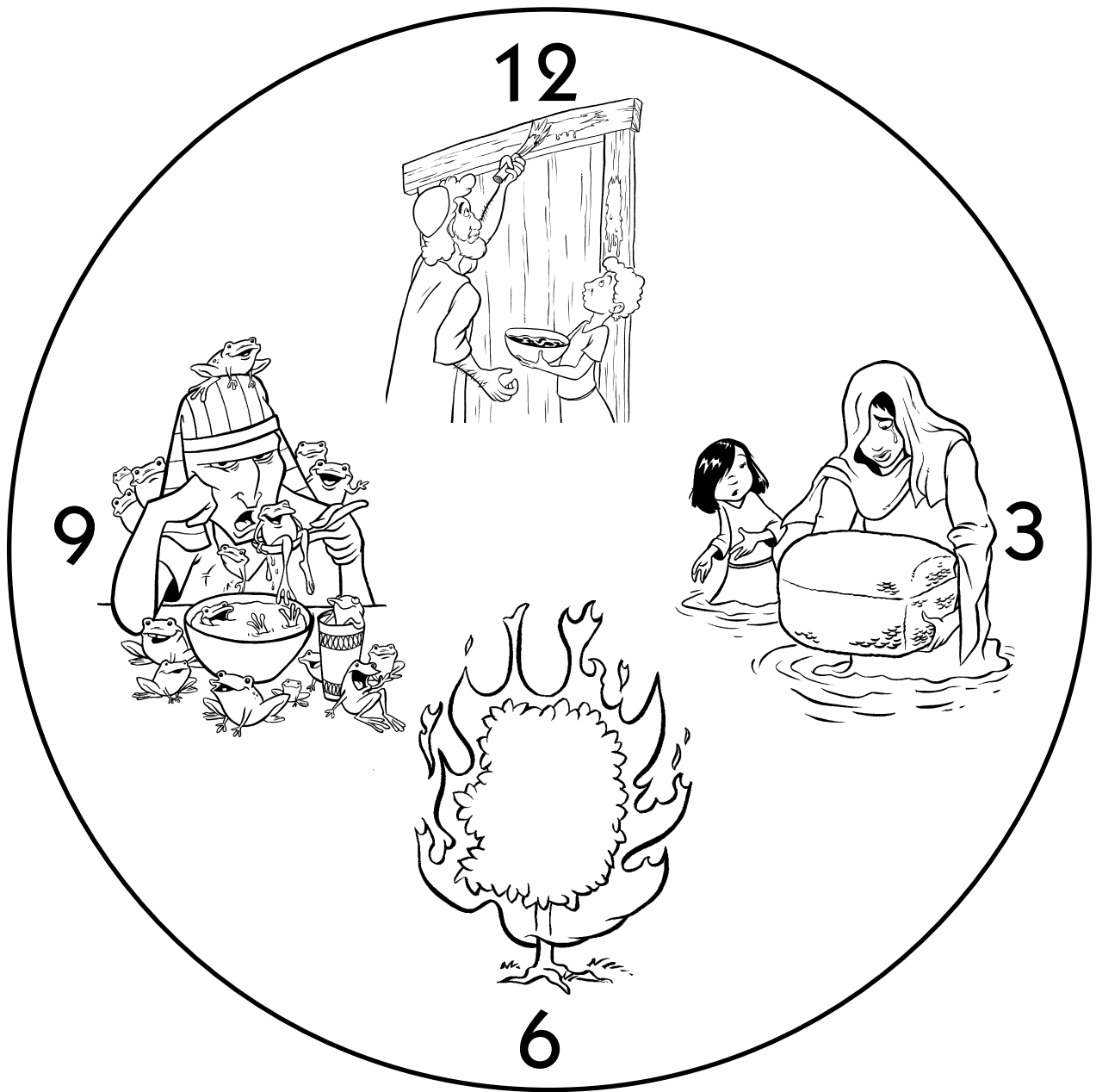
"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8).



Fourth Commandment

If you have decided to assemble the Ten Commandments as you go through them, post the fourth commandment (Ex. 20:8). The Sabbath was the seventh day of the week. On the Sabbath, the Jews rested and worshiped God. Why did God give the fourth commandment? God wanted His people to remember that He was the creator. God Himself rested on the seventh day, not because He was tired, but because He knew we would be. He also wanted His people to take a day each week to focus on worshiping Him.

God's Perfect Timing

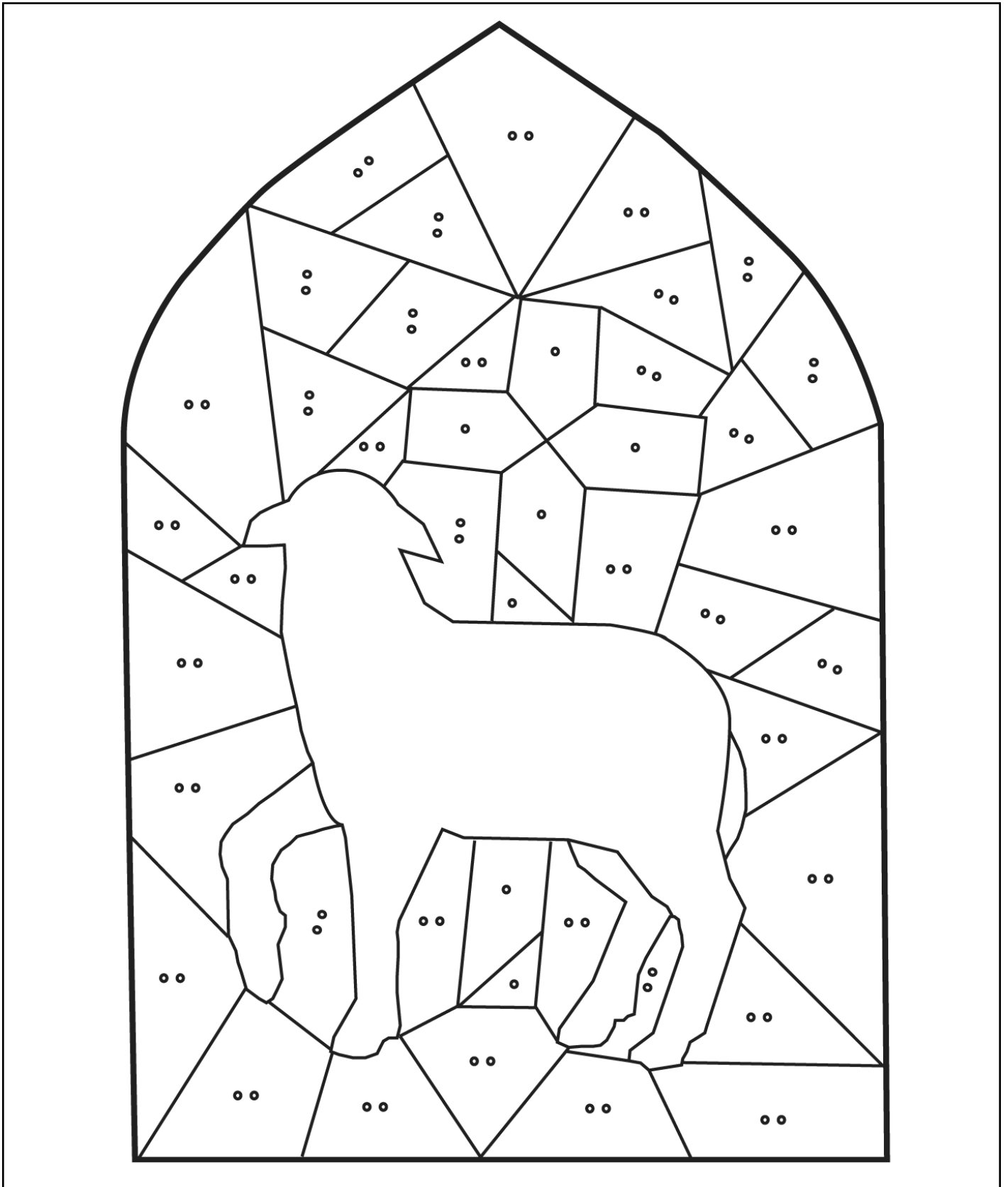


God fulfilled His plan to deliver Israel at the perfect time (Gen. 15:13–14).

Cut the paper on the dotted line, and then cut out the arrows.
Attach the arrows to the center of the clock with a brad.

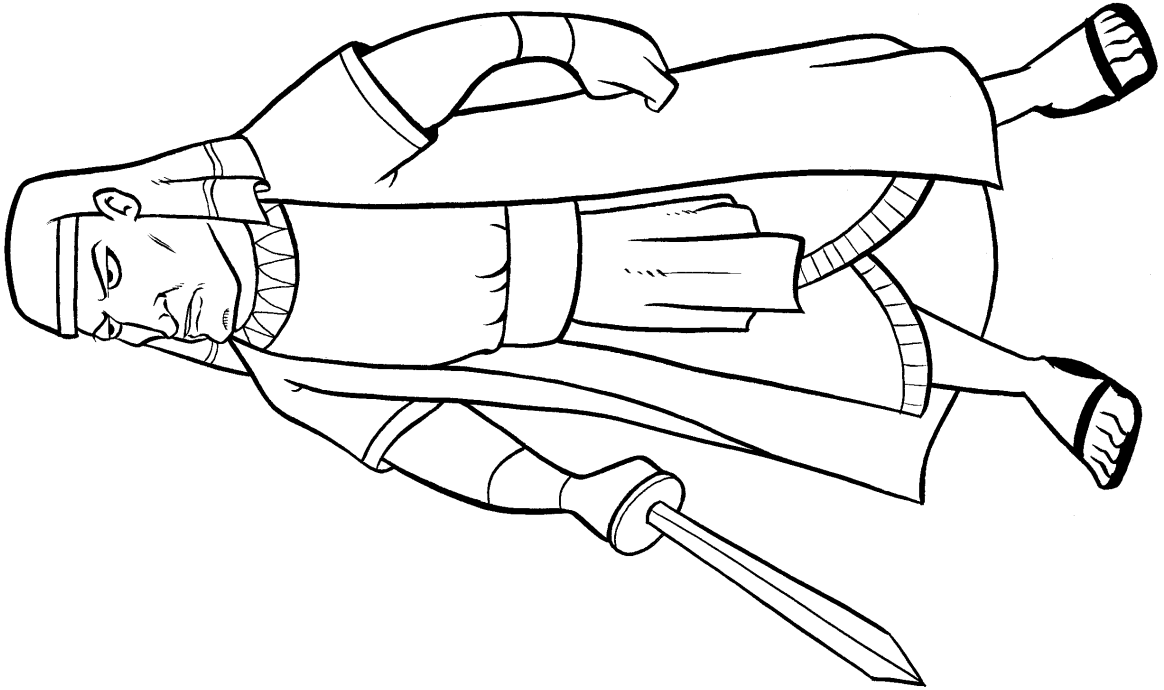
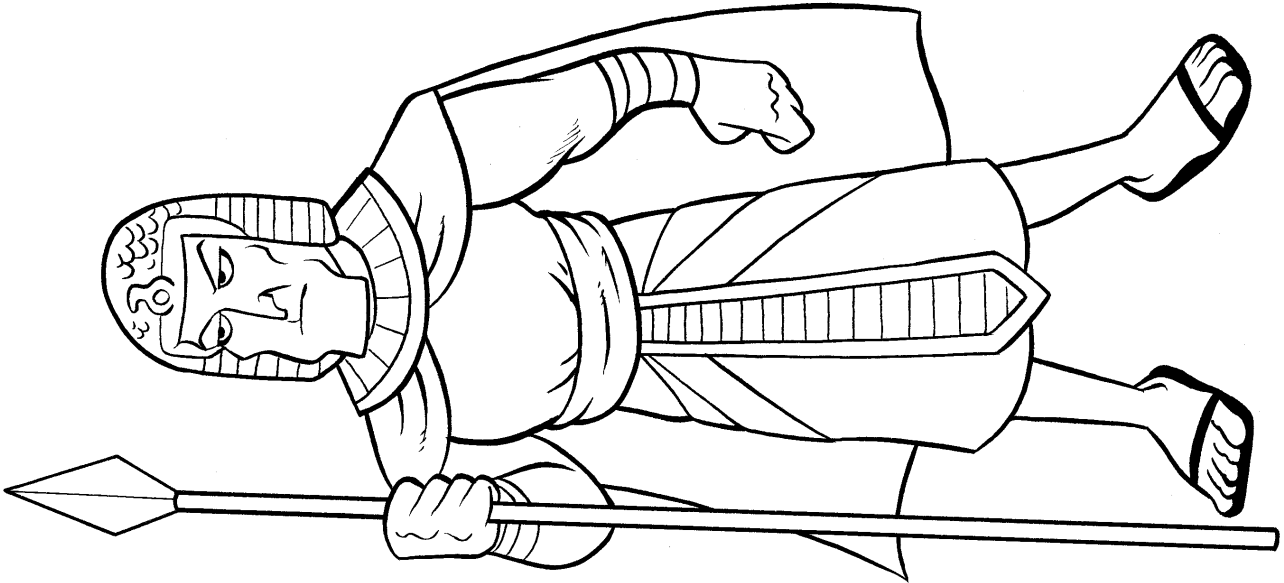


Passover Lamb



Color the picture according to the code given below.

oo = blue o = brown





“And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it” (Exodus 12:7).



**“Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire,
with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it” (Exodus 12:8).**

