

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

A Ministry of the Burnt Swamp Association

By Christopher L. Hunt
Mt. Olive Baptist Church

Remembering the Passover
Background Scriptures:
Exodus 11-12
Focus on:
Exodus 12:11-17, 24-27

After hundreds of years in slavery and bondage, freedom for the Hebrews was just in sight. A final plague, the death of the Egyptian first-born, would break Pharaoh's stubborn will, giving the Hebrews their chance at freedom.

The delivery of the Hebrews provides the context for Israel's most prominent and probably its oldest religious

festival: the Passover. The Passover Festival became a frequent celebration commemorating Israel's historic deliverance.

The term passover refers to the "passing over," and consequently the sparing, of the Hebrew households by the destroying angel sent to Egypt. To escape this plague, the Hebrews were instructed to smear lamb's blood on their doorposts and lintel. Upon seeing this, the destroyer would "pass over" that particular household.

The death of Egypt's first-born prompted Pharaoh to send the Hebrews on their way. They were commanded to leave in a hurry. Exodus

12:33 states, "The Egyptians were urgent with the people, to send them out of the land in haste." It must be noted, however, the key to Israel's freedom was their obedience, obedience to God's divine initiative. In 12:1-20 we see God giving instructions to Moses and Aaron regarding the preparation of the feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread. The feasts are characterized by careful detail and precision. Moses communicates God's message to the people in 12:21-27a. Israel's response comes in 12:27b-28; "And the people bowed their heads and worshipped. Then the people of Israel went and did so; as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did." With such cooperation and obedience, it is no wonder the Hebrews were successful in their departure from Egypt. If Israel had questioned God's instructions, refusing to follow them, their chance of freedom would have been doubtful. Nevertheless, their obedience led them to God's act of liberating them from their enemies.

This theme of obedience has significant implications in the New Testament. Though God clearly revealed Himself in the liberation of the Hebrews, He ultimately reveals Himself in Jesus Christ who was, "obedient unto death, even on a cross" (Philippians 2:8). Jesus struggled in the Upper room, in Gethsemane, and on the cross. He demonstrated an obedience which involved personal suffering for others. Whereas, the personal risk of obedience on the part of the Hebrews allowed God to overthrow the Egyptians, the obedient act of Jesus served as the effectual defeat of the forces of evil.

In the New Testament, the Passover undergoes a unique transition. The New Testament Passover is realized in the Last Supper which commemorates the death and resurrection of our Lord (Mt. 26:17-29; Mk. 14:12f; Lk. 22:7-53; Jn. 13:1-38; 1 Cor. 11:23-32). Jesus established it as a memorial of his redemptive work. "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's

death until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26). The Old Testament Passover was a celebration of God's vindication over Israel's enemies. The Lord's Supper emphasizes God's power to forgive those who are estranged from Him.

The Church has continued to observe the Lord's Supper as a memorial of Christ's death and resurrection for many centuries. However, the memory of his redemptive work must go beyond the Lord's table. The significance of the Lord's Supper is fulfilled when the Church is personally and actively involved in Christian service. This means a kind of obedience on the part of God's people which reflects the compassion, love and concern toward others that Jesus had for others. The greatest way to memorialize Him is to carry on his work faithfully and in willful obedience.

"Advice is like snow; the softer it falls, the longer it dwells upon, and the deeper it sinks into, the mind."
Samuel Taylor Coleridge



THE GOOD WORD
from the Bible

And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you.

For everyone who asks receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks it shall be opened.
Luke 11:9, 10

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to honor Seniors

Recognition at several district events plus an opportunity to apply for the Blackburn Scholarship will be in store for five seniors from the Rockingham District of the United Methodist Church. The district encompasses Richmond, Scotland and Robeson counties.

The top five seniors will be chosen based on Christian character and church participation; school grades and activities; and citizenship in their town/community. Nominations are made by the pastor of the nominee in cooperation with the local United Methodist Youth Fellowship.

Nominees must submit three letters; one each from their pastor, school principal or guidance counselor and one from a person knowledgeable of their citizenship activities in their communities.

Letters and nominations should be sent to the Reverend Samuel H. Brown, 1009 Scalesby Rd., Rockingham, NC 28379 by November 15. For further information or clarification seniors are encouraged to contact their local pastor.

New Boon For Tub Bathing Babies

How many hands do you need to tub bathe a baby?

For harried parents, two never seem to be enough to control a squirming youngster during the daily bath ritual. Now, however, a new product innovation provides a happy solution to the problem.



Mothers now can use new Baby Magic® Lathering Bath Cloths—soft, dry disposable cloths that lather up in water and permit you to hold babies safely with one hand while tub bathing them with the other.

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Bathing baby doesn't have to be a worrisome chore any longer, thanks to this new product from The Mennen Company. This new bath aid specifically designed for use on babies, can be found in the baby section of most food, drug and discount department stores.

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