

PS-KIDS • GROWING EXPLORERS (AGES 9-12)

# Passover: More Than Passing By

*A Word Study in Exodus 12 & Isaiah 31:5*

Hebrew & Greek Word Exploration

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## LESSON OVERVIEW

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Everyone thinks "Passover" means God walked past the houses in Egypt. But when we look at the **original Hebrew word** and the **ancient Greek translation**, we discover something amazing: Passover means God *hovered over* and *protected* His people — like a bird guarding its nest! Today we are going to be Bible detectives and dig into the real meaning.

## SECTION 1 — THE WORD EVERYONE GETS WRONG

### THINK ABOUT THIS:

*"When you hear the word 'Passover,' what do you picture? God walking down the street and skipping over certain houses? What if the real picture is completely different?"*

If you grew up hearing the Passover story, you probably imagined God strolling through Egypt and just passing by the Israelite houses. That is what the English word "pass over" sounds like. But here is the thing: **the Bible was not written in English!**

The Old Testament was written in **Hebrew**. And the Hebrew word used in Exodus 12 does not mean "pass over" at all. It means something much more exciting. Let us find out what it really says.

## SECTION 2 — THE HEBREW CLUE: PESACH

The Hebrew word used in Exodus 12 is:

פֶּסַח | *pesach*

Pronunciation: "PEH-sahkh"

This word does not mean "to walk past" or "to skip over." Its real meanings are:

- **To hover over** — like a bird flying protectively above its nest
- **To guard / to shield** — to stand at a boundary and block danger
- **To spare** — to save someone from harm on purpose

**The Ancient Greek Evidence:** About 250 years before Jesus was born, Jewish scholars translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek. This translation is called the **Septuagint** (say "SEP-too-ah-jint"), or LXX for short. When they got to Exodus 12:13, they had to pick a Greek word for *pesach*. They chose:

σκεπιάσω | *skepassō*

Meaning: "I will cover / shelter / protect"

They did **not** choose a Greek word for "I will walk past" (*παρέρχομαι*). They picked a word that means *to shelter*. These translators knew Hebrew really well. They understood that *pesach* is about **protection, not transit!**

LXX Exodus 12:13: καὶ ὄψομαι τὸ αἷμα καὶ σκεπάσω ὑμᾶς

"And I will see the blood and I will **cover/protect** you"

### SECTION 3 — ISAIAH'S BIRD PICTURE

How do we know *pesach* really means "to hover and protect"? Because the prophet Isaiah uses the exact same Hebrew word — and he puts it right next to a picture of birds:

*"Like birds hovering overhead, the LORD of hosts will protect Jerusalem; he will protect it and deliver it; he will spare it and rescue it."*

— Isaiah 31:5, ESV

See the word "spare" in that verse? In Hebrew, that is **נִסַּח** — the same root word as Passover! And look at what it is surrounded by: birds hovering, protecting, delivering, rescuing. That is what *pesach* means.

Isaiah gives us four action words together. They all point to the same idea:

#### **Protect**

Like a shield around you

#### **Deliver**

Pulled out of danger

#### **Spare (Pesach!)**

Hovering to guard

#### **Rescue**

Carried to safety

### SECTION 4 — THE NIGHT GOD STOOD GUARD

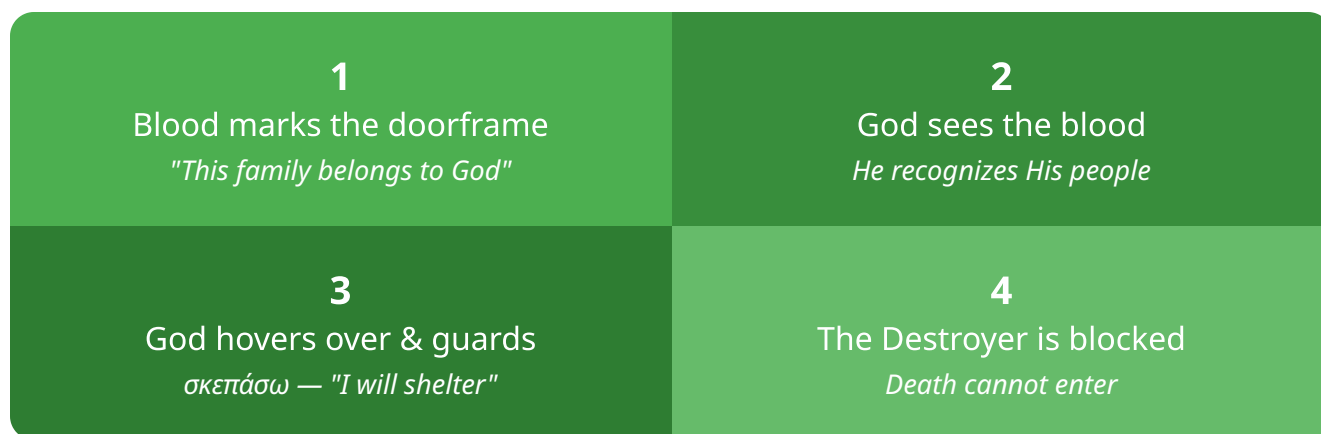
Now let us look at what actually happened on Passover night in Exodus 12:23:

"For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and **will not allow the Destroyer to enter** your houses to strike you."

— Exodus 12:23, ESV

Did you catch that? God does not just skip the house. He **blocks the door**. He "will not allow the Destroyer to enter." God is standing between the Destroyer and the family — like a bodyguard who will not let anyone through.

Here is the step-by-step picture of that night:



**Passover is not about God walking past.  
It is about God standing guard!**

## **SECTION 5 — JESUS OUR PASSOVER**

All of this points forward to Jesus. The apostle Paul says it clearly:

*τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ἐτύθη Χριστός*  
*"For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed."*  
— 1 Corinthians 5:7, ESV

In Egypt, the lamb's blood on the door was the sign that brought God's protection. Today, the blood of **Jesus** is our sign. When we believe in Jesus:

- His blood **marks** us as belonging to God.
- God's presence **hovers** over us with protective love.
- Nothing — not death, not sin, not any enemy — can get past **God's guard** over our lives.

Jesus is not just a lamb who was sacrificed. He is God's **protective presence** — the one who stands between us and everything that would harm us, wings spread wide.

### Small Group Discussion

1. What picture comes to your mind now when you hear "Passover" — has it changed from before this lesson?
2. Why do you think the ancient Greek translators chose a word for "cover/protect" instead of "pass by"?
3. How does the image of a mama bird guarding her nest help you understand how God feels about you?
4. If Jesus is our Passover, what does it mean that He "stands guard" over our lives today?
5. Is there something you are worried about right now where you need to remember that God is hovering over you?

### Word Study Cards

## פֶּסַח (pesach)

Hebrew

To hover over, guard, and protect. The real meaning of Passover: God standing guard over His people.

## σκεπάσω (skepassō)

Greek (LXX)

"I will cover / shelter." The word ancient translators chose for pesach — proving it means protection, not passing by.

## πάσχα (pascha)

Greek (NT)

The Greek spelling of pesach. Used in 1 Corinthians 5:7 where Paul calls Jesus "our Passover."

### MEMORY VERSE

*"Like birds hovering, so the LORD of hosts will protect Jerusalem; he will protect it and deliver it; he will pass over and rescue it."*

— Isaiah 31:5, ESV

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