

Pesach: God's Protective Presence

A 15-Minute Sunday School Lesson — Exodus 12 & Isaiah 31:5

Word Study with Septuagint (LXX) & Hebrew

15 MINUTES • INTERMEDIATE LEVEL • LANGUAGE STUDY

LESSON OUTLINE & TIMING

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| 0:00–1:30 | HOOK: What Does “Passover” Really Mean? |
| 1:30–4:00 | SECTION 1: The Hebrew Word — פֶּסַח (Pesach) |
| 4:00–7:00 | SECTION 2: The Bird Imagery — Isaiah 31:5 |
| 7:00–10:00 | SECTION 3: God at the Door — Exodus 12:23 |
| 10:00–13:00 | SECTION 4: Christ Our Passover — 1 Corinthians 5:7 |
| 13:00–15:00 | APPLICATION & CLOSING: Where Is Your Doorframe? |

HOOK (0:00–1:30) — WHAT DOES “PASSEVER” REALLY MEAN?

ASK THE ROOM:

“When you hear the word ‘Passover,’ what picture comes to mind? God walking past a door? Skipping over a house? What if the real meaning is something far more powerful?”

SETUP: Most of us grew up thinking “Passover” means God simply skipped over or passed by the houses of Israel. But when we dig into the Hebrew word and the ancient Greek translation, we discover something stunning: Passover means God *hovering over, guarding, and protecting* His people. Today we’re going to see this through the original languages.

SECTION 1 (1:30–4:00) — THE HEBREW WORD: פָּסַח

The Hebrew Word:

פָּסַח | *pesach*

The verb פָּסַח (*pāsah*) doesn't just mean "to pass over." Its full range of meaning includes:

- **To hover over** — like a bird protecting its young
- **To shield / to guard** — to stand protectively at a boundary
- **To spare** — to exempt from judgment through deliberate action

The Septuagint Key: The ancient Greek translators (LXX) rendered Exodus 12:13 not with a word for "passing by" but with a word for *covering and protecting*:

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

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

Key Insight: The LXX translators chose σκεπάσω (*skepasō*, "I will cover/shelter") — **not** παρέρχομαι (*parerchomai*, "to pass by"). This reflects an ancient understanding, centuries before Christ, that *pesach* means **divine protection, not divine transit**.

SECTION 2 (4:00–7:00) — THE BIRD IMAGERY: ISAIAH 31:5

The Connecting Verse: Isaiah 31:5 uses the *same Hebrew verb* פָּסַח in a context that makes its protective meaning unmistakable:

כְּצִפְרִים עֹפוֹת כִּן יִגֵּן יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

ὡς ὄρνεα πετόμενα, οὕτως ὑπερασπιεῖ κύριος σαβαωθ

*"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

Here **כִּפֹּף** appears alongside three companion verbs that define its meaning:

גָּנֹן

gānōn

“to defend, to shield”

הִצִּיל

hiṣṣil

“to deliver, to rescue”

הִמְלִיט

himlīt

“to cause to escape”

The Picture: Like a mother bird hovering over her nest with wings spread — fierce, intimate, self-giving love. This is the posture of YHWH over Israel on Passover night. Not a God who passes *by*, but a God who stands *over* and *above*, wings spread, shielding His people.

SECTION 3 (7:00–10:00) — GOD AT THE DOOR: EXODUS 12:23

The Destroyer and the Guardian:

Hebrew: **הַמַּשְׁחִית** (*hammashchīth*)

Greek LXX: ὀλεθρεύων (*olethreuōn*) — “the Destroyer”

“...and [He] will **not allow** the Destroyer to enter your houses to strike you.” — Exodus 12:23b, ESV

The structure of that night was not random. It was ordered, covenantal, and purposeful:

1 Blood marks the doorframe <i>The household is claimed</i>	2 God sees the blood <i>The covenant sign is recognized</i>
3 God protects (σκεπάσω) <i>Divine presence guards</i>	4 The Destroyer passes <i>Death is barred from entry</i>

Ancient Near East Context: In the ANE world, thresholds were sacred boundaries. Blood on the doorframe was not magic — it was a **covenantal territorial marker** declaring: “This house belongs to YHWH.” God Himself became the guardian at the threshold — not a lesser spirit, not an angel, but the Creator God standing between His people and death.

Two Scholarly Perspectives:

BibleProject

Pesach = God “hovering” in *protective love*. Like the bird imagery of Isaiah 31:5, God’s presence shields from death. Emphasis: **presence over absence**.

Michael Heiser

Pesach = YHWH claiming *territory* in cosmic conflict. Blood-marked houses are holy ground. Exodus 12:12 is judgment on Egypt’s gods. Emphasis: **divine warfare & authority**.

SECTION 4 (10:00–13:00) — CHRIST OUR PASSOVER

The Passover pattern — God creating protected space for life in the midst of judgment — runs through all of Scripture and finds its fulfillment in Christ:

τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ἐτύθη Χριστός

“For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.” — 1 Corinthians 5:7b, ESV

Jesus is not merely a sacrificial victim — He is the **embodiment of God’s protective presence**. His blood marks a new covenant people. His death establishes a new sacred space — the community of believers who dwell “in Christ” (*ἐν Χριστῷ*).

Eden	God walks with humanity in sacred space (Gen 2–3)
Passover	God guards households through blood & presence (Exod 12)
Tabernacle	God dwells among His people in holy space (Exod 25–40)
Christ	God becomes the Passover, the Temple, the Presence (John 1:14)
New Creation	God dwells with humanity forever — no more death (Rev 21:3–4)

APPLICATION & CLOSING (13:00–15:00) — WHERE IS YOUR DOORFRAME?

“If pesach means God standing guard at the door of your life — where is your doorframe? Are you inside the space God is protecting? Have you applied the blood of the Lamb to the threshold of your heart?”

The Core Truth:

*God creates protected space for life
in the midst of judgment and chaos.*

Salvation is not escape from reality — but being brought
under God's rule and protection, through Christ.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does seeing *pesach* as “protective hovering” change your understanding of the Passover?
2. The LXX uses “I will cover you” instead of “I will pass over you.” Why does this distinction matter?
3. Where in your life do you need to trust that God is standing guard at your threshold?
4. How does the Passover pattern (Eden → Exodus → Temple → Christ → New Creation) give you hope?

KEY WORD STUDIES

פֶּסַח (*pesach*)

HEBREW

To hover over, guard, protect. The Passover — God's protective presence over His people.

σκεπάσω (*skepasō*)

GREEK (LXX)

“I will cover / shelter / protect.” LXX rendering of *pesach* in Exodus 12:13.

πάσχα (*pascha*)

GREEK (LXX/NT)

Transliteration of *pesach*. Used for the festival and Christ as our Passover (1 Cor 5:7).

הַמַּשְׁחִית

HEBREW

hammashchith — “the Destroyer.” The agent YHWH bars from entering (Exod 12:23).

Pleasant Springs Church — Discipleship School

From the blood on the doorframe in Egypt to the blood of the Lamb upon the cross:

פֶּסַח

God hovers. God guards. God saves.