

The Lamb of God

GRADES 4-5



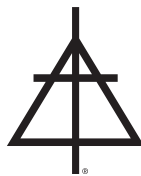
We are grateful to Carol Reinsma, director of children's ministries at Cragmor Christian Reformed Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado, for her work in developing *The Lamb of God*.

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Christian Reformed Church
**Faith Formation
Ministries**

GRADES 4 AND 5

The Lamb of God

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 12:1-20; Matthew 26:26-30; John 1:29








FOCUS

God promised to save the Israelites through the blood of the Passover lamb. God sent Jesus as the final Passover Lamb to save us and take away the sins of the world.

FAITH NURTURE GOALS

- Tell what happened on the first Passover and at the Last Supper.
- Feel sure that God saves and protects his people through the blood of the Lamb.
- Praise God for his saving power both in the Old Testament and through Jesus.

A NOTE ABOUT LEARNING STYLES

In the chart below and beside each Easy Extra activity, you will find one or more of the following descriptions: **Aa** Word Smart,  People Smart,  Music Smart,  Number Smart,  Earth Smart,  Self Smart,  Body Smart, and  Picture Smart—and an icon beside each one. Those descriptions and icons refer to “multiple intelligences,” a term developed by Dr. Howard Gardiner to describe the different ways in which people learn. We’ve used them here to indicate to you which learning style(s) each step/activity taps into the most. For example, some people are visual learners, others are musical, some learn best when they are physically engaged, some are a combination of several “smarts,” and so on. For more information on each of those learning styles along with a fun quiz you can give your students (and one you can take yourself!), visit <http://dwell.faithaliveresources.org/downloads>, click on “Topics for Leaders,” and open the “Learning Styles Quiz.”

REFLECTION: GETTING INTO THE STORY

The first Passover was a memorable event. God’s people had just witnessed nine terrible plagues in the land of Egypt. God’s mighty power had been exercised for all to see, and the fear of God was in their hearts. The people knew God’s power, but what about God’s love?

In Exodus 12 we read how God showed that love by delivering the children of Israel from their slavery in a life-changing way. This deliverance was about more than freeing them from their physical enslavement to the Egyptians. It was the beginning of an exodus from hopelessness to a hope-filled life with God.

God was reordering their lives by reordering their calendar. God was teaching the children of Israel to live in obedience, and obedience to God always has a purpose for our benefit. God wanted the people to know God, to recognize God at work, and to share the stories of God’s mighty acts with their children.

The blood of the lamb both represented God’s salvation and served as the means of that salvation, foreshadowing the day when God would provide a Lamb who would make the ultimate sacrifice for all people. Through this first Passover we learn that God is not only able to save us but *wants* to save us. When God leads an exodus, God always delivers people into something greater. That is good news that we can remember and celebrate!

WONDERING





- How are God's power and God's love for people demonstrated in the Passover celebration?
- What comfort could the children of Israel have found in the practice of celebrating the Passover?
- What comfort do we find in celebrating the Lord's Supper?

TEACHING

- In this lesson you'll be looking at the parallels between the Passover lamb and Christ. Only one who is unblemished and without sin could bear the sins of the people and atone for them with his blood. It is by Christ's blood that our sins are "passed over" by God. The Lord's Supper is about remembering Christ's sacrifice and celebrating God's deliverance.
- In Exodus 12:14, God makes a point of telling the Israelites that they are to observe the Passover as a lasting ordinance, forever. While some might see that as a burden, it is important to note that this means that God expects to be in relationship with them forever. God's deliverance may be a one-time event, but the relationship God cultivates with people is forever.

—Rev. Shannon Jammal-Holleman

SESSION AT A GLANCE

Steps	Minutes	Activities	Materials	Multiple Intelligences
Gathering for God's Story	5-10 min	Snack and conversation about celebrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Snack <input type="checkbox"/> Candles, flowers, music, or other decorations (optional) <input type="checkbox"/> Picture of your family celebrating around a table (optional) <input type="checkbox"/> Communion plate and chalice	
Entering the Story	10-15 min	"Darkness and Deliverance" story	<input type="checkbox"/> Story script, "Darkness and Deliverance" (reproducible pages 10-11)	Aa 
Living Into the Story	15 min	Lamb of God Bible study	<input type="checkbox"/> Communion table <input type="checkbox"/> Bibles <input type="checkbox"/> Lamb of God Part 1 and 2, reproducible pages 12 - 13, print one per child or pair <input type="checkbox"/> Red, orange, green, blue and purple colored pencils or markers, one of each color per pair of children	
Living Out of the Story	10-15 min	Remembering and Giving Thanks	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 adult or teen guests <input type="checkbox"/> Hymnals (optional) <input type="checkbox"/> Dear Family letter, reproducible page 14, print or email one per child	Aa 

Step 1 Gathering for God's Story

Before your group arrives today, place your snack on the table. You may want to add a few festive touches to the room too: candles, flowers, music, and so on.

When the children arrive, invite them to begin enjoying the snack together. As they do, ask them to name times when people gather together around food to celebrate. The list they suggest might include birthdays, anniversaries, family reunions, weddings, sports awards parties, showers, holidays (Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, national holidays) and so on.

Ask the group what they think is the purpose of these special meals. The list might include

- to celebrate
- to enjoy each other's company
- to remember a special event
- to look forward to a future event.

If you have time, give the children opportunity to tell about one of their favorite meal celebrations and why they like it so much. You may want to bring a picture of your family seated around a holiday meal or at a wedding to share with the group too. If some of the children have phones, invite them to share any pictures they have of family meals, if they wish.

Comment that sometimes Christians gather for a special meal too. Add the communion plate and a chalice to your table. Ask the group what happens at this special meal. Explain that this meal was one that Jesus introduced at yet **another** special meal—the Passover. At the Passover meal, the people of Israel sacrificed a lamb as a reminder and a clear sign that God would forgive them and save them and protect them.

When Jesus told his disciples to celebrate the Lord's Supper, he wanted them to remember the blood of another Lamb—a Lamb who would die for the sins of the whole world.

Step 2 Entering the Story

Tell the group that together you will be exploring and telling the story of the Passover and then thinking about that other Supper too.

Invite the children to help you tell the story today by pantomiming some of the actions. Say: **We need one** *(or two if you have a large group)* **person to be gathering herbs from the garden. What should that look like? Who wants to do that and where do you want to stand? We need someone to be caring for their brothers and sisters. What does that look like? Where would you like to stand?** Repeat the pattern for “someone to wash the family clothes,” “someone to watch over the lambs and goats,” “someone to prepare the dough for the family bread,” and “someone to roast the meat and bake the bread in an outdoor fire pit.” If your group is large, allow more than one child to volunteer for each activity.

Designate a place, such as another room, to represent the homes of the Egyptians.

In the place they are sitting or standing, ask everyone to extend their right hand out in front of them. Say, **Draw a circle in the air with your pointer finger. Now imagine that this circle is a long-ago, faraway place: the land of Goshen in Egypt.**

Invite the children to imagine that they have lived in Egypt all of their lives. Their parents and grandparents grew up here too. They have built their homes, tended their gardens, and raised sheep and goats here. But there is one big problem: they are not free. Pharaoh, the ruler of the land, keeps them

TIP

If you need to rely on the written story, adhere the page to a larger paper that gives the appearance of reading from a parchment scroll.

TIP

You may want to show the children a picture (on your phone or computer) of a contemporary Seder plate and tell them that Jews still celebrate Passover today.

under his thumb, forcing them to work on his building projects. Every day you see how tired and thirsty your father is after slaving away for Pharaoh every minute of daylight.

Have everyone begin their work.

Then walk around the room, telling the story written on the reproducible pages and inviting the children to demonstrate the actions where indicated.

After the story, tell the group that just as God commanded, God's people celebrated the Passover every year. It was a table celebration—just like the ones we talked about a few minutes ago. At Passover, people remembered how God saved his people long ago. They celebrated the fact that God would save and protect them too.

Wonder together about why this yearly table celebration was so important. Some of the following questions may help:

- I wonder why God insisted that the chosen lamb had to be perfect?
- I wonder why God chose the blood on the doorpost to be a sign of faith?
- I wonder if you have ever had to do something, go somewhere, or believe something completely on faith and trust?
- I wonder how the people of Israel felt, knowing they were saved and forgiven through the blood of the lamb?

Step 3 Living Into the Story

Tell the group that in the next part of Scripture you're going to look at, Jesus and his disciples had gone to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover together—just as they had done every year with their families when they were growing up.

TIP

If it's not possible to visit the sanctuary or if your time is short, ask the children to imagine that a table in your room is the communion table.

Lead your group from your classroom to the sanctuary and have them gather together around the communion table. (Bring Bibles along or have a stack ready nearby.)

TIP

If some of the children in your group don't attend worship, explain briefly what happens at the table during your worship service.

When you're all gathered around the table, give each child a Bible. Comment that the disciples must have been very surprised that at this Passover celebration Jesus didn't use the words that were usually spoken at the Passover meal, the words Jewish families had been speaking ever since that first Passover meal way back in the book of Exodus. Instead, Jesus seemed to be inviting them to celebrate a new feast! Have them turn to Matthew 26:26-30 (you may want to mark the passage ahead of time.). Invite five children to read one verse each.

Ask the group if these words sound familiar. Agree together that they remind us of another table celebration—the table you're gathered around in the sanctuary.

Then ask one child to read John 1:29. Invite the group to think about some of the following questions:

- I wonder why John called Jesus “the Lamb of God” and what that has to do with the Passover lamb?
- I wonder why Jesus is sometimes called the final Passover Lamb?
- I wonder what Jesus was telling his disciples and us about his body and blood? Why do you suppose he wants us to eat and remember?

Lead the group back to your meeting room and give each of them a copy of the Lamb of God reproducible pages and some markers or colored pencils.

Read the passage aloud together, then challenge the children to follow the instructions to find out how the Old Testament Passover lamb was a symbol, or a picture, of the Lamb of God. (You might pair children up to work through the challenges.)

Invite the group to summarize ways the Passover lamb and the Lamb of God were alike. Also talk about how they were different.

Answer Key

Mark with red the Passover verse that is a picture of Christ nailed to the cross and his blood that was shed there (Ex. 12:7).

Mark with orange the Passover verse that is a picture of Christ who is the lamb without blemish or defect. Christ as the offering for our sins could have no sin. (Ex. 12:5a, 6b)

Mark with green the Passover verse that pictures Christ telling his disciples at the Last Supper to “do this in remembrance of me.” (Ex. 12:14)

Mark with blue the Passover verse that reflects Christ on the cross with no broken bones, the same as the lamb prepared for the exodus. (Exodus 12:8-11)

Mark with purple the Passover verse that is picture of Christ’s blood being the sign that the price is paid for our salvation. (Exodus 12:12-13)

Step 4 Living Out of the Story

Ask the group why we need the blood of the Lamb. As they mention ideas, write them on newsprint or a whiteboard:

- to forgive our sins
- to give us hope
- to make us right with God
- to save us.

Comment that when Christians gather around the communion table, we remember what Jesus did for us, we celebrate our salvation, and we bring thanksgiving to God. A communion service can be deeply moving and powerful. Christ’s body and blood actually make us strong to live for him!

Challenge the children to think about and share their memories of being part of a Lord’s Supper service—whether they partake of the bread and wine/juice or not.

Invite your prearranged guests (1 to 3, depending on your time) to join your group and to tell the children of a time when the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was deeply meaningful for them.

After the stories and testimonies, you may want to play or sing together a familiar communion hymn that your church uses (“Lift Up Your Hearts Unto the Lord” or “Eat This Bread” are good choices.) Or invite the children to suggest some of their favorite communion songs.

Then tell the group that we usually end the Lord’s Supper with a prayer of thanksgiving. Either invite the children to offer popcorn thanksgiving prayers or lead the prayer yourself, giving thanks for the Lamb of God!

TIP




If some of the children have never attended a service of the sacrament, invite them to tell what they know about the Lord’s Supper or what they’d like to know.

TIP

Taking the time to ask one or more members of your congregations to tell a (very short!) story about their personal experience with communion is truly worth the effort. Hearing about the way the sacrament moved and comforted someone after a death, or gave them strength during an illness, or made them feel God’s presence during a time of loneliness will impress your group with how deep and meaningful the celebration of the sacrament may be. Don’t limit your choices to adults. If you know a teen or child who might be able to participate in this way, by all means ask them!

EASY EXTRAS

1. Graphic Story *This activity could be used in place of the interactive story in Entering the Story.*

TIME 10-15 minutes	
 Picture Smart  Self Smart  People Smart	MATERIALS <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Story pages (reproducible pages 15-17), one per child or pair; markers and colored pencils




TIP

If time is tight, have each child or pair of children illustrate just one of the frames. Then gather and share what you've done, putting the story together in order.

Distribute the reproducible pages for the graphic story of the Passover and have the children read the captions and draw the scene or some representation of the scene for each section. You may want to let the children work in pairs on a set of pages to economize on time.

After they have finished illustrating, give one or two children (or pairs of children) the chance to share their story with the group. Then use some of the wondering questions from the main step.

2. Thanks to the Lamb *This activity can be used in place of Living Out of the Story, Step 4*

TIME 5-10 minutes	
 Picture Smart  Self Smart  Word Smart	MATERIALS <input type="checkbox"/> Cutout blank lamb (reproducible page 18), one per child; cross—either created from wood or cut out of posterboard (big enough so each child in your group can attach a lamb to it); newsprint and marker; tape, poster putty, glue dots, or another adhesive

Ask the group why we need the blood of the Lamb. As they mention ideas, write them on newsprint or a whiteboard:

- to forgive our sins
- to give us hope
- to make us right with God
- to save us

Comment that when Christians gather around the communion table, we remember what Jesus did for us, we celebrate our salvation, and we thank God.

Distribute a lamb shape to each child. Invite them to take a few minutes to write on the lamb a short thank you to Jesus for his sacrifice. Tell them they can use some of the ideas you listed together or some of their own.

After several minutes, invite the children to come to the cross and use an adhesive (tape, poster putty, tacks, or glue dots) to attach their lamb to the cross. Then together carry the cross to somewhere in the church or sanctuary where you have received permission to display it for the congregation.

Thank the children for bringing their thanks to the Lamb!

TIP

You may want to use this opportunity to share with the children a time when the Lord's Supper was especially meaningful for you.

Darkness and Deliverance

(Invite the children to pretend to be the Israelites working in the fields or making bricks from mud. Let them work for a minute or so, then invite them to sit down.)

I see you've been working hard—even though it's been a terrible, frightful, pest-filled year.

As you know, the trouble all started when Moses suddenly returned to Pharaoh's palace after years of being a shepherd in the desert. He used to be a palace prince, but then he got in big trouble. If you don't know that story, check it out in Exodus 2.

But back to our terrible, frightful, pest-filled year! God sent Moses on a mission. He told him to tell Pharaoh to set God's people free so we could worship God. But Pharaoh said, "No way! I need my slaves to work for me."

So God told Moses he would send plagues to change Pharaoh's mind, remember? First all the water in the land turned to blood! It was smelly and awful, but Pharaoh still wouldn't listen.

Then frogs covered the land, hopping into beds and onto kitchen tables, on people and animals. But Pharaoh still said no.

Next God sent lice. They covered our bodies, making everyone itch and scratch. But Pharaoh still said no.

So God sent more plagues—but thankfully these were only on the Egyptians. Millions of flies covered the land. The sky was thick with flies!

Moses warned Pharaoh to let the people go before things got worse, but Pharaoh refused to listen and all the horses, donkeys, camels, cattle and sheep died.

Then God sent painful sores on the skin the Egyptians and their animals. Everyone was miserable. But Pharaoh still said no.

So God sent the worst hailstorm the Egyptians had ever seen. The hail pounded everything! Did Pharaoh finally change his mind? No!

Next came the grasshoppers or locusts, covering the fields and eating every green plant and leaf in sight. But Pharaoh still said no.

Then God sent darkness. It was darker than it would be if you were blindfolded! And that thick darkness lasted for three whole days. No, said Pharaoh.

It's been a few weeks now since God sent the last plague, but I'm afraid there will be another one soon because Pharaoh still refuses to give in to God. He won't let us go! You can go back to work now, and when I hear more I'll tell you.

(Encourage the kids to get up and pretend to work again for another minute. Then continue the story.)

Hey, everyone--I just heard more news! Stand still where you are and I'll tell you. Moses went to the palace to tell Pharaoh about the next plague. Here's what he said:

(Change your voice to that of a town crier by cupping hands around mouth.) **Every firstborn son in Egypt will die at midnight!**

That's terrible, isn't it? But God has different news for you on this dreaded night for Egypt. This month will start a new year for you. A new year! Moses and Aaron have given us these instructions: every household must go to the sheepfold and find a perfect lamb. If your family is too small to eat an entire lamb, you must share it with another family.

(Give the children a moment to regroup into how many they think must gather together for a lamb.)

Moses said these lambs must be perfect. They must not have any blemishes—no scars, no bumps or stains on their bodies. They must be males that are one year old.

(Have the children act out going to get their lamb, searching for a perfect one, and bringing it home.)

You have selected your lamb on the tenth day of the month. Moses says you must keep your lamb until the fourteenth. You must watch over it, making sure it is perfect.

(Give the children time to imagine caring for and inspecting the lamb.)

It is now late afternoon on the fourteenth. You must kill your lamb. It's okay to feel sad. It isn't an easy thing to do. But God has a reason.

Next, you must take some of the blood and put it on the side posts and top post of your doorways.

(Act out painting the blood on the doorposts.)

The hour is getting late. The sun has gone down. You must roast the whole lamb over the fire. Don't use any pots, because you won't have time to clean them. You must also make bread—but not the kind with leaven or yeast that takes time to rise. Make a quick flatbread. And the greens you eat must be the bitter ones that you can gather quickly.

Even the way you dress must show there is no time to waste. You must wear a belt to tuck in your clothes, put sandals on your feet, and hold a walking stick in your hands.

(Act out roasting, bread mixing, herb gathering, and eating while standing.)

Now listen to what God is going to do.

God will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn son—both of people and animals. But the blood on your doorposts will be a sign that the people in your house have faith. If you put blood on your doorposts, no one in your house will die.

That's a big promise! And there's more.

After this last plague is all over, God wants you to remember this time forever. Every year you and your family must celebrate this same Passover feast. From now on this will be your new year's celebration. You are God's new people.

LAMB OF GOD (PART 1)

EXODUS 12

¹The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, ²“This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. ³Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. ⁴If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat.

⁵The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. ⁶Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the members of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. ⁷Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs.

⁸That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. ⁹Do not eat the meat raw or boiled in water, but roast it over a fire—with the head, legs and internal organs. ¹⁰Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it.

¹¹This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the Lord’s Passover.

¹²“On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of both people and animals, and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. ¹³The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.

¹⁴“This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord—a lasting ordinance.

LAMB OF GOD (PART 2)

- Mark with red the Passover verse that is a picture of Christ nailed to the cross and his blood that was shed there.
- Mark with orange the Passover verse that is a picture of Christ who is the Lamb without blemish or defect. Christ as the offering for our sins could have no sin.
- Mark with green the Passover verse that pictures Christ telling his disciples at the Last Supper to “do this in remembrance of me.”
- Mark with blue the Passover verse that reflects Christ on the cross with no broken bones, the same as the lamb prepared for the exodus.
- Mark with purple the Passover verse that is a picture of Christ’s blood being the sign that the price is paid for our salvation.

Dear Family,

Our group spent some time today talking about meals and celebrations. We told each other stories about our favorite family meals and described why they were so special. Then we moved on to our exploration and discussion about another important family meal, the Lord's Supper.

Because 4th and 5th graders can understand in greater depth what is happening at that supper, we looked at some of the Bible's rich teachings about the Lamb of God. We explored Old Testament passages about the Passover lamb and then we discovered how they were linked to and were fulfilled in an amazing way through the New Testament Lamb of God, Jesus. Best of all, we talked about how that sacrifice was for us and our sins!

Talking about the one-time-for-all sacrifice that Jesus, Lamb of God, made on the cross helped us reflect about what is really happening when we celebrate the Lord's Supper and share the body and blood of the Lamb. We listened to stories people in our congregation told about times when taking that sacrament had been especially meaningful for them--and we told our own stories.

You may want to continue that storytelling at home. Talk about what the Lord's Supper means to you and tell each other about times when the sacrament really helped you feel stronger, less sad, and wrapped in the arms of your Savior.

Sincerely,

Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. (Exodus 12:3)

The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect... the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. (Exodus 12:5a, 6b)

Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs. (Exodus 12:7)

They are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. ... Eat it with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet. ... Eat it in haste; it is the Lord's Passover. (Exodus 12:8-11)

On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn—both men and animals. . . . I am the Lord. The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. (Exodus 12:12-13)

This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord—a lasting ordinance. (Exodus 12:14)

