

4 Lesson

A Community Celebrates

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



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 ten 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. On a special night the angel of God passed through the land and took the life of the oldest son of every Egyptian family who had not put blood on their doorpost.

Each Israelite family had been told to give God a sign so the angel would pass



The Message

God's family celebrates
His love together.

Memory Verse

*"They will celebrate
your abundant
goodness and
joyfully sing of your
righteousness"*

(Psalm 145:7, NIV).



over their home. God instructed them to sacrifice a lamb and sprinkle its blood on the doorposts. When the angel saw the blood, He would pass over that house. If the angel did not see blood on the doorposts, the oldest son would die.

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 dipped in salt water. The bitter herbs reminded the Israelites of the hard time they had as slaves. The salt water was to help them remember the tears they cried during their suffering.

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.

S A B B A T H

DO 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.

DO See if your family can guess what you have drawn before the water dries. Take turns.

READ Find a quiet place and read your lesson story together.

PRAY Thank God for His protecting care.

S U N D A Y

DRAW 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.)

DO The Israelites ate their food with bitter herbs. Show and discuss it during family worship. With your family, smell and taste some cooking herbs. Which taste bitter?

READ Look up "herbs" in a concordance. Find two other texts where herbs are mentioned.

M O N D A Y

DO What would you take if you had to leave your home quickly? List five things. Survey your family and list what they would take.

READ 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 such people.

PRAY Pray for refugees and the homeless.

T U E S D A Y

DO Ask your Mom if you may make some unleavened bread. You need 2 cups of flour, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt, and $\frac{3}{4}$ 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 Read 2 Chronicles 35 during worship. What did you learn?

SING Sing a praise song, then thank God for His care.

W E D N E S D A Y

MAKE Create a calendar with family birthdays and other important family celebrations.

DO Add national holidays and celebrations to your list. Choose one of these holidays. Find out the story behind the celebration.

READ What does God want us to celebrate each week? (See Exodus 20:8-11.)

PRAY Thank God for special days to celebrate His love.

Every part of the Passover Feast was to remind the Israelites of how God rescued them from slavery in Egypt.



THURSDAY

READ For worship today read and discuss Psalm 23.

DO 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.

PRAY Thank God for the things mentioned on your thankfulness chain.

DO Talk about things you can do to make your family Sabbath celebration better.

FRIDAY

DO Help get ready for Sabbath. Clean your room.

DO During family worship, review and act out the whole story of Josiah.

DO Say your memory verse together.

SING Sing a song of praise; then thank God for His protection during the week.

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PUZZLE

Directions: The following clues are taken from this week's lesson. Write the answer on the lines provided and in the vertical boxes you will find out how many days this Passover celebration lasted.

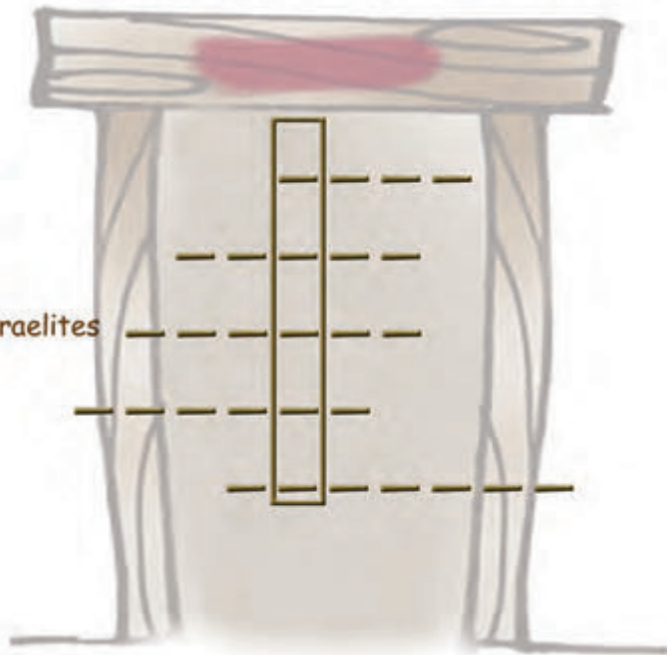
1. Ingredient added to water

2. Food that had not risen

3. What Egypt made of the Israelites

4. Type of herbs

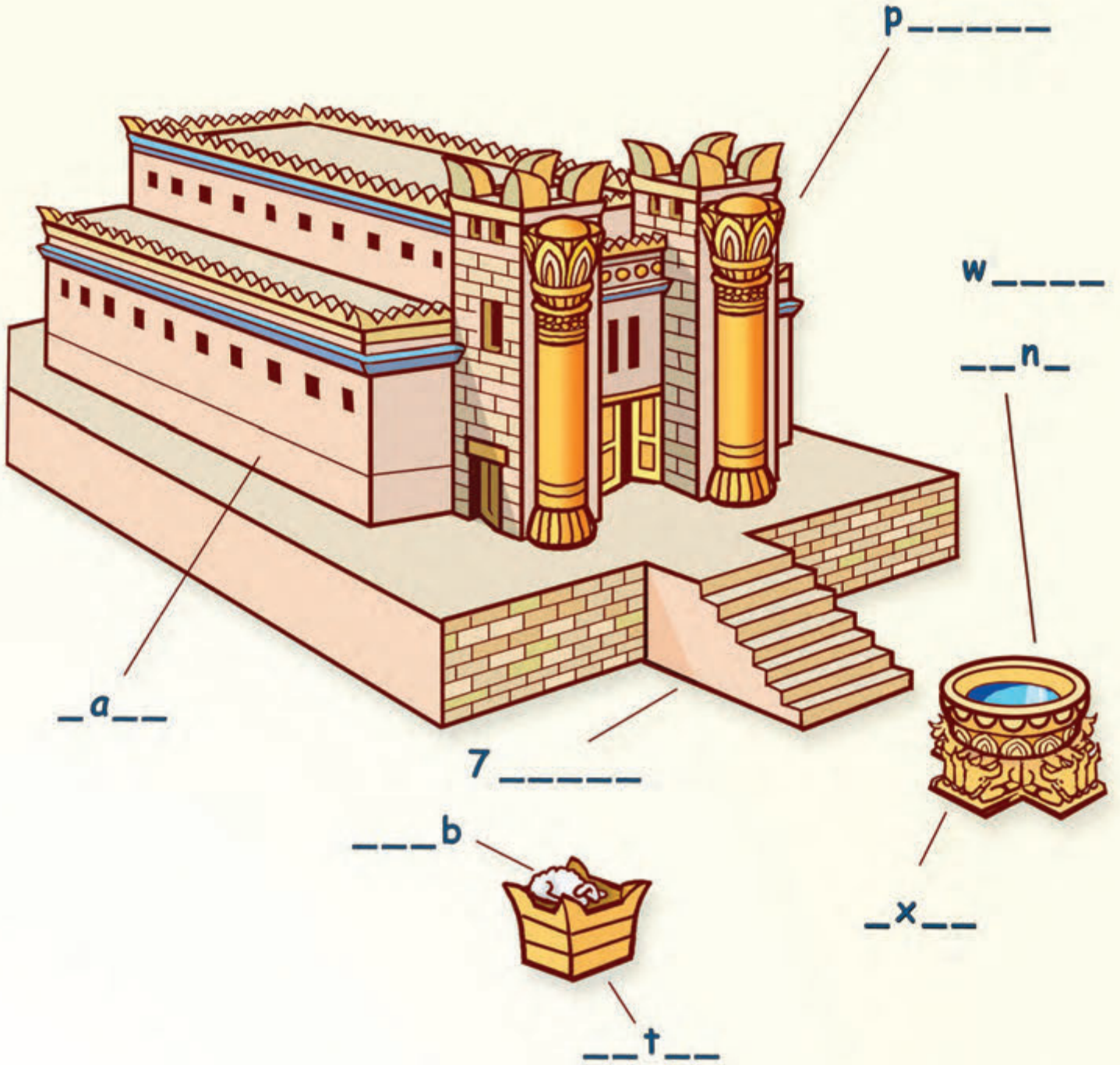
5. These were sacrificed



COMMUNITY

Directions: Study this picture of the temple inside and circle the items that should remain in the temple. Put an X on items that King Josiah wants removed from the temple. Then identify items in the picture of the temple outside and write them in the blanks.





Answers: wall, lamb, steps, water, oxen, water tank, pillar