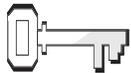


A Community Celebrates



References

2 Kings 23:21–25;
2 Chronicles 35;
Prophets and Kings, pp. 392–406



Memory Verse

“They celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness” (Psalm 145:7, NIV).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that we can celebrate what Jesus has done for us.

Feel a desire to celebrate God’s blessings with others.

Respond by choosing to celebrate what Jesus has done for us.



The Message

God’s family celebrates His love together.

Monthly Theme

The Bible teaches us that we belong to the family of God.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

After the restoration of the temple, King Josiah gives instructions to celebrate the Passover. This service reminds the Israelites of how God had led them out of Egyptian slavery. The king wants everyone to participate in this special service, so he personally provides 33,000 animals for sacrifices. Others also contribute. There is great feasting and wonderful music as thousands of people celebrate the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. “None of the kings of Israel had ever celebrated such a Passover” (2 Chronicles 35:18).

This is a lesson about community.

Once again King Josiah led the Israelites to follow God’s Word; this time to celebrate God’s presence and goodness in delivering them from Egypt and caring for their physical needs. Just as God cared for His people then, He cares for us today. He is pleased when we celebrate His goodness to us.

Teacher Enrichment

“Judah’s slide to destruction was interrupted by the amazing rule of its all-time best king. Josiah came to the throne at age eight, but received good counsel from the high priests. In 31 years he carried out the most extensive religious reforms Judah had ever seen. He removed and destroyed the altars, idols, and symbols of ungodly worship from the temple. In a thrilling sequence of events, he oversaw the rediscovery of the Law of Moses and acted immediately on what it taught. No king equals Josiah for his sincere and devout practices” (*The Student Bible [Grand Rapids: Zondervan Corporation, 1986]*, p. 315).

Passover. “The festival [was] instituted at the Exodus to commemorate the night of the Israelites’ escape from Egypt, when all the first-born of the Egyptians were slain. . . . Detailed instructions (Ex. 12:1–28) were given for this ceremonial meal that was to become an annual observance” (*The SDA Bible Dictionary*, pp. 841, 842).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Activities	up to 10	A. <i>Paying the Price</i> B. <i>Preparing for Passover</i> C. <i>Egypt Relay</i>	white paper, tape, red watercolor or crayon, newspaper, paintbrush unleavened bread, grape juice, picture of a lamb, water, salt, herbs, paper plates, paper cups blanket per team, four or five household items per team
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> container used last week none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes, crown, royal cloak, items for Passover meal (see Readiness B), adult male paper or chalkboard Bibles, six sheep shapes (see p. 141)
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>You Are Special</i>	box wrapped as present, small presents
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Sabbath Celebration</i>	paper, crayons/markers, balloons (optional)

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- white paper
- tape
- red watercolor or crayon
- newspaper
- paintbrush

A. Paying the Price

Before Sabbath School, tape white sheets of paper to the doorposts of the Sabbath School room. Place newspaper on the floor to soak up any accidents. As the children arrive, ask if they are the oldest child in their family. If so, have them “paint” the “blood” on the doorpost.

Debriefing

Ask: **What was it like to paint the doorpost because you were the oldest child? How did it feel if you were not allowed to paint? If you knew that your life depended on the doorposts being painted, what would you do? Today we will learn about an Israelite celebration called the Passover. We, too, can celebrate things that God has done for us. Today’s message is:**



GOD’S FAMILY CELEBRATES HIS LOVE TOGETHER.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- unleavened bread (pita bread)
- grape juice
- picture of a lamb
- water
- salt
- herbs
- paper plates
- paper cups

B. Preparing for Passover

Recipe for unleavened bread.

- 4 cups of flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups of water

Mix, form into 16 balls. Roll out each ball into a 7-inch (18-cm) circle. Bake in a preheated oven at 500°F (180°–200°C) for five minutes or until the bread is lightly colored, crisp, and blistered.

Prepare the Passover meal. Set the table with paper cups, plates, and the food items used for the Passover. This may be used during the Bible lesson.

Debriefing

Say: **Can anyone guess what this meal was to celebrate? It is good to celebrate what God has done for us. Today’s message says:**



GOD’S FAMILY CELEBRATES HIS LOVE TOGETHER.

Say that with me.

C. Egypt Relay

Form two or more teams, depending on the size of your group. Say: **When the Israelites left Egypt, they had to pack in a hurry. You must pack everything in the blanket and run to the other side of the room; then run back and unpack the items. Each team member has to pack and unpack.**

Debriefing

Ask: **What was it like when you were trying to pack quickly? How would you like to pack for your vacation like that? In today's story the Israelites had to pack quickly. Later they would celebrate that night. It is good to celebrate the things God has done for us. Today's message says:**



GOD'S FAMILY CELEBRATES HIS LOVE TOGETHER.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- blanket per team
- four or five household items per team

Prayer and Praise **Any Time**



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Clap Your Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 4)
- "Trust and Obey" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 113)
- "Lord, I Want to Stamp and Shout" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 56)
- "Alleluia" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 16)
- "We Are the Church" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 141)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Emphasize the theme of community.



Offering

Say: **When we give our offerings for missions, we show that we care about our neighbors all over the world.**

You Need:

- offering device



Prayer

Form a circle and kneel. Ask the children to thank God for the Sabbath and one thing they like about it. Have them do this like popcorn popping, speaking out from anywhere in the circle at any time. Close by thanking God for the opportunity to celebrate His goodness.

2

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- adult male
- Bible-times costumes
- crown
- royal cloak
- items for Passover meal (see Readiness B)

Experiencing the Story

Characters: King Josiah

Setting the Scene

If possible, invite an adult male to play the role of King Josiah. Have him narrate the story. Seat the children around the “Passover meal” prepared in Readiness B or in advance. If appropriate, let the children taste the meal as “Josiah” tells the story. Or let them see and touch the different foods. Point to the picture of the lamb at the appropriate time.

Every time the word *Passover* is mentioned, the children should raise their hands in the air and wiggle their fingers and hands as a way of saying, “Thank You, God, for saving us.” Introduce the speaker as King Josiah.

Read or tell the story.

During the past two weeks you have learned how I became king when I was 8 years old. You know how the Israelites got rid of their idols. And you heard that the Book of the Law was found in the temple. I wanted to celebrate the people’s decision to follow God. For many years there had been no **Passover** celebration, so I decided this would be the right way to mark the people’s decision.

Normally, people celebrated the **Passover** feast with their families or their neighbors. I wanted the people to understand that we are all part of God’s big family. I also knew that some would not be able to afford or understand why they had to sacrifice an animal. So I gave 30,000 sheep and goats and 3,000 cattle. Other leaders wanted to help as well. They also gave thousands of **Passover** offerings.

The **Passover** celebration is to remind the Israelites of the time we had been slaves in Egypt. Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, would not let the Israelites go. So God sent 10 plagues to force Pharaoh to set us free. Those plagues took many forms. Water turned to blood. You know about the frogs, darkness, lice, and hailstones, just to name a few. But the tenth plague was the worst. It would involve taking the life of the first-born son of families in Egypt.

Moses had explained that each Israelite family was to give God a sign that they wanted the death angel to pass over their home. God instructed them to sacrifice a lamb and put its blood on the doorposts. It was to be a sign. Then the angel would pass over that house. If anyone did not put the blood on the doorposts, the firstborn son would die. The Israelites obeyed God. So that night, when the angel came, he took the life of the firstborn son of every Egyptian family.

The **Passover** feast also showed people how God would save them from sin. The lamb that was sacrificed during the feast represented Jesus. Jesus would die on the cross for everyone’s sins.

We always include special things in the **Passover** meal. When we eat it, we are dressed for travel to remind us of the first **Passover**. We eat unleavened bread, bread without yeast. At the first **Passover**, there was no time to let the bread rise. Yeast also reminds us of how sin can come into our lives and work away quietly, almost unseen.

Bits of the meat of the lamb that was slain are wrapped in the unleavened bread. The lamb reminds us of the Messiah, Jesus, who would come to die for our sins.

Bitter herbs remind us of the bitter times we had when we were slaves.

I asked the priests to divide all the people into family groups and then sacrifice a **Passover** lamb for each group. All the priests stood in their places and celebrated the **Passover** with the people. They sacrificed the animals and roasted them. Then they gave the meat to the people.

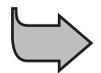
No work was allowed that day. There was plenty of food and wonderful music. After the **Passover**, the people celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread together for seven days. All this time was spent in celebration of God's goodness. He had saved us, and we would never forget.

Debriefing

Ask: **What do you think it was like to be part of Josiah's Passover celebration? What would you have done during the celebration?**

Why don't we celebrate the Passover today? (The Passover pointed forward to the sacrifice of Jesus. Now that He has come and died, it is not necessary.)

Think of something we celebrate in church today. (Communion) **It is good to celebrate what God has done for us. Let's say our message together:**



GOD'S FAMILY CELEBRATES HIS LOVE TOGETHER.

Memory Verse

Call attention to the words of the memory verse as written so all may see. Cover or erase one word each time the children repeat the verse. By the time all the words have been removed, the children should know the verse. The memory verse is: **"They celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness" (Psalm 145:7).**

You Need:

- memory verse written where all may see

Bible Study

In advance, copy questions and texts below onto sheep shapes, one per shape (see page 141). Before Sabbath School, hide them around the room. For large groups you may need more than one copy of each question.

Form six small groups, making sure that nonreaders are paired with readers or that they have an adult to help them.

Say: **Around the room are hidden six sheep shapes with texts and questions. When I say "Go," search for the sheep. Read the question and look up the text to find the answer.**

1. How old was Josiah when he encouraged the Israelites to celebrate the Passover together? (2 Chronicles 34:1 and 2 Chronicles 35:19)
2. What kind of king was Josiah? (2 Kings 23:25)
3. Why and how did the Israelites eat the Passover meal? (Exodus 12:11)
4. Why did the Israelites eat unleavened bread during the Passover? What did they do with the yeast? (Exodus 12:15)
5. What did the Israelites celebrate during the Passover? (Exodus 12:26, 27)
6. Identify two times when Jesus celebrated the Passover. (Luke 2:41, 42; Luke 22:7, 8)

Allow time to share the questions and answers with the whole group.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why do you think King Josiah thought it was important for the Israelites to celebrate the Passover?**

Why don't we celebrate the Passover today? (It celebrated deliverance from Egypt. When Jesus celebrated it with His disciples, He replaced it with the Communion service. See Luke 22.)

Why do we need to remember the things that God has done for us? (Helps build our faith. Reminds us that we can

You Need:

- Bibles
- six sheep shapes (see p. 141)

trust Him with everything in our lives.)
Let's say today's message together:



**GOD'S FAMILY CELEBRATES
HIS LOVE TOGETHER.**

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- small present for each child (flower, badge, sticker, etc.)
- gift-wrapped box

You Are Special

Place a small present for each child in a larger box and wrap the box as a gift. Allow response time as you say: **I have a present here. Would anyone like to guess what is inside?**

When do we usually get presents? This is a special present. It is not for a birthday or Christmas.

Inside this present are smaller presents. One for each of you. I wanted to celebrate that you are here today. Let children come and choose a present from the box.

Talk with the children about other celebrations. Make a list. If necessary, prompt the children to think of celebrating Communion and the Sabbath.

Ask: **What can we do to help us enjoy God's celebrations more?** Discuss ideas on how to make Sabbath more enjoyable.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do people usually feel at celebrations?** (happy, usually have fun)

What ideas can you suggest to your family to make Sabbath more enjoyable? Allow time for each child to respond.

God has given us celebrations to tell us how much He loves us. He is looking forward to the day when we can celebrate them with Him. Let's say today's message together:



**GOD'S FAMILY CELEBRATES
HIS LOVE TOGETHER.**

4

Sharing the Lesson

Sabbath Celebration

Tell the children that they may invite a guest—a friend or relative—to a Sabbath celebration.

With the class, plan a special time to celebrate the Sabbath. Depending on your situation it may be during Sabbath School, the worship service, or a potluck meal and an afternoon activity.

Let the children write a note to invite their guest. Attach each note to a balloon. Each child takes his/her balloon and gives it to the person they choose to invite.

Note: Keep the balloons in your room until after the church service.

Debriefing

Ask: **What do you think about our**

Sabbath celebration? Whom will you invite? Our Sabbath celebration is special, and we will have a good time.

Jesus is planning a big celebration in heaven. The best thing of all is that everyone is invited. Do you want to be there? If you do, raise your hand. Let's say our message together.



GOD'S FAMILY CELEBRATES HIS LOVE TOGETHER.

Closing

Close with prayer, asking God to bless the plans for the Sabbath celebration. Thank Him that He is planning a celebration in heaven for all of us.

Note: Be sure to follow through with the celebration the children have planned.

You Need:

- paper
- crayons/ markers
- balloon for each child (optional)

A Community Celebrates

References

2 Kings 23:21–25;
2 Chronicles 35;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 392–406

Memory Verse

“They celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness” (Psalm 145:7, NIV).

The Message

God’s family celebrates His love together.

Think about the best celebration you ever had. It may have been a birthday or Christmas. What made it so special? King Josiah and the Israelites had a very special celebration together. Let’s read about it.

Josiah had achieved much during his reign. The Israelites broke down their idols, and the Book of the Law had been found in the temple. After reading the Book of the Law, Josiah wanted to celebrate the people’s decision to follow God. The Passover had not been celebrated for many years. So he decided to gather everyone together for a big community celebration.

Normally, people celebrated the Passover feast with their families or their neighbors. Josiah recognized that not everyone would be able to afford to sacrifice an animal. So he gave 30,000 sheep and goats, and 3,000 cattle. Other leaders wanted to help too. They gave thousands of animals for Passover offerings.

The Passover celebration was to



remind the Israelites of their time as slaves in Egypt. Pharaoh, the Egyptian king, refused to let the Israelites go. So God sent 10 plagues to force Pharaoh

to set the Israelites free. The plagues were terrible. Water turned to blood. Frogs were everywhere. Darkness, lice, and hailstones added more pain. But the tenth plague was the worst. It would involve taking the life of the firstborn son of families in Egypt. However, God had instructed each Israelite family to sacrifice a lamb and put its blood on the doorposts. It was to be a sign. When the angel saw the blood, he would pass over that house. If the angel did not see blood on the doorposts, the firstborn son would die. The Israelites obeyed God. So that night, when the angel came, he took the life of the firstborn son of every Egyptian family.

The Passover feast also showed people how God would save them from sin. The lamb sacrificed during the feast represented Jesus, the Messiah, who would die on the cross for everyone’s sins.

The Passover feast included special food. The people ate unleavened bread—bread without yeast. It was flat bread. At the time of the first Passover, there was no time to let the bread rise. Yeast also reminded the people of sin, and how it could come silently into their lives. The lamb was roasted and eaten with bitter herbs. The bitter herbs reminded the Israelites of the hard time they had as slaves.

When Passover day came, all the priests stood in their places to celebrate the Passover for the people. They divided all the people into family groups. Then they sacrificed the animals, roasted them, and gave the meat to the people.

No work was allowed during Passover. The people enjoyed plenty of food and wonderful music. After the Passover, the people celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread together for seven days. All this time was spent in celebration of God’s goodness. He had saved His people. And they would never forget it.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go for a walk with your family. Find some twigs and tie them together. Dip them in water and draw something on the ground.
- Before the water dries, see if your family can guess what you have drawn. Take turns.
- Find a quiet place and read your lesson story together.
- Thank God for His protecting care.

Sunday

- Draw pictures of the food the Israelites ate at Passover time. Cut them out and glue them to a paper plate. Write your memory verse on the plate. (If you need help, read Exodus 12:3, 8.)
- The Israelites ate their food with bitter herbs. With your family, smell and taste some cooking herbs. Which taste bitter?
- Look up “herbs” in a concordance. Find two other texts where herbs are mentioned.

Monday

- What would you take if you had to leave your home quickly? List five things. Survey your family and list what they would take.
- Look in a newspaper for pictures or information about refugees or people who are homeless. Read Matthew 25:34–40 together. Discuss as a family what you may be able to do to help refugees or the homeless.
- Pray for refugees and the homeless.

Tuesday

- Ask your mom if you may make some unleavened bread. You need 2 cups of flour, 1/2 teaspoon of salt, and 3/4 cup of water. Mix it all together and form 8 balls. Roll each ball

into a circle. Bake in a preheated oven 500°F (180°–200°C) for 5 minutes. Share the bread with your family tonight.

- Read 2 Chronicles 35 during worship. What did you learn?
- Sing a praise song, then thank God for His care.

Wednesday

- Create a calendar with family birthdays and other important family celebrations.
- Add national holidays and celebrations to your list. Choose one of these holidays. Find out the story behind the celebration.
- What does God want us to celebrate each week? (See Exodus 20:8–11.)
- Thank God for special days to celebrate His love.

Thursday

- For worship today, read and discuss Psalm 23.
- Cut a sheet of paper into narrow strips. Give each family member a strip and ask them to draw or write about something God has done for them. Glue the ends of the strips together to form a thankfulness chain.
- Thank God for the things mentioned on your thankfulness chain.
- Talk about things you can do to make your family Sabbath celebration better.

Friday

- Help get ready for Sabbath. Clean your room.
- During family worship, review and act out the whole story of Josiah.
- Say your memory verse together.
- Sing a song of praise; then thank God for His protection during the week.