

A Story of the First Passover

This story gives a child's view of what it might have been like for families on that first Passover leading to the freeing of Israel from Egypt (Exodus 3-13).

The boy's heart pounded as he helped his father secure the struggling lamb. He shivered a little as the sun's rays dimmed and the coolness of the spring evening settled softly over Goshen. They had slaughtered animals before to provide meat for a special occasion. But this time was different.

This lamb would play a part in the last great plague the LORD was going to send on Egypt. *Will Pharaoh finally give in?* the boy wondered anxiously. *Or will he refuse as he has done so many times before?*

Pharaoh gets a warning

It had all started when Moses, the adopted son of an Egyptian princess, returned from a 40-year exile in Midian. Moses and his brother Aaron brought some stern warnings for Pharaoh. They told him: Let the Hebrew slaves go into the wilderness to hold a feast and offer sacrifices to the LORD, or be punished!

The boy's father was present when Moses and Aaron first showed signs and wonders from God and delivered His warning.

The stubbornness of the king was amazing! *I would have agreed after that first plague—when all the waters turned to blood*, the boy thought. But Pharaoh refused to obey twice more. God responded by sending thousands of frogs to cover the land. After that He sent swarms of lice, thick as dust, to torment man and beast.

Still Pharaoh would not yield, and God sent a plague of flies. The Egyptian's heart only grew harder.

“Why doesn't Pharaoh realize our people are special to the LORD? Our cattle didn't die of the disease that killed Egypt's livestock. We were not afflicted with awful boils, but he and his people and animals were. Our cattle and crops were protected during the plague of hail!”

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The boy shuddered, remembering the terrifying storm and the miles of devastation it had left in its path.

“He knew, son, but Pharaoh is a proud man. He will not give in easily.”

Father is right, the boy thought. This ruler’s hard heart would only cause more misery for his own people.

One last plague

“The LORD told Moses and Aaron of one last plague,” his father continued gravely. “At midnight on the 14th of Abib, all of the firstborn in the land, both man and beast, will die.”

The boy felt his throat tighten as he asked quietly, “*All?*” He was a firstborn—and so was his father!

“Don’t worry, son,” his father quickly soothed. “The LORD will protect us. That’s why we selected this lamb four days ago on the 10th of Abib. Moses and Aaron were quite specific about it. They told us to choose a perfect male lamb or kid no more than a year old and to keep it until the beginning of the 14th of Abib—that’s tonight. Now is the time when any who are to be spared must kill the lambs.”

“Get ready,” his father urged as he quickly killed the lamb. The boy moved forward to catch its warm red blood in a basin. “Quickly, son, get the hyssop I put near the doorway. We will use it to smear blood on the two side posts and the lintel above the door of the house. God said the blood of the lamb will spare our lives.”

Soon the doorway was smeared with blood and the animal was skinned and roasting over a hot fire. When the family gathered for the evening meal, his father relayed some final instructions from Moses.

“After the lamb is roasted, we must eat all of it, along with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. If any is left over, we are to burn it in the fire. Be dressed and ready to travel. And one last important thing—we cannot go outside our homes until the morning light or we die! Only the blood on our door will protect us. Tomorrow, we leave. The LORD is going to free us from our slavery in Egypt at last!”

The boy knew that he, for one, would not be sleeping this night.

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At midnight the boy trembled as he heard horrified cries from the Egyptians. The plague on the firstborn had begun. He moved closer to his father, whose steady voice reassured and comforted the anxious family.

“When the LORD sees the lamb’s blood, He will cause this plague to pass over our house. No one here will be harmed. This time Pharaoh *will* let us go.”

The boy silently made himself a promise: *I will always remember this night. I will tell my children about the sacrifice of the LORD’s Passover in the first month of each new year. I will NEVER forget how the LORD dealt with Pharaoh, and how He delivered us from Egypt!*

For family discussion

1. Do you know how many plagues God sent on Egypt? (Hint: They are found in Exodus 7-12.) Can you list them all?
2. Why is this memorial called “Passover”?
3. Why do you suppose Pharaoh was so stubborn?

Read more about the Passover and its meaning today in our article “[Passover: What Did Jesus Do for You?](#)”