

# Exegetical Lessons 101–200 on Exodus

When I exegete a book, I tend to get very bogged down in the details and so, I decided to develop a series of a few short lessons on various books of the Bible, where I attempt to simply deal with the primary points of each verse without getting too bogged down in detail. Each lesson is 4–5 pages long and designed to be read at one sitting. Although it is always nice to have a Bible open when studying this, I have, in almost all cases, included the relevant Scripture within the study.

I anticipate that the study of the book of Exodus will be considerably shorter than the book of Genesis.

[Top of the Page](#)  
[Lessons 101–200](#)  
[Doctrines in Exodus Lessons 101–200](#)

As these lessons are completed in real time, only the first two set of links are to be found.

## External Links

[Exodus Lessons 1–100](#)  
[HTML](#)

[Exodus Lessons 1–100](#)  
[PDF](#)

[Exodus Lessons 1–100](#)  
[WPD](#)

[Exodus Lessons 101–200](#)  
[HTML](#)

[Exodus Lessons 101–200](#)  
[PDF](#)

[Exodus Lessons 101–200](#)  
[WPD](#)

Exodus Lessons 201–300  
[HTML](#)

Exodus Lessons 201–300  
[PDF](#)

Exodus Lessons 201–300  
[WPD](#)

Exodus Lessons 301–400  
[HTML](#)

Exodus Lessons 301–400  
[PDF](#)

Exodus Lessons 301–400  
[WPD](#)

[Kukis Homepage](#)

[Exegesis](#)

[Doctrines](#)

## Internal Links

[Lesson 101: Exodus 9:11–12](#)

[Lesson 102: Exodus 9:11–14](#)

[Lesson 103: Exodus 9:13–16](#)

[Lesson 104: Exodus 9:16 Rom. 9:10b–17](#)

[Lesson 105: Exodus 9:13–19](#)

[The Plague of Boils \(Part III\)](#)

[The Seventh Plague: Hail \(Part I\)](#)

[The Seventh Plague: Hail \(Part II\)](#)

[The New Testament View](#)

[Hail Part III](#)

<a href="#">Lesson 106: Exodus 9:13–21a</a>	<a href="#">Hail Part IV</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 107: Exodus 9:20–22b</a>	<a href="#">Hail Part V</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 108: Exodus 9:22–24</a>	<a href="#">Hail Part VI</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 109: Exodus 9:23–27</a>	<a href="#">Hail Part VII</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 110: Exodus 9:25–30</a>	<a href="#">Hail Part VIII</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 111: Exodus 9:27–33</a>	<a href="#">Hail Part IX</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 112: Exodus 9:33–34</a>	<a href="#">The Hail Ceases; Part X; Doctrine of the Heart</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 113–115: Exodus 9:33–35</a>	<a href="#">Hail Part XI (Scar Tissue of the Soul)</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 116–117: Exodus 9:1–35</a>	<a href="#">Summary of Exodus 9</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 118: Exodus 10:1</a>	<a href="#">The Plague of the Locusts I</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 119: Exodus 10:1–2</a>	<a href="#">The Plague of the Locusts II</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 120: Exodus 10:1–4</a>	<a href="#">The Plague of the Locusts III</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 121: Exodus 10:1–6b</a>	<a href="#">The Plague of the Locusts IV</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 122–123: Exodus 10:1–10</a>	<a href="#">The Plague of the Locusts V</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 124: Exodus 10:10–11</a>	<a href="#">The Plague of the Locusts VI</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 125: Exodus 10:11–14b</a>	<a href="#">The Plague of the Locusts Part VII</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 126: Exodus 10:13–15</a>	<a href="#">The Plague of the Locusts VIII</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 127: Exodus 10:16–17</a>	<a href="#">The Plague of the Locusts X</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 128: Exodus 10:13–20</a>	<a href="#">The Plague of the Locusts XI</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 129: Exodus 10:21–22</a>	<a href="#">The Plague of Darkness</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 130: Exodus 10:21–24b</a>	<a href="#">The Plague of Darkness Continues</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 131: Exodus 10:21–25</a>	<a href="#">Pharaoh Responds to the Plague of Darkness</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 132: Exodus 10:25–29</a>	<a href="#">The Demands of God</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 133: Exodus 11:1</a>	<a href="#">Introduction to Exodus 11</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 134: Exodus 11:1–2</a>	<a href="#">Israel in Egypt</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 135: Exodus 11:1–3a</a>	<a href="#">The Israelites Are to Ask for Gold and Silver Jewelry</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 136: Exodus 11:1–3</a>	<a href="#">Moses Being Great in the Land</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 137–138: Exodus 11:1–6</a>	<a href="#">Order of Events</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 139: Exodus 11:1–6</a>	<a href="#">The Severity of God</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 140: Exodus 11:4–8d</a>	<a href="#">The Egyptians will plead with Moses to leave</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 141: Exodus 11:8</a>	<a href="#">Moses Storming out from the Presence of Pharaoh</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 142: Exodus 11:8–10</a>	<a href="#">A Summary Statement</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 143: Exodus 11:9–10</a>	<a href="#">A List of the Judgments as Organized by Moses</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 144: Exodus 12</a>	<a href="#">Introduction to Exodus 12</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 145: Exodus 12:1–2a</a>	<a href="#">Introduction to Exodus 12 (part II)</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 146: Exodus 12:1–3</a>	<a href="#">God speaks to Moses and Aaron</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 147: Exodus 12:3b–4</a>	<a href="#">Each household will take a lamb</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 148–149: Acts 8:30–35 Psalm 22</a>	<a href="#">Old and New Testament Scriptures</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 150: Exodus 12:1–4</a>	<a href="#">The Passover and Unlimited Atonement</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 151–152: Exodus 12:1–8</a>	<a href="#">The Typology of the Passover</a>

<a href="#">Lesson 153: Exodus 12:5–10</a>	<a href="#">The Passover Lamb is a Type of Christ</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 154: Exodus 12:, 5–8, 10–11</a>	<a href="#">Those participating in the Passover Meal</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 155: Exodus 12:11–12 11:9</a>	<a href="#">The Warning of the Tenth Judgment</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 156: Exodus 12:3–14</a>	<a href="#">The Passover will be a Memorial Celebration</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 157: Exodus 12</a>	<a href="#">The Meaning of the Passover</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 158–159: Exodus 12:15–17</a>	<a href="#">The Feast of Unleavened Bread</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 160: Exodus 12:17–21</a>	<a href="#">The Feast of Unleavened Bread/Passover</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 161: Exodus 12:21–22b</a>	<a href="#">The Hyssop and the Blood</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 162–163: Exodus 12:22–24</a>	<a href="#">Ceremonies and the Scriptures</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 164–165: Exodus 12:21–28</a>	<a href="#">Instructions for the Passover continue</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 166: Exodus 12:29–31</a>	<a href="#">The Deaths of the Firstborn</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 167: Exodus 12:30–31</a>	<a href="#">Charts of the Ten Plagues</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 168: Exodus 12:31–33</a>	<a href="#">Pharaoh and the Egyptian People Tell Israel to Go</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 169: Exodus 12:31–35</a>	<a href="#">The Israelites Plunder the Egyptians</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 170: Exodus 12:33–37</a>	<a href="#">Israel Plunder the Egyptians and then Leave</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 171: Exodus 12:38–39</a>	<a href="#">The Mixed Multitude</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 172–173: Exodus 12:40–41</a>	<a href="#">The Length of Time that Israel is in Egypt</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 174: Exodus 12:40–41</a>	<a href="#">How long the Hebrew People were in Egypt</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 175: Exodus 12:33–42</a>	<a href="#">An Overview Which Includes the Text in Question</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 176: Exodus 12:42–44</a>	<a href="#">Passover Regulations Part I</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 177: Exodus 12:45–48</a>	<a href="#">Passover Regulations Part II</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 178: Exodus 12:47–51</a>	<a href="#">Passover Regulations Part III</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 179–181: Exodus 12:1–51</a>	<a href="#">A Summation of Exodus 12</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 182: Exodus 13:1</a>	<a href="#">Introduction to Exodus 13</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 183: Exodus 13:1–2</a>	<a href="#">Sanctification</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 184: Exodus 13:3–4</a>	<a href="#">Feast of Unleavened Bread</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 185: Exodus 13:5</a>	<a href="#">Hebrew customs in the Church Age</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 186: Exodus 13:3–6</a>	<a href="#">The Books of Moses were written by Moses</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 187: Exodus 13:3–8</a>	<a href="#">Unleavened Bread; Spiritual Gifts</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 188: Exodus 13:8–9</a>	<a href="#">A Sign on One's Hand or on One's Forehead</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 189–190: Exodus 13:10–15c</a>	<a href="#">Purchase of the Firstborn/Redemption</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 191: Exodus 13:15–16</a>	<a href="#">Odd bits of clothing for the hand and forehead</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 192: Exodus 13:17–18a</a>	<a href="#">Israel continues to move forward</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 193: Exodus 13:17–18</a>	<a href="#">Capacity for Blessing/Maps of the Exodus</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 194: Exodus 13:19</a>	<a href="#">Joseph's bones</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 195: Exodus 13:17–22</a>	<a href="#">God leads Israel out of Egypt</a>
<a href="#">Lessons 196–197: Exodus 13:1–22</a>	<a href="#">A Summary of Exodus 13</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 198: Exodus 14:1–2b:</a>	<a href="#">Introduction to Exodus 14</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 199: Exodus 14:1–2</a>	<a href="#">Pharaoh keeps tabs on the Hebrew people</a>
<a href="#">Lesson 200: Exodus 14:1–4b</a>	<a href="#">Pharaoh's Army Being Lured into a Trap</a>

## Doctrines, Charts and Maps in Exodus Lessons 101–200

<a href="#"><u>Nut — Egyptian Goddess of the Sky</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>An expository examination of Romans 9:10b–17</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>A review of Exodus 9:13–19</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Would you believe if you saw a miracle from God?</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>The interim between v. 22 and v. 23</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Texas-sized hail</u></a> (photos)
<a href="#"><u>Moses and the Great Storm over Egypt</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>Seth — Egyptian God of Storms and Disorder</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>The plague of hail and fire</u></a> (The Phillip Medhurst Picture Torah 337)
<a href="#"><u>The Heart</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Pharaoh's Heart Through the Plagues</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>Doctrine of Scar Tissue and Blackout of the Soul</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>The Vocabulary for Scar Tissue of the Heart</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Plague of Diseased Livestock - Patagonia</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>The Plague of Boils</u></a> (a graphic)
<a href="#"><u>The Seventh Plague—A Hailstorm</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>An Example of How the Plagues Overlap</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>God and the Negative Volition of Pharaoh</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>God Sends the Locusts Against Egypt</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>Locust Invasion in Sokoro State</u></a> (a photograph)	<a href="#"><u>Did God Lie to Pharaoh About the Permanence of the Exodus?</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Exodus 10:1–15: The Order of Events</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Locust Scourge in Africa</u></a> (a photograph)	<a href="#"><u>Current Locust invasions in Africa</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>A Plague of Locusts</u></a> (a contemporary photograph)	<a href="#"><u>Locusts as a Swarm</u></a> (a question from the Guardian):	<a href="#"><u>Parallels to Salvation</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Ra — The Sun God</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>Ra — the Egyptian Sun God</u></a> (a photograph of a statue)	<a href="#"><u>William Tyndale, burned alive for translating the Bible into English</u></a> (graphic)
<a href="#"><u>Couple Protecting their Home</u></a> (a photograph)	<a href="#"><u>War is not healthy sign</u></a> (a photograph)	<a href="#"><u>Carl Sagan quote</u></a> (a graphic)
<a href="#"><u>The Order of Events: Moses Warns Pharaoh of the Last Plague</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Was God's Treatment of Egypt too Harsh?</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Child Sacrifice to the Statue of Molech (also, Moloch)</u></a> (an illustration)
<a href="#"><u>What Other Translations Have Done with Exodus 11:7</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Did Moses Storm Out from Pharaoh Once or Twice?</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>The Events of the Plague of Darkness Presented Chronologically</u></a>



[The Judgment of Egypt is a Shadow of Salvation by Jesus Christ](#)

[Organization of Exodus 12:1–28](#)  
(by Hajime Murai)

[The Parallels Between Psalm 22 and the Crucifixion](#)

[The Doctrine of Unlimited Atonement](#)  
(Buddy Dano/Kukis)

[The Family Passover Meal](#)  
(a graphic)

[The Angel of Death](#)  
(a graphic)

[Blood on the Header and Side Posts of the Door Foreshadows the Cross](#)  
(a graphic)

[The Doctrine of Leaven](#)

[Using the Hyssop](#)  
(a graphic)

[The Ceremonies and the Scriptures](#)

[There was weeping](#)  
(a graphic)

[The Ten Plagues of Egypt](#)  
(a chart)

[The Plagues God Brought Against Egypt](#)

[On the Tenth Day of the Month, Each One is to Take a Lamb](#) (a graphic)

[For Whom Did Christ Die?](#)  
(George Zeller)

[Links to the Doctrine of Unlimited Atonement](#)

[This is the manner in which you will eat it](#)  
(Illustration by James Tissot)

[Blood on the Passover Door](#) (a graphic)

[The Symbology of the First Passover](#)

[The Lord's Supper](#)  
(a photograph)

[Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed](#)  
(a graphic)

[The Respect of Scholars for the Scriptures](#)

[The Firstborn Slain](#) (Wood engraving by Gustave Dor)

[Pharaoh tells Moses and Aaron to leave Egypt](#)  
(illustration by James Tissot)

[The Passover Gospel](#)

[Acts 8](#)

[Definition of Terms Regarding the Atonement](#)  
(George Zeller)

[Painting Blood on the Doorframe](#) (a graphic)

[The Lord Checked for Blood on the Doorpost](#)  
(a graphic)

[The Passover, or the Passover lamb, is a type of Christ](#)

[Exodus 12:15](#) (a graphic)

[Hyssop](#)

[Hebrew for Pass through](#)  
(a graphic)

[The Israelites despoiling the Egyptians](#)  
(ancient artwork)

[The 10 Plagues - Jehovah Versus the Gods of Egypt](#)

[Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron](#) (a graphic)

<a href="#"><u>The people had asked for jewelry</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>A mixed multitude went up with them</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>Timeline Featuring Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph</u></a> (a graphic)
<a href="#"><u>A Few Preliminary Observations on the Time Frame of Slavery</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Note the Inconsistencies</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>The Seder</u></a> (from Wikipedia and YouTube)
<a href="#"><u>Table set for the Passover Seder</u></a> (a photograph)	<a href="#"><u>One Torah for the native-born and the stranger</u></a> (Exodus 12:49 graphic)	<a href="#"><u>Abstract representation of the Passover</u></a> (a graphic)
<a href="#"><u>Christ, Our Passover—Blood on the Door Frame</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>The Jews' Passover, by James Tissot</u></a> (before 1902) (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>Exodus 13</u></a> (a graphic)
<a href="#"><u>Outline of Exodus 13</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Exodus 13:2 (God's Word™)</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>The Mini-Abbreviated Doctrine of Sanctification</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Exodus 13:3a-b (NKJV)</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>Exodus 13:3</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>Understanding Hebrew customs in the Church Age</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>The JEPD theory or documentary hypothesis</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>The JEPD chart</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>A brief review of Exodus 13:3–6</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Prefilled Communion Cups - Wheat Wafer &amp; Juice Sets</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>Exodus 13:7 (God's Word™)</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>Exodus 13:9–10 (The Message)</u></a> (a graphic)
<a href="#"><u>The Very Abbreviated Doctrine of Redemption</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Exodus 13:14</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>A Frontlet Between the Eyes</u></a> (a photograph)
<a href="#"><u>A Sign on the Hand (and arm)</u></a> (a photograph)	<a href="#"><u>Ancient Canaan</u></a> (a map)	<a href="#"><u>Exodus 13:17</u></a> (a graphic)
<a href="#"><u>The Desert-wilderness</u></a> (a photograph)	<a href="#"><u>Psalms 23:5</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Exodus of Moses and the Israelites</u></a> (a map)
<a href="#"><u>Map of the Exodus Route</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Joseph's Bones</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Exodus 13:19 (God's Word™)</u></a> (a graphic)
<a href="#"><u>A brief review of Exodus 13:17–19</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>God Goes Before Israel as a Cloud</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>A Pillar of Cloud Leading Them</u></a> (an artist's rendition)
<a href="#"><u>God Gives Israel a Pillar of Fire by Night</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>A Pillar of Fire and a Pillar of Cloud</u></a> (a graphic)	<a href="#"><u>Chapter Summary outline for Exodus 13</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Route of the Exodus</u></a> (a map)	<a href="#"><u>A Casket of Bones Representing Joseph's Bones</u></a> (a photograph)	<a href="#"><u>The Pillar of Cloud and of Fire</u></a> (two graphics)

[Typology of Moses and Jesus](#)  
(from Agape Bible Study)

[Exodus 14 — Moses Parting the Red Sea](#)  
(a graphic)

[Exodus 14 Trust God](#)  
(a graphic)

[Exodus 14:1–14 as a Chiasm](#) (Dr. Peter Pett)

[Exodus 14 “Stand Still...”](#)  
(a graphic)

[The Red Sea Crossing](#)  
(a map)

[“The Desert-wilderness has shut them in”](#)  
(a graphic)

## Lesson 101: Exodus 9:8–12

## The Plague of Boils (Part III)

This is the final lesson on the plague of boils, which is the 6<sup>th</sup> plague. The record of this plague is only 5 verses long:

Exodus 9:8–9 And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Take handfuls of soot from the kiln, and let Moses throw them in the air in the sight of Pharaoh. It shall become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and become boils breaking out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt."

These are the directions which were given by God.

Exodus 9:10 So they took soot from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh. And Moses threw it in the air, and it became boils breaking out in sores on man and beast.

V. 10 describes the actual judgment.

Only 3 verses (vv. 10–12) are given to the actual plague itself.

Exodus 9:11a And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils,...

Despite all that has happened, despite the religious illusionists being unable to stand, they and Pharaoh continue to express negative volition towards God and what God requires.

Along these same lines, you may have seen a creationist and an evolutionist debate one another; or a believer debate an atheist; and sometimes—particularly if these men are debating for the very first time, the atheist (or evolutionist) will present an argument; and it will be completely destroyed by the believer (or the creationist). Does the evolutionist/unbeliever suddenly give up and say, “You know, you have completely taken me down with those points”? Of course not. He does what he can do to regain his footing and in order to debate another day. He listens carefully to the arguments, tries to remember them, and tries to think of a way to counter them for the next time they meet.

People believe what they *choose* to believe. Now they may debate and argue with you about their point of view, but for the most part, you have already chosen to believe what you believe and they have chosen to believe what they believe. Now, many times, these beliefs have come as a result of constant reenforcement from your parents or from going to school (which increasingly presents a monolithic point of view today). Quite often, these viewpoints are developed and solidified while we are young up to some point in time in our teens or 20's. It is quite common nowadays for a young person to be raised as a liberal atheist, and to not ever hear an opposing view for 20+ years.

When I was young, my first exposure to a conservative point of view from a political standpoint was my 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> semester of college, from Dr. Gottlieb Baer, a political science teacher. He was a fascinating and interesting man, but he was often teaching things from a point of view that was conservative, very different from how I was brought up. Now, in my first 17 or 18 years, I had received history teaching which was not completely and totally biased one way or the other, and I had heard William F. Buckley debate liberals on public television, and I found that quite interesting as well, as he seemed to always debate better and make better points than his opponents (I observed this, even as a liberal). But apart from Buckley and Dr. Baer, I had never heard another point of view clearly espoused. I was brought up a liberal, but I did not have that pounded into me nor was this point of view reenforced from every side. From time to time, I heard a neutral point of view; from time to time, I heard conservative thinking—but rarely.

However, when I began learning Bible doctrine from R. B. Thieme, Jr., around age 21 or 22, he did not back-pedal or sugarcoat any of what he taught. He taught Bible doctrine, along with the laws of divine establishment, which are quite conservative (the laws of divine establishment are laws which come from God and are applicable to mankind as a whole). For many decades after that, because I was raised a liberal, I became more of an independent who leaned right.

Now, over time, I changed my thinking primarily as a response to the teaching of Bible doctrine. No one necessarily argued me into thinking one way or another. However, most people do not have the clear teaching of Bible doctrine in their lives, and so, they often think however they have been trained to think from a young age.

There were also some important decisions which I made along the way to changing my own mind. At some point, early on, I clearly and intentionally accepted the Bible as authoritative. That was the biggest change in my thinking. This may seem like a basic thing, but not all believers believe the Scriptures. A believer of my acquaintance never accepted the Old Testament as accurate, but she did accept the New Testament (I believe today, she does not even accept the NT as authoritative). Another believer of my acquaintance does not accept the Bible as the infallible, and when asked a theological question, will like respond with the opinion of a theologian than with a set of Scriptures.

Now, if you want to continue thinking a certain way, the internet provides countless websites that you can go to in order to bolster your point of view or to find memes galore which support your way of thinking. In fact, young people today are so unfamiliar with

different viewpoints that, they think debate is posting memes which support their point of view, followed by vociferous name calling. It rarely occurs to them to listen and consider what is being said to them from an opposing viewpoint and to consider what others say to them.

I went off on this tangent because there are many witnesses to Moses and Aaron; and everyone in Egypt (apart from the Hebrews) are affected by each and every plague. They are witnessing things which no one has ever seen before. Pharaoh has it confirmed to him over and over that his religious illusionists cannot match the power of Moses and Aaron's God. Yet, does anyone in Egypt change their mind? Very few. People have free will, and some refuse to depart from the way that they were raised. Based upon what we read here, it is clear that Moses and Aaron represent the Greater God, and that there is no response from the religious illusionists of Pharaoh.

Let me give you another example which would clearly present the power of free will. Many of us have seen presidential debates. Let's just say that a debate occurs and candidate A just destroys candidate B. Let's say that everyone in the media agrees that A was sharper, faster, provided, the better arguments, etc., etc. Then election day comes. Does candidate A get 80% of the vote? Of course not! In a blow-out election, he might get 55–60% of the vote, despite the terrible performance of candidate B on the debate stage. No matter what, candidate B is going to get 40% of the vote and probably more.

**Application:** Today, we have a former vice president running for the office of president; and he appeared to be the media darling for many, many months. Then he opened his mouth, and remark after remark revealed him to be a doddering confused old man. You would not want him to be your Lyft driver, let alone, president of the United States. Yet, if he became the democrat candidate, I can guarantee that he would still get 40% of the vote, despite him being far from the top of his game.

My point is, the people of Egypt are witnessing the awesome power of the True God, and yet, they do not side with the God of Israel. They do not come to the conclusion that Moses and Aaron have a God who is God over all Egypt. The Hebrew people have, for the most part, already come to that conclusion. But the key in all of this is free will. Despite what people see and hear, they have the ability to override that with their own free will and their own set of opinions.

Exodus 9:11a [And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils,...](#)

The religious illusionists are neutralized by this plague. If called upon to stand when Pharaoh enters the room, they were unable to.

Exodus 9:11b [...for the boils were on the magicians and on all the Egyptians.](#)

These boils and blisters had broken out on everyone in Egypt. No doubt, some had boils on their feet, making it very painful to stand or walk. Yet, we will read of no large group of

Egyptians bowing down to the God of the Hebrews. They have their beliefs, and, for the most part, they have not abandoned these beliefs.

Exodus 9:11 [And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils were on the magicians and on all the Egyptians.](#)

Pharaoh has a point of view about the God of the Hebrews and he is not about to change his mind on that topic. His magicians being able to somewhat duplicate what Moses and Aaron did was comforting, but even when they were no longer able to do this and here, they are out of the picture, Pharaoh was still able to resist the God of Moses and Aaron. His negative volition is the result of his free will; and he continues to exercise negative volition toward the God of the Hebrews.

Pharaoh resisted Moses, even though his entire country had these boils on them, making each moment painful. But not painful enough to change their loyalties (insofar as we know).

This should help us to understand just how negative that negative volition can be. You may pray and pray that someone you know feels great pain and distress until they can no longer resist God, but, it is clear in real life that, even under the greatest of pressures, man is able to resist God. In some cases, the best outcome is cursing God before one dies (sadly enough).

Exodus 9:12a [But the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh;...](#)

God hardening the heart of Pharaoh has always been a very difficult concept, because it sounds too much like, Pharaoh is about to give in and do what God has demanded him to do; and then God comes along and makes Pharaoh change his mind and act against God. I believe that we may rest assured, in human affairs, that God allows us our own volition. He allows us to act as we choose to act. Obviously, since each one of us is our own worst enemy, that may seem to be a bad idea; but we have to accept some immutable facts: (1) we have free will. (2) God will sometimes act to guide us or to influence us in our choices, but He allows our free will to still act. You certainly have friends and loved ones who, from time to time, have given you a piece of their mind, and sometimes, this affects what we think and do. It does not mean that they have control of our volition; it just means that they have an influence in our lives; and God also has an influence in our lives. Many people are subject to group think. That is, if the people around them almost universally think "X", they, at some point, choose to believe "X." (3) Primarily, God's influence over us is through His Word. We choose to listen or not to listen to His Word being taught; and then we choose whether to believe it or not; and then we choose whether to let this teaching impact our lives from day to day. Certainly, it is possible to believe passages and Scriptures and doctrines, and yet to still act in opposition to them from time to time. We do have free will and a sin nature. (4) What God does *not* do is reach into our souls and take negative volition and turn it positive or vice versa. God allows for His sovereignty and our free will to coexist—at least for a time. There will be a time when our free will is brought into line with God's sovereignty. This does not occur because God forces His

thinking upon all mankind, but because believers will choose in eternity future to think like God thinks.

God is *not* taking Pharaoh, whom He has finally worn down to a pliable state, and making him negative again. God is giving Pharaoh the strength to go on, yet allowing him to act using his own free will.

As you get older, you will, at various times, sit on the deathbed of a loved one, realizing that this is your last contact with this person. He or she may have rebuffed you on numerous occasions when you presented the gospel to them; and at this final time, their strength to rebuff you is gone. You present the gospel to them, unopposed, because they are too weak to oppose you. Now, maybe they listen; but maybe they are still on negative signals. If they had more strength, they might say to you, "Now just shut the hell up about the Jesus stuff." God has given Pharaoh, a beaten down man, the strength to continue to allow his volition to operate. God has not turned Pharaoh's compliance into opposition; God has not taken Pharaoh's positive volition and turned it into negative volition; God has given Pharaoh enough strength to continue to express his negative volition.

You might have asked yourself throughout this ordeal, why are the Egyptians suffering when it is Pharaoh's negative volition which is calling the shots? Everyone has free will and these Egyptians were with Hebrews day after day. Some people and nations accept the Hebrews and treat them fairly. Others take advantage of them and other nations and peoples persecute them. Any Egyptian could have at any time joined in with the Hebrews. In fact, apparently, some of them did (Exodus 12:38 Num. 11:4).

The pain inflicted by these judgments evangelized some Egyptians. They all had free will and they could have thrown themselves at God's mercy, begging for forgiveness for their ghastly treatment of the Hebrews (either their direct actions or the consent to what Pharaoh did to the Hebrews). Many of them had become very antisemitic and God judges antisemitism. In addition, some people can only be evangelized under great pain and stress. This is my own personal experience. I realized that many of my own personal decisions in life were leading to pain and heartache, and that there was this option that God seemed to be offering: **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.** At age 21, I took that option, and that changed everything.

It appears that a small percentage of the Egyptians may have given in to the God of the Hebrews; but most of them continued to reject Him. Therefore, most of Egypt continued to be judged.

Exodus 9:12a **But the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh;**...

With this verse, we have a slight change. In this verse, God strengthens the heart of Pharaoh. Let me suggest that, at this point, Pharaoh is so overwhelmed, that he has little or no personal strength remaining. He is not even strong enough to oppose Moses, even though he, no doubt, hates Moses for all that has happened. God gives Pharaoh the



strength which he lacks. However, God does not reach in to Pharaoh's soul and change Pharaoh's volition.

The same verb is used as we find throughout most of this section of Exodus: *châzaq* (חָזַק) [pronounced *khaw-ZAHK*], which means, *to make strong, to strengthen*. Strong's #2388 BDB #304. Pharaoh is not thinking, "Maybe I should let them go and get them out of my hair"; but God reaches in and changes his mind. What appears to be taking place is, God is simply giving Pharaoh strength or resolve to act in accordance with his own will. If the magicians are covered with boils, then it stands to reason that Pharaoh is as well. Physical pain can wear down many people to a point where they are compliant, but their compliancy is simply due to the pain; not due to a change in their volition.

Exodus 9:12b ...and he did not heed them, just as the Lord had spoken to Moses.

Pharaoh has the strength now to oppose Moses and Aaron. He has the ability to express his negative volition. He is a beaten down man, but God has given him the strength to go on. He expresses negative volition towards the words of Moses and Aaron, but this should not come as a surprise to either man, as God told them this is the response that Pharaoh would give.

What occurred here evangelized the entire world for centuries, so it is highly likely that a few Egyptians also believed in Jesus Christ and joined the Hebrews. However, most of them, mirroring Pharaoh's scarred heart and negative volition, based upon prejudice, did not. Most continued to hate the Hebrews and they continued to receive the discipline due to them. Actually, discipline is a misnomer—unbelievers, in general, are not disciplined by God, but they are judged by God in their unbelief.

Exodus 9:12 But the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh; and he did not heed them, just as the Lord had spoken to Moses.

We are not given any additional information in the narrative. What did Pharaoh say and do after his heart is hardened? Obviously, he said *no* to Moses; *no* to God's demand. But this particular narrative is not taken any further. At this point, we move on to the next plague.

## Lesson 102: Exodus 9:11–14

## The Seventh Plague: Hail (Part I)

### The Seventh Plague: Hail

Interestingly enough, the text for the 7<sup>th</sup> plague is far more extensive than for the previous plagues. Whereas, 7 verses describe the 5<sup>th</sup> plague and 5 verses are given to the 6<sup>th</sup> plague, 22 verses are used for the 7<sup>th</sup> plague. Even so, not every detail will be given. Vv. 13–19 are God speaking to Moses, telling him what he will say to Pharaoh. So, like many of the previous judgments, we don't really go from God's instructions to Moses; to Moses going to Pharaoh; to Moses speaking to Pharaoh; which is then followed by the

actual execution of the judgment. We go from God speaking to Moses, telling him what he will say and what is going to happen right to the judgment itself (which plague is covered in 7 verses). The remainder of this chapter is all about Pharaoh relenting, the plague being stopped, and then Pharaoh's heart is hardened once again.

Throughout these few chapters, the author Moses presents a nice compact approach to the plague narrative; it keeps the action moving along. This plague alone could have easily been 40–50 verses long (instead of 23 verses), but without providing us with any more information than this chapter already does.

Furthermore, if we follow the text carefully, it is going to be clear that, not only are some important passages missing, but, the text is not all in a neat chronological order. Now, anyone can read this text and be happy with the flow of the narrative—and they may not even be aware that some key pieces are missing and that there are some verses out of order. That is the brilliance of the Mosaic narrative, which is very readable, and few will find it in the least bit confusing or difficult to understand—despite the fact that he jumps from God's orders right into the midst of the plague at times, without skipping a beat. If you simply read the text of the plagues, you may not even notice that large portions of narrative are actually missing. Again, Moses' genius as a writer, as guided by the Holy Spirit.

Now, as an aside, the words which Moses used were his own, they came from his vocabulary; and the way that he remembered these plagues came from his memory. What is *not* taking place is automatic writing or the Holy Spirit entering into Moses and taking over his hand and body as he writes. The Holy Spirit is the Author of Scripture; but the human author is as well.

Exodus 9:13a [Then the Lord said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning...](#)

God speaks to Moses and tells him to rise up early in the morning. This will begin the final set of 4 plagues, which will be considerably significant.

In some of the previous plagues, God would tell Moses where Pharaoh would be at some specific time, and tell Moses to go run him down at that time and at that place. In this plague, that aspect is ignored (maybe Pharaoh is out for his morning swim/bath; maybe he is sitting at his favorite coffee house<sup>1</sup>—wherever Pharaoh would be, God would know this and probably was quite specific about this detail with Moses.

Exodus 9:13b [...and stand before Pharaoh,...](#)

Obviously, God must speak to the representative of nation Egypt, and that is Pharaoh. This must be done whether Pharaoh wants this confrontation or not. I would think it pretty

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<sup>1</sup> What I do with comments like this is try to present a modernized view of what is going on. There are no coffee houses; Pharaoh is not at a pancake house having breakfast or anything like that. He is out doing whatever pharaohs do at that time of the day (or, he may even be hiding from Moses).

obvious that Pharaoh desires no more meetings with Moses and Aaron. However, some of these meetings are called for by Pharaoh, who wants a judgment lifted.

We do not know exactly how the plague of the boils (plague #6) ended. Moses seemed to stop writing about it and moved on into the next plague. Notice how all of this transitions:

Exodus 9:11–13b *And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils were on the magicians and on all the Egyptians. But the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh; and he did not heed them, just as the Lord had spoken to Moses. Then the Lord said to Moses, “Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh,... (NKJV)*

Do you see that clever play on words? *The magicians could not stand before Moses...* and then God tell Moses, *“Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh...”* However, these words for *stand* are actually synonyms; they are not the same word.

Interestingly enough, this is the first time, in the plague sequence, when we use this particular word for *take a stand*. There is probably a double-meaning to be taken from this verb: (1) in the most common way, Moses is to find a place to be where Pharaoh would be, and to be there, standing before Pharaoh. (2) But, less literally, Moses is taking a strong stand against Pharaoh, introducing plagues which will affect him most personally—even more than the plagues which had come before.

Obviously, there are some important details which are left out—can Moses just walk into the palace the speak to Pharaoh? Can he ask for and get an audience with Pharaoh? Does Moses know where Pharaoh will be? The way I understand this is, Moses knows enough about the comings and goings of Pharaoh, to place himself right where he expects Pharaoh to be. Or, in the alternative, God tells Moses exactly where to find Pharaoh (I think the latter case is suggested by the previous plagues).

Exodus 9:13c *...and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God of the Hebrews:...*

This is what Moses will say to Pharaoh. He will speak in God’s Name. God is identified by His proper name and by a description, *the God of the Hebrews*.

Most often, in Scripture, is it not God speaking directly to a group or to an individual, but instead, His representative speaks to someone (or to a group) on behalf of Him. God never comes directly to Pharaoh in a vision or a dream, speaking to him or warning him. God works through representatives.

This has continued up even to this day, when many pastors today speak for God by using His Word. The pastor-teacher who knows the Word of God and teaches that, he speaks for God today. God is not going to speak to you personally. You will not hear the audible voice of God, and, contrary to popular opinion, you are not going to hear the still, small voice of God telling you what to do (*quick, make a sharp right turn, straight up ahead!*).

However, if you know the Word of God, then you will be guided by that and the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Anyone who tells you that they are getting direct messages from God and acting accordingly—that person is a nutball, and should be avoided—I don't care how nice or charismatic he seems. However, in the era of unfolding revelation (from the beginning of man to around A.D. 90), God only spoke directly to a relatively small number of men. We are *not* in that era. How do I know this? Simple. No more Scripture is being written. We have the complete and total Word of God. John, in the final chapter of the final book of the Bible gives us this solemn warning: *I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.* (Rev. 22:18–19, ESV) What a good pastor-teacher attempts to do today is, understand Scripture, understand the theology presented by Scripture, and then convey that information to his congregation—as much as they can take in and as much as he is able to teach.

Back to the narrative. God is speaking to Moses, telling him exactly what he must say to Pharaoh.

Exodus 9:13d *...Let My people go, that they may serve Me...* (I have changed the formatting of the NKJV here)

Again, the demand, “Send My people out to serve Me.” God is still speaking to Moses in the narrative, but He is telling Moses exactly what to say to Pharaoh.

The message to Pharaoh is simple and concise. There are no negotiations to be done. God has given Pharaoh a straightforward mandate of what is expected of him. At each plague, God goes to Pharaoh, through the persons of Moses and Aaron, and He tells Pharaoh quite simply to release His people, the Hebrews. Then God allows Pharaoh his free will to react in whatever way he chooses.

Exodus 9:13 *Then the Lord said to Moses, “Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God of the Hebrews: Let My people go, that they may serve Me,...* (Everything in italics is what Moses will say to Pharaoh)

We do not generally know how Moses came to God in Egypt; or in what manner God appeared to Moses. During these plagues, we begin with God's communication to Moses as a given. God's demand has been consistent. He speaks through Moses to Pharaoh, “*Thus says Y<sup>h</sup>owah, God of the Hebrews, ‘Send My people out.’*”

Now, later in the book of Exodus, Moses will go to a specific tent to commune with God (which tent appears to be a pre-Tabernacle—although there is nothing necessarily ornate about this particular tent). We do not know exactly how this pre-Tabernacle tent came to

be nor do we know at what point Moses began to enter into that tent. I would suggest to you that this is the manner in which Moses speaks with God.

God added, '*...that they serve Me...*' With these words, God is setting up an important contrast. Up to this point in time, the Hebrew people have been serving Pharaoh; but they are God's people; therefore, they ought to be serving Him. The Hebrew people are in a relationship with the Revealed God; not with Pharaoh.

Given all of these plagues, we have no idea what is going on with regards to Israel's slavery. It seems likely that they are not even showing up for work, given all that is happening in Egypt. It would seem that everything is in a holding pattern, as there are no normal daily activities which can occur during most of these plagues. The people of Egypt merely try to get through each day of a plague.

Exodus 9:14a *...for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart,...*

The word *heart* actually refers to the thinking of Pharaoh; and what God does is going to affect Pharaoh more personally than the previous plagues.

The particular plagues to come are going to be monumental. They will tell people that, sometimes it does not matter what God does—negative volition is negative volition. Some will continue to resist God, no matter what.

**Application:** You may think that with just the proper rational argument that you can sway a person who has negative volition towards God; or that if God suddenly appeared to that person, that they would believe. But negative volition is stronger than either of those things.

Exodus 9:14b *...and on your servants and on your people,...*

The judgments will be against the servants of Pharaoh. Pharaoh will be personally affected and all those around him will be similarly affected.

These judgments which will be against the people of Egypt, called Pharaoh's people here. The citizens of Egypt are not let out of this judgment.

Exodus 9:14c *...that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth.*

The end result of these judgments will be that all Israel will recognize that there is no one like God in all the earth. Many other nations and individuals will come to the same conclusion.

Here, God states His intentions to Pharaoh; these plagues are sent throughout the entire land of Egypt and placed upon all of the Pharaoh's subjects, as well as all of those under his direct command in the palace. This reveals that Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of the Jewish people, is a God like none other. He is the true God, the only God; the God Who created

the universe; the God with power beyond imagination. The other gods worshipped by the Egyptians and other heathen are fronts for demons. Demons, in their strength and emotional needs, desire our worship and allegiance and were heavily involved with the Egyptians.

Throughout the centuries, men have assumed that their gods were superior or at least equal to the gods in other lands; much like today some in the United States feel that Krishna or Buddha are equivalent to the God (Jesus Christ) that we worship here in America. Nothing could be further from the truth. Krishna and Buddha are demon-fronts. Satan is the author of religion, religious promoting the idea that doing good impresses God (the exact nature of this *doing* varies from religion to religion). Satan is behind these gods which are associated with certain nations and cultures. It does not matter how widespread the religion is or how many adherents it has. There is but one God and He came to earth and took His place beside us in the form of a man and He took upon Himself the punishment for all of the sins that we have ever committed and that we ever will commit. Krishna did not die on behalf of our sins—Krishna is not our savior and is not our mediator. He is not qualified to be this. Same deal with Buddha. These are men fronting for Satan. These men, along with all other religious deities, are not localized names for the same God. Both of these religious proponents and their gods are false.

These signs, done by God, will be unlike anything which has ever been brought against a king or his nation. Only the True God is able to do this.

Exodus 9:14 *...for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart, and on your servants and on your people, that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth.*

The reference to Pharaoh's servants, I believe, would apply to those in the palace who either work for him or are slaves to him. The idea is, there would be greater personal damage to those in the palace.

I would think, up to this point, what God has done to Pharaoh is unlike anything which has been done against Egypt by any one or any being. God promises to keep this pressure up, to the point of even Pharaoh acknowledging what God has done.

## **Lesson 103: Exodus 9:13–16**

## **The Seventh Plague: Hail (Part II)**

In our narrative, God is still speaking to Moses, telling Moses exactly what to say to Pharaoh:

Exodus 9:13–14 *Then the Lord said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God of the Hebrews: Let My people go, that they may serve Me, for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart, and on your servants and on your people, that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth.'* (Everything in italics is what Moses is to say to Pharaoh)



Moses message to Pharaoh would be that there is an intensification now, which Pharaoh himself will feel. What Moses says and does, along with the resultant plagues, will affect Pharaoh's thought processes even more than they had before. The God of the Hebrews is going to weigh heavily on Pharaoh's mind.

It appears that, at this point, it will become more personal; God will reach out to touch Pharaoh more directly with these final 4 plagues.

Exodus 9:15a *Now if I had stretched out My hand...*

At this point, in these 2 verses, God will explain that He could have completely destroyed all of the people of Egypt—without any effort.

Essentially, what God will say to Pharaoh is, "I have been giving you warnings of My great power; but I did not have to do that."

Exodus 9:15b *...and struck you and your people with pestilence,...*

Previously, I have spoken of alternative approaches that God could have taken in order to bring His people out of Egypt. Here, God Himself is giving an alternative approach which He could have used. He could have struck Pharaoh and all of his people with sickness of some sort. He could have killed them or he could have simply immobilized them. God has this kind of power.

God is saying, "If I wanted to, this could have been a simple, one-step process. You all get sick, and My people walk out. You would be helpless to resist."

Exodus 9:15c *...then you would have been cut off from the earth.*

God is giving Pharaoh an alternative to what He has done. "I could have struck you and your people with pestilence and wiped you all out—just like that!"

God indicates that this whole thing could have been a single strike, had He simply wanted to remove Egypt from existence. God could have *snapped His fingers* and all of Egypt would have died.

Exodus 9:15 *Now if I had stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, then you would have been cut off from the earth.*

God could have chosen to simply kill all of the Egyptians and the Hebrews would have been able to simply leave Egypt without a fight. God is certainly able to do that. In fact, that requires far less effort than what He has expended so far. However, God's purpose was not solely to move the Hebrews from point A to point B. They were to be His representatives and God had to let the world know that. God evangelized the world through this revelation of power in Egypt. By these acts, God revealed Himself to the world. God showed the world that He alone is God and besides Him there is no other.



There are no localized gods and there is no other God but the God of the Hebrews. No local god of any nation had ever done what God was doing in Egypt.

Pharaoh was not created by God to do evil that God might be glorified. In some translations, it sounds as though God raised up Pharaoh for this purpose. God allows Pharaoh the use of his free will and God's plan functions even by making use of Pharaoh's free will. We saw this in our study of Jacob in Genesis. He certainly made a lot of wrong choices in his life; and when he worked for Laban, Laban also made a lot of wrong choices. God was able to make nation Israel from Jacob, despite he and Laban butting heads so many times and resorting to bad behavior as a result. Jacob made so many bad decisions in his life, and yet God made the people of Israel from Jacob.

Later in the book of Genesis, we studied the sons of Jacob, and they also made a lot of wrong choices (except for Joseph, who primarily made good choices). Yet nation Israel rose up through these men, these very imperfect sons of Jacob.

No matter what man does, whether choosing right or wrong, God's plan moves ahead. God's plan is not slowed down; it never grinds to a halt because of negative volition on the part of man.

God is never frustrated. He does not throw His hands into the air, exclaiming, "I wanted you all to listen to Me and do what I said; and you are not!" Despite man's considerable shortcomings—even those men who belong to God—God is able to bring His plan forward.

Exodus 9:15 *Now if I had stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, then you would have been cut off from the earth.*

God says (again, He is telling Moses what to say to Pharaoh), "You know, I could have easily killed all of you with sickness; and you would all be dead right now." If God killed all of Egypt, then the people of Israel could simply walk out of Egypt and into Canaan.

What God did and what God is capable of doing can be seen from several points of view. God could have, but did not, wipe out all of the Egyptians in whatever manner He chose—by a mass sickness, as He suggests here. This would not have fulfilled God's plans for Israel (or for Egypt). They need to march out of Egypt as a whole. However, we need to ask this question: *If suddenly, every Egyptian died, what would motivate the Hebrew people to leave Egypt?*

Bear in mind that the Hebrew people have lived in Egypt now for 400 years. This is their home. They have no reason to just pick up and leave if all of Egypt had died. Egypt would be theirs, but God did not plan for Israel to rise up and take control of Egypt.

Another problem would be, the people of Israel needed more encouragement in order to believe Moses and Aaron. Remember the first time that they went to Pharaoh and made their demands? Pharaoh increased their responsibilities as slaves and the people and elders all turned against Moses and Aaron.

This was the reason that we studied a chapter of the first request was given to Pharaoh; where that chapter seemed to focus on human viewpoint rather than divine viewpoint. Despite all that the sons of Israel suffered by living in Egypt, at the first sign of opposition, the people turned against Moses and Aaron.

The people of Israel could be convinced, but it would take a few miracles/acts of power to achieve that.

**Nut — Egyptian Goddess of the Sky** (a graphic); from [Hub Pages](#); accessed April 25, 2018. There are easier-to-see representations; but I believe that this was drawn/carved/painted by the ancient Egyptians themselves.



Exodus 9:16a *But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up,...*

God here is addressing Pharaoh through Moses. “You are not Pharaoh because of a series a clever things which you did to attain this position. You are Pharaoh because I placed you here with this power,” God is saying. “You have a purpose, which is the fulfillment of My purpose. You will fulfill My purpose for you, no matter how negative you are towards Me.”

The verb used here is not one for *raised up* but it is the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect with a 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine singular suffix of ‘amad (עָמַד) [pronounced *gaw-MAHD*], which means *to take ones stand, to stand*. The Hiphil stem is causative and the perfect tense means that this is a completed action insofar as God is concerned, even though these actions and interactions are ongoing. Since God knows the end from the beginning, in God’s eyes, the actions of Pharaoh all conform to God’s plan.

The causative stem and also be used in a permissive way, and that is how it is used here. God has permitted Pharaoh to take a stand. Not only has He permitted Pharaoh to have a great position of power, but God has also given Pharaoh the strength to oppose Him whenever his own strength was lacking. Sometimes, when I cover these verses one at a time, we lose the forest through the trees. There is a contrast which was set up here by this particular verb. This verse is in contrast to v. 15. God has allowed Pharaoh to remain, instead of causing him and Egypt to disappear quickly and quietly from the earth.

Exodus 9:16b *...that I may show My power in you,...*

*Show(n)* is the Hiphil infinitive construct of râ’âh (רָאָה) [pronounced *raw-AWH*], which means, *to cause to see, to cause to look; to show; to cause to see [with pleasure]; to cause to know, to cause to learn; to cause to experience [evil or good]*.

Even though the translation is quite difficult, the general idea is not. God raised up Pharaoh; God established Pharaoh; and Pharaoh, through his negative volition, revealed God's great power. That was His purpose. God uses the wrath of man to praise Him.

Exodus 9:16a-b *But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you,...*

It is God Who raised up Pharaoh; and the purpose was to show off His power to Egypt and to all the surrounding nations. As a result, many Egyptians would believe in the Revealed God (spoken of in this chapter as, *they feared Him*).

Had God merely wiped out all the Egyptians with disease, there is no demonstration of power there. People would not be saying, "The God of the Hebrews made all of Egypt ill."

Exodus 9:16c *...and that My name may be declared in all the earth.*

God's Person and reputation are made known throughout the world because of what He did in Egypt. God uses Pharaoh in order to interact with Moses and Aaron and accomplish His mission.

#### Lesson 104: Exodus 9:16 Rom. 9:10b–17

#### The New Testament View

This is what God says to Pharaoh, speaking through Moses:

Exodus 9:16 *But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.*

Here, God plainly states His purpose. It is not simply to free the Hebrews, because that could have been done quietly by inflicting the Egyptians and the Pharaoh with some disease so that they would all die (or become immobilized). Had this been God's approach, the Hebrews would not even have to leave Egypt; Egypt would belong to them. However, that was not God's plan or purpose. This is why God had to continually give Pharaoh the strength to oppose him. In the doctrine, **the Hardness of Pharaoh's Heart** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)), I gave the analogy of the boxer. Pharaoh has been sent to the canvas several times and, although he wants to fight back; he despises his opponent (this will be clear at the end of Exodus 10), yet his own strength will not allow him to go on. Therefore, God has given him the strength to stand up again and to fight.

Another point, which is made in several places throughout Scripture: there is a certain exclusivity when it comes to God. There is no such thing as worshiping just any God. There was not an equivalent god among the gods of the Egyptians. There is but one God, and during this period of time, it was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. There is not some choice of deities and one cannot find enough similarities between the God of the Universe and some other God worshipped by a particular nation to say that they are the same God. **"There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must**

be saved." There is one mediator between God and man; the man Christ Jesus. "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no man comes to the Father but by Me." These are quotes from the New Testament, Acts 4:12 1Tim. 2:5 John 14:6. Exodus 9:14d reads, "There is none like Me in all the earth."

There is clearly a universality of God; however, this is not just any God—this is the God of the universe, Christ Jesus. It does not matter if you are brought up Roman Catholic, Mormon, Hindu or Orthodox Jew; there is but one God in the universe and you do not have a choice to worship whoever you feel like or whoever your parents taught you to worship. We are not given the freedom or the tolerance to worship a god that we have made in our own image; or a god which just happens to suit us best; or the god of our culture. When you worship the god who is made in your image or the god that is most convenient, and you are, in essence, worshiping yourself. Who we worship is not an option when it comes to eternal salvation. Even sincerity is not an excuse: there is but one God in this universe, the God of all mankind, our Creator, Jesus Christ, the God of Israel.

Exodus 9:16 *But indeed for this purpose I [God] have raised you [Pharaoh] up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.*

In that era, what happened in Egypt would allow the Hebrew people to move about relatively undisturbed for 40 years in the desert-wilderness. These events would cause many to believe in their God.

#### **An expository examination of Romans 9:10b–17:**

This very verse is quoted in Romans 9. The context of this passage is actually quite difficult. Also, Paul quotes several passages from the Pentateuch in this dissertation.

Rom. 9:10b–12 *[W]hen Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of Him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger."* (Gen. 25:23)

Rebekah, Isaac's wife, gave birth to twin sons. Esau came out first, and, a few minutes (or hours) later, Jacob was born. Esau is considered to be the eldest, despite the fact that there may have been only few minutes between their births. However, God has determined, *even before they are born*, that the older would serve the younger.

This is known and revealed, *in order that God's purpose of election might continue.*

There is the hyper-Calvinist view that, every person that God chooses is elect, and that the believer has no choice in the matter. I do not believe that is what is being taught here. There is an election here, and we might understand that word better if we understand that there is a selection process taking place, which might be better understood as the winnowing of the line of Abraham.

God selected the Hebrew people, which came from a very specific branch of Abraham's descendants. Abraham had a number of sons, beginning with Ishmael, then Isaac, and then the 6 sons of Keturah. From Ishmael and possibly from Keturah sprung the Arabic tribes; but from Isaac comes the line of Israel. Isaac's line is winnowed as well. He fathers two sons (the backdrop for this passage in Romans), and one of them is selected and the other is not (as is expressed in this passage, *I loved Jacob, but Esau I hated*).

Now, even after the Hebrew people are clearly selected by God, there continues to be a winnowing process. Israel wants a king. Saul is the people's choice; David is God's choice. The key to the Davidic line is, from him would come the Greater Son of David, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Rom. 9:13 *As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."* (Mal. 1:2–3)

Of the two sons born to Rebekah, God is said to love Jacob and to hate Esau. Now, these are both anthropopathisms. God does not love or hate in the same sense that we do. His approbation (or disapprobation) actually existed in eternity past and it is based not only upon Jacob and Esau's free will, but upon the free will of their descendants.

Through most of their lives, Esau seems to be a better and nicer person (although Jacob, through deception, did cause Esau to become quite irate—angry enough to want to kill Jacob). But God approves of/loves Jacob; and God disapproves of/hates Esau.

God knows the line of Jacob and He knows the line of Esau. He knows that Esau's line would eventually fail, pursuing a life outside of Canaan, abandoning the land of God's promise to His people. Furthermore, Esau allied himself with the family of Seir (at least for a time). Jacob, despite his many and continued imperfections, would slowly but surely move in God's direction—and so would his sons and their descendants. Since God knew this about Jacob and Esau in eternity past, and because God knew about their descendants, His approbation and disapprobation existed in eternity past. God approves of Jacob and He disapproved of Esau. This is not based only upon the decisions both men would make in their lives, but the decisions that their descendants would make as well. And the most important consideration is that Jesus Christ is in Jacob's line, not Esau's line.

Rom 9:14–16 *What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, Who has mercy.* (Exodus 33:19)

Paul (the writer of Romans) asks, *Is God unjust?* And he answers, *not on your life!*

God, as Sovereign over all, can choose towards whom He is merciful; and God can choose to have compassion on whomever He chooses.



The next phrase is quite tricky. Paul writes: **So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, Who has mercy.** There are two ways that we can understand this: (1) our free will means nothing whatsoever; God is going to like us or not; or (2) God's sovereignty is dominant and over all; but, this does not necessarily mean that our free will means nothing.

Now, I realize that, if you take this passage completely by itself, ignoring the context and ignoring the rest of Scripture, it would sound as if man had no free will, and whatever God wants to do, that is what He does—and we are merely vessels of His sovereignty. As such, our free will is but an illusion to us. However, let me suggest in other passages of the Bible, it seems very clear that our free will has an important place in the plan of God—in Scripture, for instance, we are commanded to do many things. What meaning is it that we are commanded to do “X” (or not to do “Y”), if we are mere puppets who do “X” when God makes us?

Throughout the Bible, our volition is presented as important, and God expresses, through Paul, that He would that all men are saved (1Tim. 2:3–4). Let's approach this problem using a bit of logic: logically, if God wills for all men to be saved, and Jesus died for all men, and if we have no true free will, then all men are saved (which is *not* what the Bible teaches). In order to get to that final conclusion, then all 3 premises must be true. God wills for all men to be saved (1Tim. 2:3–4 2Peter 3:9) and Jesus died for the sins of all mankind (1Tim. 4:10 Titus 2:11 Heb. 2:9 1John 2:2); therefore, the third assumption has to be false (that we have no free will). To put it more clearly, it is therefore true that we have free will. Otherwise, we are led to the inescapable conclusion that all men are saved and we might as well kick back in an easy chair and ride out our lives into a blessed eternity.

Let's assume that the opposite is true and determine where that leads us. If we have no free will, then (1) what is there in our lives to teach angels? What meaning would our lives have and the plan of God have in the Angelic Conflict? And, most logically, (2) how can God hold us responsible for our choices in life, if He ultimately pulls all the strings? Theologically speaking, #1 or #2 would be a spiritual conundrum.

Furthermore, if angels are watching us, and they know that we lack true free will; then can they not claim the same? “I disobeyed You, God,” a fallen angel would say, “Because that is how You made me.” If God's sovereignty does not allow for human free will, why would it allow for angelic free will?

Therefore, we must logically understand what Paul writes in the light of this fact that man has free will.

For much of Jacob's life, he made some bad decisions; and Scripture records them. He was manipulative, dishonest, and crafty, often using his own free will in order to better his

own situation (or, in a way where he thought that he was bettering his situation). Nevertheless, God said, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

There is enough information about both men in the Bible that, it would be hard to allege that Jacob is the better person, and so, God loves him. Both men have their flaws. Jacob's flaws cannot be explained away.

Romans 9:17 **For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show My power in you, and that My name might be proclaimed in all the earth."** (Exodus 9:16) (ESV; capitalized)

However, even more amazing than the fact that we have free will (which is not all that amazing), is the fact that God has used Pharaoh's free will in His plan. God used Pharaoh and God used Pharaoh's negative volition, despite the fact that Pharaoh was clearly anti-God.

God, as Sovereign over the earth, could see to it that this particular Pharaoh would come to power (it is likely that, had Moses remained there, he would have become pharaoh). And God used Pharaoh's negative volition in order to exalt Himself. Some people would have gone only so far with their negative volition and finally, given in to God. This pharaoh did not. Now, God had to strengthen Pharaoh's resolve; but I do not believe that indicates that God changed Pharaoh's volition. God simply gave Pharaoh the ability to more completely exercise his own free will.

God used this Pharaoh and his negative volition in order to glorify Himself.

One of the things which we have studied previously is, God takes man's free will; man's actions, good and bad; and works with that in His plan. God disciplines believers who make bad decisions; God gives grace to the grace oriented; and He works all of this together in the realm of His Own Sovereign will. That is, what God wants to happen, happens. At the same time, God allows for the fact of free will, both human and angelic. His plan takes into consideration good and bad choices. God's plan takes into consideration good and bad decisions made by believers and unbelievers alike.

Over and over, we study situations and circumstances where God's will clearly overrides everything; and God is able to work His will despite that sinful things that we do.

## **Lesson 105: Exodus 9:13–19**

## **Hail Part III**

We spent some time in Romans 9 and studied it in relationship to our overall study. We will now return to Exodus 9:

Exodus 9:13–14 **Then the Lord said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God of the Hebrews: *Let My people go, that***



*they may serve Me, for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart, and on your servants and on your people, that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth.*

God is telling Moses what to do and what to say. We may assume that Moses and Aaron do exactly what God tells them to do—they go before Pharaoh and speak these words.

Exodus 9:15 *Now if I had stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, then you would have been cut off from the earth.*

These are God's words directly to Pharaoh.

God has a variety of options when it comes to His people being enslaved in Egypt. He could have easily wiped out all of Egypt; but that would not have fulfilled His purposes. God's plan is more complex than *move the Hebrew people from Egypt to Canaan*. God's plan includes a consideration of the free will of every Hebrew and of every person in Egypt. It is because their volition is important to God that God acts in Egypt in the way that He does. God allows for all of these things to play out without Him stepping in and altering a single free will decision made by anyone. Everyone living in Egypt will see first hand the power of God and the impotence of the Egyptian gods. God will allow every person in Egypt to make a free will choice for or against Him.

God provides both carrots and sticks, you might say; but just because He works to encourage us to believe in Him, that does not mean that we will.

**Application:** Over the past few years, President Trump has interacted with Kim Jong-un, the Supreme Leader of North Korea. The intent was to use carrots and sticks to get Kim to give up his nuclear weapons and his weapons testing. Just because Trump wills for Kim to give up his nuclear weapons and just because Trump applies maximum pressure, both positive and negative, does not mean that Kim will give in to Trump's plan.

Whereas, it is quite obvious that Trump cannot change Kim's free will; it is less obvious that God chooses not to change our free will. God's plan is robust enough to allow us to use our free will, which results in many of us doing some really bad and stupid things.

Exodus 9:16 *But indeed for this purpose I [God] have raised you [Pharaoh] up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.*

God uses the negative volition of Pharaoh to glorify Himself. That is, so that men would look to the God of the Hebrews in order to be saved. Every son of Jacob will believe in the God of his fathers; and most Egyptians will reject their God.

Exodus 9:17a *As yet you exalt yourself against My people...*

This is how God used the negative volition of Pharaoh to praise Him. Pharaoh continued to act against God's people; he opposed God's people and exalted himself against them.

Pharaoh himself, in opposing God, was making himself out to be God, exalting himself over the Hebrews. But Pharaoh is not the true authority over the Hebrew people; God is. All peoples are ultimately subject to God's authority; and every single person is responsible for his own free will decisions.

Exodus 9:17b *...in that you will not let them go.*

Pharaoh is acting as if he gets the final say in how God's people will be treated; and so, Pharaoh refused to send God's people out of Egypt. Pharaoh believes that he has the power to determine what will happen to the Hebrew people, but he does not.

Exodus 9:17 *As yet you [Pharaoh] exalt yourself against My people in that you will not let them go.*

Pharaoh, in his negative volition, attempts to stand up against God. Pharaoh believes that he has some power; that he has some real say in the matter. When it comes to God's plan, it just goes right on, no matter what. Even if Pharaoh intends to resist God to the end, God's plan has made provision for that. God's plan is able to incorporate the decision of every single person on this earth, positive or negative.

The Voice provides an outstanding translation here:

**Eternal One** (to Moses): For by now I could have *easily* raised my hand and struck you and your people with a disease *so lethal* that you would be erased entirely from the earth. But I have kept you *in power* for a reason, to show you *My greater power* and to see that *My name and reputation* spread through all the earth. [Romans 9:17] But you still *try to* dominate *My people* and refuse to release them from the land.

God is telling Pharaoh, "I could have squashed you like a bug in the first plague. I could have wiped you and all of Egypt out without any difficulty. But I chose not to do this, because that would not suit My purposes here." God used Pharaoh's hard-heartedness—his negative volition—to accomplish God's greater purposes in all the earth, to exalt Himself as the True God, the God of the Hebrew people. Secondly, the people of Jacob will choose to follow Moses out of Egypt and, eventually, into Canaan.

All of the surrounding nations would know about the God of the Hebrews, and they would know this because of the negative volition of Pharaoh.

Now God describes the next plague, the 7<sup>th</sup> one; God's 7<sup>th</sup> plague would be hail.

Exodus 9:18a *Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause very heavy hail to rain down,...*

For the next plague, God could cause hail to fall as has never happened before.

Isis was the god of the atmosphere in Egypt, who sent rain down to Egypt's crops, whom the Egyptians prayed to that the Nile not be flooded (yet it needed to have enough water

for them to use in their crops). The God of the Universe controls the weather and at best, Isis is a figment of the Egyptian mentality; at worst, Isis a demon-front.

Exodus 9:18b *...such as has not been in Egypt since its founding until now.*

There has never been hail like this in Egypt before. Generally speaking, Egypt received less rain than most of the lands in that region (although, I believe that they received more rain then than they do now).

Exodus 9:18c *...since its founding until now.*

In the entire history of Egypt, nothing like this hail has been seen before.

God tells Moses what God will do to Egypt and then what God expects from Pharaoh.

Not too much further into this chapter, the text will cut from God speaking to Moses to Moses being in front of Pharaoh. This sudden jump will be without any intervening verbiage. It reminds me of the way some movies are cut. God in the opening says to Moses, "And this is what I want you to say to Pharaoh..." and there is a sudden cut to Moses and Pharaoh where Moses is saying these exact words to God. The way that this is done in the text is quite subtle.

We are never given percentages, but each plague destroys a portion of what everyone owns. Every single Egyptian is affected by every plague; and when their possessions are affected, it may be half of what they own—or most of what they own—which is affected by each plague. At this point in our narrative, there are still cattle left, even after the judgments which have taken place so far.

Exodus 9:18 *Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause very heavy hail to rain down, such as has not been in Egypt since its founding until now.*

God's next judgment is, He will send hail upon the land, and a hail storm such as Egypt had never seen before.

Remember that, a part of God's warning to Pharaoh is, this particular disaster (and all of those which follow) are going to affect Pharaoh personally. My understanding is, with Pharaoh's resources, he could mitigate previous plagues to some degree. From this point forward, Pharaoh will be affected as much as anyone else (that is my interpretation of what God said).

Exodus 9:19a *Therefore send now and gather your livestock and all that you have in the field,...*

We continually find the verb *to send* [*for*] in a variety of forms in this chapter. Pharaoh refuses to send the people of Israel out, so there are a number of things which God tells him (or others in Egypt) *to send*. Pharaoh and the people of Egypt, who want to preserve

what cattle they have remaining, must send for these animals and anything which belongs to them out in the field.

It ought to be obvious, given his negative volition so far, that Pharaoh personally is not going to heed this warning. However, this does not mean that no Egyptian will heed it. Let me suggest that, *God is fair*. Therefore, those who would respond to this warning will hear about it. As discussed earlier, Pharaoh has many aides, underlings and slaves with him; and some of them—insofar as we can tell—no doubt take these warnings very seriously. These might noise abroad what is going on and what the warning is. God will certainly allow for those who fear Him the chance to obey Him.

Exodus 9:19b *...for the hail shall come down on every man and every animal which is found in the field and is not brought home;...*

Animals and people out in the field were to be gathered up and brought into whatever covered shelter was available.

The men and beasts are both described as those who are found in the field and those who are not withdrawn into shelter. This is a pleonasm (or, a redundancy)—it is used to call attention to the subject under discussion. When the same thing is described with a positive and a negative, yet, for all intents and purposes, the author has just said the same thing twice, then he is intensifying what is said or repeating for emphasis. As a teacher, I often have to repeat the same concept. So that I don't get too bored and so that my students can understand things from a different viewpoint, I will often state the same concept two or three times in a row, but using different words. This helps them to fix what I am saying in their minds.

Exodus 9:19c *...and they shall die.*”

This is the NKJV, and they have moved the phrase *for the hail shall come down*. There is nothing wrong with them doing that in a translation. However, properly, the final phrase is, *...hail will come down on them and they will die.*”

For those animals and people who remain out in the field, they would be struck by hail and they would die.

This is a marvelous test. God has just caused the Egyptian people to suffer a great many losses, which affected a lot of the populace and now he is going to give them a chance to make a choice—will they listen to God or will they remain hard-hearted?

You may wonder, *weren't all of the animals killed off in the 5<sup>th</sup> plague?* Specifically, the 5<sup>th</sup> plague, which was against the livestock of Egypt in particular, was directed against the *livestock in the field—the horses, donkeys, camels, herds, and flocks*. So, there may have been animals which were kept in shelters which were not affected by the first plague against them. Secondly, sometimes when we find the word *all*, it refers to the *vast majority* of something—in this case, the plague killed off the vast majority of the livestock in the

field. Thirdly, there may be some groups of animals which were not affected by the 5<sup>th</sup> plague: wild animals (which would be used as food); cattle and, possibly, sheep and goats (although they may have been included in the phrase *herds and flocks*). In other words, there were additional animals to be killed, both domesticated and wild, which God would kill with the hail and lightning.<sup>2</sup>

Some Egyptians may have heard and heeded this warning from God and took their livestock into whatever kind of shelters that they had for them. Those would have survived. It is possible that some Egyptians became believers as a result of this.

This is an end of a quote within a quote within a quote. All of this began back in v. 13 with God speaking to Moses. All of this is God speaking. The Niobi Study Bible has: *And the LORD said unto Moses, "Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh and say unto him,...* Everything from this point forward, to v. 19, is God speaking to Moses. Then we have God telling Moses what to say: *And the LORD said unto Moses, "Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh and say unto him, `Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews...* So the quote within the quote will be what Moses is to say to Pharaoh. Finally, v. 13 begins with Moses telling Pharaoh what God is saying to him: *And the LORD said unto Moses, "Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh and say unto him, `Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: Let My people go, that they may serve Me.* A quote within a quote within a quote is fairly common in the Bible (more so than in other literature). The reason for this is, God almost always works through intermediaries. Moses is His intermediary, and Moses will speak to Pharaoh; God will speak to Pharaoh, but *only* through Moses.

Exodus 9:19 *Therefore send now and gather your livestock and all that you have in the field, for the hail shall come down on every man and every animal which is found in the field and is not brought home; and they shall die."*

This is whatever livestock which they still have that is alive; God is giving the Egyptians a very important option here: *if they believe the words of God, then they can preserve their livestock.* Just as Goshen has been spared these plagues, they could turn their home into a safe home, simply by bringing their remaining livestock into shelter. Also, at this point since most of their livestock was killed off by the 5<sup>th</sup> plague, they will have enough room in their barns/shelters to preserve all of their remaining livestock.

Let me remind you of what God said to Pharaoh: Exodus 9:14a *...for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart,...*

What does Pharaoh have in his heart? *Volition!* God is giving Pharaoh the chance to make a choice here. Pharaoh could order all of Egypt to bring their livestock under shelter, but he does not. Every man or animal left out would die. The hail would be that bad as to kill anyone out in it.

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<sup>2</sup> Some help with the explanation came from *When Critics Ask*; Geisler and Howe, ©1992, Victor Books, pp. 73–74.

Therefore, this is a personal warning made to Pharaoh; as well as a general warning to all those who own cattle throughout Egypt. All of Egypt has a choice. They know in advance what the plague would be. 6 times, Moses and Aaron have told the people about the plagues, but, this time, anyone who chooses to can choose to protect his people and his remaining livestock.

## Lesson 106: Exodus 9:13–21a

## Hail Part IV

### A review of Exodus 9:13–19:

Let's take a look at this entire plague and note some stark differences from previous plagues:

Exodus 9:13–17 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, *Let My people go, that they may serve me. For this time I will send all My plagues on you yourself, and on your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth. For by now I could have put out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you My power, so that My name may be proclaimed in all the earth. You are still exalting yourself against my people and will not let them go.*

God tells Pharaoh very clearly that, had He wanted to, He could have destroyed Pharaoh and all his people on day one. However, God did not destroy Pharaoh and all of Egypt, but He has, instead, brought all of these judgments against Egypt in order to glorify Himself. God has a plan and that plan must go forward. *That* glorifies Him. This means that the people of Israel must return to the land (as well as receive the Law). If God merely wiped out the Egyptians, why would the Hebrew people want to leave? What would be their motivation? All of them had grown up in Egypt. Their parents were lifelong Egyptians; their grandparents were born and raised in Egypt; and their great grandparents as well.

How many 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> generation Irishmen in the United States can you say to, "Well, now I think it is time for you and your family to return to Ireland (or wherever)." That's just not going to fly. Now and again, there is an odd bird who returns to Ireland, generations later; but most people tend to remain in the country where they were born and raised. Why would they want to go to a country where their great grandfather was born and raised? After all, he chose to up and leave his native land.

So, there were a variety of things which had to happen in order to move the Hebrew people from Egypt to the land of Canaan. It is these things which occur—which cause the Hebrew people to pick up and move—that glorify God. These things glorify God because this advances His plan, which He has revealed from the time of Abraham.



When God is glorified, what other things happen? Not only do all of the Hebrew people heed Him but many Egyptians and others living in Egypt will heed His warnings as well.

Exodus 9:18–19 *Behold, about this time tomorrow I will cause very heavy hail to fall, such as never has been in Egypt from the day it was founded until now. Now therefore send, get your livestock and all that you have in the field into safe shelter, for every man and beast that is in the field and is not brought home will die when the hail falls on them.' "* (ESV; capitalized; reformatted)

This is what is brand new. God tells the people, “Look, if you don’t want to lose your servants or your cattle, all you need to do is bring them under shelter.” What sort of person would agree to do this? A person who believes God; a person who fears that Lord. This is a person who believes in the Revealed God and, therefore, is saved by God.

This warning also helps to set up the final warning—so that one might protect his firstborn. God gives a warning; therefore, men need to heed God’s warning.

**Application:** There are a great many warnings in Scripture—some individual and some national. We need to hear those warnings. We first need to learn them (that is by taking in Bible doctrine); and then we need to heed them (that is, listen to what God says and then do what He requires).

Regarding national warnings, bear in mind that each and every person has their own volition. You can present the truth, but they have to be willing to hear the truth and obey God.

**Application:** When people believe God, good things happen. When a nation rejects God, that nation is subject to discipline or to divine judgment (the believer receives discipline and the unbeliever receives judgment).

**Application:** Worldwide, at the time that I write this (2020), we are facing the COVID19 virus, which has the potential of being a worldwide threat. So far, its impact in terms of death count as been relatively small; but its affect of day-to-day life has been quite profound. Personally, I believe that this is judgment from God, for man to reassess his priorities. There were a considerable number of people in the United States enjoying great prosperity; and then, suddenly, that prosperity came to a halt (for many). It is very easy to become rich and successful, and then set aside your relationship with God. Men think, “Look at me! Look at what I have achieved! See how successful I have become!” But that success can be removed overnight (which happened to millions of people throughout the world).

**Application:** When faced with a judgment from God, draw closer to Him. How do you draw closer to God? Make certain you are naming your sins to Him and taking in the teaching of the Word of God. Even if churches are not assembling in the way that they



used to, there are many ways electronic ways to hear the Word of God taught accurately by men dedicated to Bible teaching.

Exodus 9:20 He who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses.

This is the first indication that there is some positive volition among the Egyptians.

The servants of Pharaoh could refer to his literal servants; but we might better understand this to mean anyone associated with Egypt. In other words, *Egyptians* and anyone else in Egypt. All Egypt knew what was going on; and some began to believe the Word of God. I believe that these who heeded God's Word here were believers. They chose to believe God's Word. They had faced and had been devastated by 6 plagues. This time, God provided them a way out; God gave them a way to express positive volition towards Him and His Word. Now, this does not make them great believers; but it does make them believers, nonetheless. For salvation, faith in the Revealed God is all that is required.

Therefore, God spared the livestock of some Egyptians. All they had to do was obey the Word of God.

Exodus 9:20 He who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses.

The word *servants* can certainly refer to anyone who works for Pharaoh, either as an appointed position or as a slave; but, I suspect that this can refer to *Pharaoh's subjects* (that is, *citizens of Egypt*) as well. Even though Pharaoh did not respect the Word of the Lord, some people in the palace and outside of the palace did. I am going to assume that word got out to those who would respond to the message of the God of the Hebrews.

The term *God's Word* has always had a double meaning. God is the embodiment of truth and, as such, the Son of God, the visible member of the trinity, Jesus Christ, is called the living Word (John 1:1–3, 12). The written Word of God is that which was spoken by God to man from which we are to learn from and be guided by forever (and to clarify a point, this word does not need to be spoken audibly; so Moses writing narrative and Moses recording the actual words of God is all the Word of God).

Exodus 9:20 He who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses.

The word for *fear* means *fear/respect*. This allows for the fact that some Egyptians were evangelized by what had happened. So now God will make a distinction between those who fear and respect God's living and written Word and those who do not; in other words, we have Gentile salvation here at the outset of the Jewish nation. In fact, because of the relationship between God and His people the Hebrews, we have Gentile salvation. This was the intention of God in raising up a nation of His own people. The Hebrews were responsible to represent God on earth to man, just as Moses represented God to Pharaoh

on earth. This is all a shadow of things to come where the Son of God will represent to man His Father in the heavens.

God the Son is able to represent us before God the Father because He died in our stead for the sins which we have committed (and which we continue to commit).

There are servants who feared God; they heard His Word and they understood it to be a serious warning; and it appears that some Egyptians (we have no idea just how many) began to take the God of the Israelites seriously.<sup>3</sup> When Moses made a pronouncement, Pharaoh and the people of Egypt did not just blow it off as some crazy man pontificating. They heard and respected God's words—no doubt based upon the plagues that were warned about and brought to bear before—and they decide to not ignore these warnings from God.

The response to the Word of God is an individual choice, a matter of volition. You can have influence over some people—close relatives and children in particular—but people still make their own choices. People make a choice who to allow themselves to be influenced by.

**Application:** When people watch the news on television (or wherever they get their news from), they generally trust the person or people they *choose* to listen to. Now, this may be developed over a period of time, or it may begin with the first few times you listen to a news source. In any case, you, the listener, make that choice.

**Application:** The same thing is true when it comes to going to a particular church or listening to a particular pastor. That you choose to continue to hear them as a matter of volition.

Exodus 9:20 [He who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses.](#)

The last phrase in this verse is 'el (אֵל) [pronounced *e*] and it is a preposition of direction and it means *into*. This is followed by a definite article and the nominative masculine plural of bayith (בָּיִת) [pronounced *bay-YITH*] and it means *houses*. So the Egyptians, having seen the power of God, are not mercilessly crushed due to Pharaoh's obstinance—they have been offered salvation through faith in the Revealed God (Who is Jesus Christ) and deliverance through obedience to the Revealed God.

Let's say that during one of these plagues, an Egyptian finds out that these plagues have been affecting Egyptians but not the sons of Israel—what might you do for your family in these circumstances? Ideally speaking, an Egyptian would try to align himself with a Hebrew family; or seek shelter with a Hebrew family. Does that not seem logical, if the God of the Hebrews brings plagues upon Egypt, but these same plagues do not cause any

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<sup>3</sup> There are clues throughout the Exodus narrative which suggest this.

harm to the sons of Jacob? Although this may have occurred, we don't have any record of it.

Exodus 9:21a *But he who did not regard the word of the Lord....*

The Bible does not give us any percentages or even suggest or imply any percentages of those who feared the Word of God as over against those who did not. I would guess that those who feared God were small in number, but significant, because every person is significant to God.

We may reasonably assume that what God had to say was quickly broadcast throughout the land by word of mouth (Apple not quite having developed the iPhone at this time); and this pronouncement by Moses was spread quickly throughout the land. The people of Egypt now took sides. Given that they were probably spread out, I don't think that there were political battles going on; but each man made a decision for his family and his family's resources (that is, their livestock), and some brought their servants and livestock into safety and others left them out there, in defiance of the Hebrew's God.

As an aside, during the time of Joseph, all of the livestock became the property of Pharaoh. We do not know if this continued or was still a fact at this point. My guess is, all that remained of this ancient status was the 20% tax which Joseph levied on the people (you may recall that Joseph did not provide this grain for free, but charged for it).

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**Lesson 107: Exodus 9:20–22b****Hail Part V**

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We are in the midst of the plague of hail. God told Moses what to expect and He provided a way through this plague for the Egyptians. As a result, the people of Egypt took divergent paths. When God warned them (through Moses) to bring their animals inside, some did and some did not.

One of the new wrinkles mentioned in this plague is, some Egyptians would take what God says seriously. They would act in accordance with the warning. If that has occurred before, we are unaware of it. This may help to explain why more time is given over to the revelation of this plague.

Exodus 9:20 *He who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses.*

This refers back to the Egyptians who took seriously the word of the Lord. What we have here is the masculine singular, Qal active participle (with the definite article) of *yâê'* (אֵי) [pronounced *yaw-RAY*]. The form of the verb means, *the one who fears, the one who is afraid; the one exhibiting fear-respect, the one having reverence [a reverential respect]*. Strong's #3372 BDB #431. This is a verb which acts as a descriptive noun. This verbal noun describes those who obeyed the Word of God. They feared God; and they respected Him. Therefore, they preserved their servants and their animal stock.

V. 20 is about the Egyptians who believed God (*servants of Pharaoh* being the citizens of Egypt). V. 21 speaks of those who defied the Living God.

Exodus 9:21a *But he who did not regard the word of the Lord....*

In this verse and the previous we have a common grammatical difference between those who believe in Jesus Christ and those who do not. This is all but lost to us in the translations, even though the translations often make an attempt to translate this difference. We have two kinds of Egyptians, those who are fearing the Word of Yahweh (the Qal active participle of *yârê'*) and those who are not setting their heart upon the Word of God (the Qal active participle of *sûwm* and the direct object *lêb*). Therein is not the contrast; the contrast is in their actions which follow.

In v. 20, those who keep fearing God's Word *cause their slaves to flee [to shelter]*. The verb is the Hiphil perfect of *nûwç* (נוּחַ) [pronounced *noos*] and their slaves *are caused* (Hiphil stem) *to flee*—perfect tense, completed action. Salvation and the results of salvation are a completed process. Once we believe in Jesus Christ, no matter what we do, we cannot lose the salvation which God provided for us on the cross by judging His Son our stead.

Those who did not regard the word of Y<sup>e</sup>howah (literally, *did not set his heart on the word of Y<sup>e</sup>howah*), did something else...

Exodus 9:21b *...left his servants and his livestock in the field.*

The one who does not apply his heart to God's Word (which is a different set of words, but again, a Qal active participle) follows his unbelief with action: the Qal imperfect of *‘âzab* (עָזַב) [pronounced *gaw-ZA<sup>B</sup>V*] and it means *to leave, to forsake, to desert*. The imperfect tense means that they continued to forsake their slaves and cattle out in the field.

They did not place their hearts on the Word of God; so they did not take these words spoken by Moses seriously. There are many atheist groups of different sorts throughout the world, and most of them ignore what is in the Bible. Some actively repudiate it. Some make fun of it. When something seems like it makes sense (for instance, the Ten Commandments), they say, "Well mankind came up with these basic rules long, long before Moses did." Or, "Any thinking human could have come up with a similar set of over-arching principles." But, they didn't. These fundamental laws were laid down by God—and these commandments are clearly seen as separate from their many applications (which we will study). These fundamental commands for interaction with God and for the interaction of men cannot be found so succinctly stated anywhere else, except as spoken by the Lord, as recorded in the Bible (yes, I am fully aware of [the Code of Hammurabi](#)).

As an aside, the Code of Hammurabi is a set of 282 laws (34 of which have been lost to history). #2 on this list of laws is: *If any one bring an accusation against a man, and the accused go to the river and leap into the river, if he sink in the river his accuser shall take possession of his house. But if the river prove that the accused is not guilty, and he escape*

*unhurt, then he who had brought the accusation shall be put to death, while he who leaped into the river shall take possession of the house that had belonged to his accuser.*<sup>4</sup> Is that somehow supposed to be comparable to the Ten Commandments?

Primarily, what these laws of Hammurabi have in common with the Mosaic Law (including the full list of commandments) is, they are ancient and they are laws for a society. No doubt there are some similarities between these sets of laws (for instance, *stealing and murder* are both presented as *wrong* things in both sets of laws).

Exodus 9:21b ...[left his servants and his livestock in the field.](#)

When we oppose God's Word, when we do not apply God's Word, when we do not set our hearts upon God's Word, our actions have very negative consequences. It was cruel for many Egyptians to leave their slaves and their cattle out in the field, thereby causing them to be killed by the hail. Their negative volition resulted in a continuous action (imperfect tense) of the deaths of their possessions. It is not that they had no regard for their slaves—at the very worst, their slaves were valuable property to them. But their negative volition toward God's Word automatically causes people to do things which can be quite cruel. What I mean is, they did not leave their slaves and cattle out in the field with the intention of killing them; that was simply the promised result of not heeding God's Word. It had the exact same effect upon the slaves and the cattle had they done this with the intention of having them be killed.

The exact same thing happens today. Let me give you a clear example. An unbelieving parent will not take his child to church. This unbelieving parent might feel a strong love for his child, but the result of this unbelief is, the child will never hear God's Word at an early age that he might never have the chance to believe unto salvation and, as a result, spend eternity in the lake of fire. This parent has, in effect, deserted his own child out in the field before a terrible hail storm. It is not intentional cruelty—no parent when they realize that absolute horror of the lake of fire would ever want their children to spend eternity there, but their actions can have that same result.

These signs and wonders that we have been studying have evangelized the entire world, and there were some in Egypt who were also evangelized. It was be easy to spot those who have trusted in Y<sup>e</sup>howah and fear Y<sup>e</sup>howah—they will be the ones who still have live servants and cattle. To heed the warning of Moses required some trust—that trust being placed in the God of Moses.

Egypt is known for having very little rainfall. The coast of Egypt receives the most rain, which averages approximately eight inches a year; and you don't have to go very far inland before that drops to less than two inches per year. Not only is God telling them that there will be a storm, but it will be a deadly hail storm; an extremely rare event. This is such an unusual event, so out of the ordinary (as some perhaps have never even seen a hail storm in their entire lives), that it requires some serious trust in God's Word to perform the action

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<sup>4</sup> From the [Code of Hammurabi](#), accessed April 14, 2020.

which protects their slaves and their cattle. On the other hand, these Egyptians have just been subjected to six plagues, unlike anything that the people of Egypt have ever seen before. So they had objective proof that Moses is a man to be heeded.

### **Would you believe if you saw a miracle from God?**

An evangelistic note: If you are an unbeliever and are somehow reading this, you might be thinking *well, if I would just see a miracle, a sign; then I would believe all this*. That is not so. These Egyptians had seen sign after sign of God's tremendous power over the earth and most of them still did not believe. Even as a precaution, they could have thought to themselves, *well, I just am not sure about this, but what can it hurt to bring my slaves and livestock in for a couple days? What can that really cost me except a little embarrassment if there is no hail storm and I will have had the chance to save my most valuable possessions?* But they were so strong in unbelief, that they did not even do that.

Listen: all you have to do to secure eternal salvation for yourself is to believe that Jesus Christ died for your sins; to place your trust in Jesus Christ as your only means of salvation, the only bridge between you and God. This act only takes a few seconds and this short few seconds out of your life—the few seconds where you choose to believe in Jesus Christ—has the final result of providing eternal salvation for you forever. How can you lose? There is no embarrassment even, as no one else, besides God, knows about you making this decision (unless you tell them). Furthermore, if you choose to renege on this faith, you are still saved; **If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.** (2Tim. 2:13)

Maybe you are thinking, *well, if God would just come down to earth and talk to me directly; then I would believe*. There are two answers to that: (1) God is speaking to you directly right now and you know it; (2) God did come down to earth, presented every astonishing miracle and sign imaginable, and yet there were those who not only did they not believe in Jesus Christ, but, in their hatred and negative volition toward God (and I am speaking of very religious men here), they persecuted our Lord, lying about him in illegal trials and taking turns punching Him. This is how some unbelievers react when they have the opportunity to see God in human form in their midst. Others just chose to ignore Him. You have no excuse.

If we want to pursue this further into the philosophical realm, you might object saying, *I don't want to believe in anything that I cannot see or touch*. 70–99% of everything that you know is based upon faith; we are told certain things and we believe them. Just seeing pictures of England or even getting into a plane and flying to a place that you are told is England does not prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that such a place as England, our mother country, exists. It can be effectively argued that you are assuming those who took the photos are telling you the truth about what they photographed and those connected with the airline who know are actually delivering you to a place which is really England. All the things that you *know to be true*, as reasonable as they seem, are still based upon things that someone has told you and you decided to believe.



Anyone who got into a commercial airline whose destination was England would believe that, at landing, they are in England. No one would be searching out proof positive that they are in England because they doubted where they had been taken. People have faith in the airlines, in the pilots, in the tickets which they purchased which read, *Destination: Heathrow Airport*.

When it comes to proof of God; and proof of Himself, there were be some faith involved, even if God spoke to you. Even if God Himself manifested Himself to you in some form and spoke to you, would that prove that He was indeed God? It would not! There must be some faith from you; not much faith, just a little more than none at all.

Saving faith must be directed toward Jesus Christ, God come in the flesh, and toward His saving work for you on the cross, where He took upon his own body the punishment that we deserved for all of our sins against God. We divide all of human history, believers and unbelievers alike, by the first advent of Jesus Christ. If you are concerned with intellectual integrity and reasonableness, I can guarantee you that there is no sacrifice in intellectual integrity to believe in Jesus Christ. There is no sacrifice of intellectual integrity to believe God's Word. If you have even a spark of interest, then merely say to God, *I will believe in Jesus Christ, Your Son*.

Exodus 9:21 But he who did not regard the word of the Lord left his servants and his livestock in the field.

There is judgment for the unbeliever; particularly those who defied that Lord. There are two ways we should understand the use of the word *servants* here. Back in v. 20, it refers to citizens of Egypt; but in v. 21, it refers to the literal servants of the servants (citizens) of Egypt. There were likely people who had servants who saw to their livestock and lived outside most of the time (or all of the time). If they were left out in this hail storm, they would die.

There are people who, when they hear and understand the Word of God, will choose to do the exact opposite; or choose to act in opposition to His Word. This is how negative volition works.

Exodus 9:22a Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven,..."

Few people appreciate the theatrics of God, apart from Cecil B. DeMille, who made every effort to duplicate these theatrics on the big screen, without attempting to add too much of his own point of view or without attempting to exaggerate the occurrences of the chapters.

This is certainly going to take place with Pharaoh watching (an assumption that I am making here); but the idea was to associate Moses, an emissary from God, with the judgments that he has warned Pharaoh about.

Moses is not causing any of these miracles to occur. That is God's domain. He is simply pointing to where everyone should look—and before a crowd of people (even a small crowd), this is a very theatric gesture that Moses makes.

Exodus 9:22a **Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven,...”**

Like the previous plagues, there is not a complete narrative of all that takes place. There is enough information given so that we know what God wants (for Israel to be sent out), what Pharaoh will not do (release Israel); and that the result will be a judgment on Egypt, which Moses and Aaron have warned about.

Notice that Aaron is not wielding the staff, but Moses. This is all very demonstrative, which was the way to convey what was going on in the ancient world. God wants as many as are within eyeshot to see Moses stretching his staff toward the heavens, which action will precede a hail storm unlike any hail storm in the history of Egypt.

Exodus 9:22b **...that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt—...”**

The warning of this hail storm has been issued (vv. 18–19); and now, before whatever Egyptians are there, Moses raises up his staff. Probably to many there, watching Moses, this seemed ridiculous. Hail storms were rare in Egypt; probably lifetime-rare.

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**Lesson 108: Exodus 9:22–24****Hail Part VI**

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God is speaking to Moses about the 7<sup>th</sup> plague/judgment, which is hail.

Exodus 9:22a-b **Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt—...”**

God gives Moses specific instructions of what to do to bring the hailstorm on. Obviously, God brings the hailstorm to Egypt; but there had to be some theatrics attached to it, as Moses was speaking (and acting) for God. Pharaoh and many Egyptians need to see with their own eyes Moses' actions which precede the hail storm.

There is a reason for all of the theatrics. God just doesn't do stuff because it seems cool to do; but He makes it clear that He is acting through Moses (and Aaron), so that when they pronounce God's judgment, people listen, and some of them do what God asks of them. People are clearly able to identify God's man on the ground.

Exodus 9:22c **...on man, on beast, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt.”**

The end result of Pharaoh refusing to send out the sons of Israel will be the great hail storm upon all Egypt. Whatever is left out in the open will be destroyed by this great hail.

One minor note of interest: there does not appear to be a warning about the plants (but what could be done?). When the hail comes down, it not only killed both men and animals, and it would have destroyed all of the crops as well. This is the first mention of that.

Exodus 9:22 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt—on man, on beast, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt.”

Moses speaks the Word of God as he raises up his staff towards heaven (it is not clear whether Aaron speaks or has a role at this point). Moses does whatever God has told him to do in order to point to the sign that he warned the Egyptians about.

This hail would come down on anyone and anything which was not covered. The hail would be so devastating as to destroy everything out in the open. Furthermore, the storm would be quite extensive—throughout all the land of Egypt. That would be a massively large hailstorm.

#### **The interim between v. 22 and v. 23:**

V. 22 is God telling Moses what he is supposed to do and v. 23 is the action.

Exodus 9:22 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt—on man, on beast, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt.”

V. 22 are God’s instructions to Moses. In v. 23, Moses stretches out his staff towards heaven and the hailstorm begins.

Exodus 9:23 And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground. And the Lord rained hail on the land of Egypt.

There is actually a lot which happens between v. 22 and v. 23; and it is easy to read them both in succession and not realize that.

Exodus 9:22 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt—on man, on beast, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt.”

Exodus 9:23 And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground. And the Lord rained hail on the land of Egypt.

This is what has happened between vv. 22 and 23: God completed His instructions to Moses and Moses left God’s Presence. Then Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and spoke to him. This meeting appears to take place out of doors. All of the words God said

to Moses were then spoken to Pharaoh. Now, bear in mind that, there is first a warning—bring in your flocks and cattle from the fields and protect them in your homes (or under some sort of shelter). Then we have what appears to be some incidental information that some would listen and obey and others would not (vv. 20–21).

So, we have now gone, from God giving Moses instructions, to Moses standing before Pharaoh (presumably), *having already warned him* of what is to come. There must have been time given for people to hear and then obey these words of God. The exact mechanics and timing of this warning are not actually given in the narrative—but it seems logical that there was a day's warning.

At some point after Moses and Aaron went to speak to Pharaoh, Moses stretches out his rod toward heaven (we do not know what sort of an audience he had, but the theatrical nature indicates that there was an audience or some sort).

God is not theatrical just for Himself. When He created the heavens and the earth, it was done instantly—in keeping with the Big Bang theory (Gen. 1:1). But, when God restored the earth, then He took His time because He had an audience (all of the angels, elect and fallen). Restoration was a 6-day process, so that each step could be observed (Gen. 1:3–30).

So, between vv. 22 and 23, Moses issues a warning. Is this to a crowd of Egyptians, does it take place before Pharaoh, does he also issue this same warning to the Israelites? We don't know. But, it makes sense that, if God tells Moses to tell the Egyptians to bring their servants and their animals under shelter, then some time must be given for that to happen. Some feared the Lord and they brought their animals and servants into a shelter (v. 21); and some did not pay attention to God's Word, and their people and animals were left out in the field (v. 22). So, even though there is not specific verse which reads, "Moses issued the warning and gave the people 36 hours to obey the Lord;" something like this had to have happened.

So, a warning has been issue to the Egyptians and some obeyed that warning and some did not. Now let's view the individual steps of v. 23:

Exodus 9:23a [And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven;...](#)

God told Moses to stretch out his hand towards the skies, but Moses stretches out his rod against the heavens. I do not think that this is an act of disobedience, but Moses understanding what God wants—all of this is quite theatric, and that draws in his audience and sets up a connection between what he does and what God causes to happen.

Moses is not acting as if this is his power; he is making known that this is from God; that this is a judgment from God.

Exodus 9:23b [...and the Lord sent thunder and hail,...](#)

Moses, God's chosen spokesman, stretches out his rod towards the heavens, and, as a result, God brought down thunder and hail from the skies.

At this point, with Moses lifting up his staff towards the sky, it would make sense for the thunder to begin. Moses has to get to shelter; Pharaoh needs to get to shelter; so I would assume that the storm began, with a lot of thunder, and some smaller balls of hail beginning to come down. Everyone who watched Moses would have immediately ran for cover.

Although technically, there could have been time between Moses lifting up his staff towards the sky and the hail falling, I would suggest that is not what happened. Obviously, everyone there needed enough time to run for shelter; and that amount of time was certainly given (10 minutes, perhaps?).

Exodus 9:23c ...and fire darted to the ground.

Fire—which I assume is lightning—is also brought down upon the earth. There certainly are storms with thunder, lightning and hail—often very severe storms.

The wording here is interesting. Moses was one of the most intelligent men who has ever lived; and one who had the proper training in all fields to develop this intelligence. However, it is possible that he did have a word for *lightning*. The word which is used here is the common word for *fire*, found several times throughout the Bible. This hail storm with lightning was such a rare occurrence in Egypt that it is possible that they did not have a special word for it. Moses, being raised Egyptian and then living out in the desert, had no reason to know a word for *lightning*.

Likewise, the Hebrew word which I have translated *thunderings* is the nominative masculine plural of qôl (קוֹל) [pronounced *kole*], which means *a voice, a sound*. It is used of the human voice, of human speaking, of praises and outcries to God. There was not a specific word in the Hebrew for *thunderings*, as this was not an occurrence which was described very often. Therefore, Moses borrowed this word and used it in context to mean *thunder*.

Exodus 9:23a-c And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground.

Logically, the thunder would begin right after Moses raises up his staff and gives the warning. It is even possible that some non-deadly hail fell. The way I see this playing out is, after Moses raises up the staff (which is after he gives the warning), there is thunder which carries on—perhaps for an entire day. There may be some hail storms, but nothing which is deadly. There is lightning from the sky. Time is given for people to find out what has happened, and for people to respond or resist to God's warnings.

Let me suggest further that, had this storm simply occurred, many people would have brought their slaves and their livestock under shelter, but there is the added dimension that

Moses has said, “You must do this or God will destroy those who are left outside.” So it is quite possible that there were Egyptians, who would have normally paid attention to the storm signs, but chose not to, because Moses warned them that his God would bring this to pass.

Exodus 9:23d *And the Lord rained hail on the land of Egypt.*

Hail pours down on the land of Egypt just like it is rain. My guess would be, few people have ever experienced hail like this—perhaps no one since then?

Baseball-sized hail does exist; but the idea of a hailstorm in Egypt seems rather farfetched.

Exodus 9:23 *And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground. And the Lord rained hail on the land of Egypt.*

If you carefully read v. 23, it may become apparent exactly how this series of events played out. First Moses stretched out his rod towards head, and God produced thunder, hail and lighting. However, none of it is deadly. Time is given to the people of Egypt to respond to Moses’ warnings. *Then, Y<sup>e</sup>howah rained down hail on the land of Egypt.* This second reference to hail is to the deadly hail which God sent. So God sent a terrific hailstorm to Egypt, where there was thunder and hail and lightning. But this was not deadly. However, then there came the deadly hail—it fell from the sky just like rain. It was intense and it happened all over Egypt.

I want you to reread v. 23 and see if you notice anything unusual about this verse. My guess is, you did not see it; so let me tell you what stands out: *Moses is not speaking.* In pretty much every judgment, Moses tells Pharaoh what God wants, and then he tells Pharaoh what is going to happen; and then Moses uses his staff in some way to begin the next plague.

Why isn’t Moses speaking? He does not have to. He already issued a warning to Pharaoh. He already said, “You have 24 hours to secure your animals and servants because God is about to bring on a hailstorm like you have never seen before.”

So, with v. 23, Moses returns to Pharaoh, or, more likely, stands out in front of the palace of Pharaoh, and lifts up his staff to the heavens. He does not have to say anything because he has already issued the warning, a day (or whatever) earlier.

Exodus 9:24a *So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail,...*

We have in these two verses what appears to be a lot of repetition, with hail, fire (lightning) and thunder; but I think the idea of the repetition indicates first the beginning of the storm, which is safe to be in; followed by a very intense and destructive storm—which storm is deadly.



The second verb is a bit more difficult than most. It is the Hithpael participle, feminine singular construct of the verb *lâqach* (לָקַח) [pronounced *law-KAHK*] generally means *to take*. However, it is only found twice in the Hithpael—here and Ezek. 1:4, both in connection with lightning during a storm. Many translators opt for a meaning far removed from the common root word and believe it to mean *flashing continually*, or words to that effect. Some have been able to construct a meaning true to its original meaning. Many translators translate this words as *catching a hold of itself*; that is, the lightening flashes and it is immediately followed by another burst of lightning; as though one came down, but on the way, grabbed another bolt of lightning, which in turn grabbed another bolt of lightning before it completely left heaven.

My assumption here is, the fire being spoken of is lightning. There are storms and there are storms. I have personally seen hail on a few occasions—nothing too large or dangerous—but my understanding is, such hailstorms exist and some of them come with lightning and thunder.

**Texas-sized hail** (photos); from facebook [field with hail](#); [hand holding hailstones](#); accessed April 10, 2019. This is apparently golf ball-sized hail. That in itself could be quite destructive.



In order to destroy trees and kill animals, the hailstones sent by God had to be considerably larger than this golf ball-sized hail.

Exodus 9:24b ...so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.

Recall that Moses was privy to the historical records in the land of Egypt—his studies in the palace as a young man likely included some meteorological matters. He was being groomed to rule over the land of Egypt. His duties as the king over Egypt would deal day in and out with crop production, animal husbandry, flood control and building projects. All of these areas are dependent upon the weather. So Moses knew something about the weather in Egypt—he knew, for instance, how many inches per years it rained in the various areas; he knew how often storms and rains came to Egypt. He knew the worst that could be expected; he knew the likely length of the average storm; he knew how often storms caused the Nile to overflow. And he knew in particular that in the entire time that Egypt had been a nation, keeping copious records of all things including the weather patterns. Moses also knew that there had never been a storm like this in Egypt before.

Exodus 9:24 *So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.*

What is being described is an horrendous hailstorm with lightning. This is the worst hailstorm in the history of Egypt.

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**Lesson 109: Exodus 9:23–27****Hail Part VII**

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We are in the midst of the plague of hail.

Exodus 9:23–24 *And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground. And the Lord rained hail on the land of Egypt. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.*

This, which, like the previous plague, appears to be a natural occurrence, but one very unusual for that part of the world. Moses spends a great deal of time on this judgment. Of the 3 plagues found in Exodus 9, Moses spends the most time on this one.

Having lived in Texas for quite a number of years, we take terrible storms for granted, although our hail storms are certainly not this destructive. But just as we will gab about a tremendous storm for hours with our co-workers; similarly, Moses cannot get over it and keeps repeating that this was an incredible storm with great bolts of lightning; one which followed another, one right after the other. Even though this is God's inspired Word, it is still written by the man Moses and the ferocity of this storm was one of the most incredible sights that he had ever seen.

Some people are deathly frightened by storms. One of this magnitude would be an awesome spectacle, and one which certainly would capture one's attention.

Moses is possibly enjoying this storm. He knows why the storm has been conjured up by God; he knows that God is in complete control of the storm—so Moses has the opportunity to sit back and watch it like fireworks on the 4th of July. There are a great many events

which, if we were not related to the God of the universe, would be frightening and difficult to endure. However, with little more than normal precautions, a Christian can derive a great deal of pleasure and enjoyment from an intense storm. However, I am *not* encouraging you to stand out in the middle of a flat field during a lightning storm.

**Application:** There are a great many circumstances in your life which, for all intents and purposes, feel to you like a massive hail storm coming down on you. So often, you do not see an escape or a solution. But, bear in mind, every storm in life is known by God; and some of them may find their origins in God. We need not fear them.

**Application:** So that there is no misunderstanding, God gives us free will and He gives us various resources. We apply these things and common sense to what life throws us. So, if there is an evacuation order given for your neighborhood, you do not ignore it *because God will protect you*. Sometimes, that evacuation order *is* God protecting you. You may think it is great faith to stay in a home certain to be flooded; but sometimes, that is arrogance more than it is faith. It is okay to consider the circumstances of life and make a decision based upon those circumstances. We live on this earth and we are subject to the various circumstances which are a part of living on earth.

**Application:** There will be times when you act with common sense and foresight and you suddenly find yourself in desperate straits—God knew about those straits in eternity past and He has a plan for you in those circumstances.

**Application:** In life, you will find out that, the most important thing for you to know is Bible doctrine. Then, when you are faced with some difficult decisions, you have a divinely constructed framework from which to make those decisions.

Back to our narrative:

Exodus 9:25a *And the hail struck throughout the whole land of Egypt,...*

The hailstorm, like the other plagues of Egypt, has to occur throughout all of Egypt. This is the only way that all the people know that this is God's power.

The destructiveness of this hail storm is repeated in a number of different ways, emphasizing just how devastating that it was. Everything which was outside was destroyed by this hailstorm.

Exodus 9:25b *...all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck...*

All of the men, all of the animals, and all of the plants were struck down by hail. The men and animals not under shelter were killed and the plants destroyed.

Exodus 9:25c *...[even] every herb of the field and broke every tree of the field.*

The hail is so destructive that it destroyed trees.

In the area in California that I grew up in, pea-sized hail was perhaps the largest that we had (which I personally witnessed). In Texas, I have heard of, but luckily have never seen, golf ball sized hail to larger, which is extremely destructive. Here we are very likely talking about grapefruit-sized hail, one or two of which would knock down and possibly kill a large animal. In terms of plants, the hail was so heavy and so continual that it that it destroyed entire trees.

The use of the word *all* here means that the greater part is referred to. This figure of speech is called synecdoche [pronounced *syn-EK-do-kee*] of the genus. A synecdoche is very similar to a metonymy. A metonymy refers to the exchanging of two similar nouns, a synecdoche refers to the exchanging of two similar ideas. There are four basic types of synecdoches: the synecdoche of the genus (where the genus is put in for a species—Exodus 9:25 23:3, 26); the synecdoche of the species (where the species is put in for the genus—Isa. 53:12 Dan. 12:2); the synecdoche of the whole (where the whole is put in for the part—Exodus 20:12 Deut. 29:5 Zech. 5:3); and the synecdoche of the part (where the part is put in for the whole—Gen. 6:12 1Sam. 19:24). Each of these is further subdivided into a half a dozen sub-categories each. The verses quoted will be covered in exegesis as we come to them.

**Moses and the Great Storm over Egypt** (a graphic); from [WordPress](#); accessed May 5, 2020.

Exodus 9:25 And the hail struck throughout the whole land of Egypt, all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck every herb of the field and broke every tree of the field.

The hailstorm has destroyed everything. Anything out in the open was destroyed or killed. The hail was so strong as to destroy trees. So this had to be baseball sized hail; or possibly larger.



Exodus 9:26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, there was no hail.



There is nothing random here. The Egyptians who have rejected God left their animals and servants out in the fields, and they were destroyed; yet the people in Goshen were not harmed as there was no hailstorm there.

As we saw, there were some Egyptians who listened to these warnings, and they brought their servants and animals in before the storm.

Some people might have a hard time with this, particularly those from huge valleys. In the California area, if it is raining relatively hard in Sacramento, then it will be raining up and down the entire valley for two hundred miles in all directions. However, in Houston, the storms can be quite specific. During a half hour drive to work, I have driven from good weather into a severe storm, back into good weather and then into a severe storm again, all within 15 miles of one another. Here we have a storm which surrounds Goshen, yet does not penetrate God's protection in Goshen. We as Christians are under the same wall of fire that Israel enjoyed here. We are God's chosen people and God protects us and often those around us during the most horrendous of crises.

Having lived in Texas for the past 40+ years, I have seen just how specific storms can be. It is not unknown here for one area to get 50 inches of rain and a community right next to it to get 30 inches of rain in a massive storm (I am thinking of Hurricane Harvey). I have driven down a freeway, where one side of the freeway was being rained upon; and the other side of the freeway was dry. This continued for about a mile of stretch down the freeway.

God did not allow the hailstorm to destroy the people or livestock in Goshen, where the Hebrew people lived. Judgment came only to those who did not believe the God of Moses. Those who trusted the Word of God among the Egyptians brought their livestock and slaves under shelter and thereby preserved them.

This hailstorm was so powerful, even Pharaoh began to rethink his position.

Exodus 9:27a [And Pharaoh sent...](#)

When this verb is used, the object is often implied. Here, Pharaoh sends messengers to Moses and Aaron.

We find this verb *to send* used over and over in this chapter. What God wants is for Pharaoh *to send* His people out of Egypt. What we have is, *Pharaoh is doing a lot of sending*, but without sending the people of God out of his land.

Exodus 9:27b [...and called for Moses and Aaron,...](#)

Perhaps there was a break in the storm. When observing the break, Pharaoh sent his messengers out to find Moses and Aaron. We do not always know how Moses and Aaron found Pharaoh each and every time; but we know on some occasions, Pharaoh simply called for them to come to him. He would send out messengers to find and summon them.

This was likely an intermittent storm, as many are. It would storm horrendously for several hours, then there would be respite. It would storm again, then an hour of quiet. During a period of quiet, Pharaoh sends for Moses and Aaron and pours out his soul to them. He confesses that he has been wrong and I think that we could safely conclude that he feels bad because he continually backs the wrong horse (that is, his own negative volition).

Exodus 9:27c ...and said to them, "I have sinned this time.

Once Moses and Aaron arrive, Pharaoh speaks to them. "I have clearly sinned against God this time," is the gist of what Pharaoh said to them.

Does Pharaoh feel this emotionally or is he just saying these words? I would not be surprised if Pharaoh's emotions are strong and deep. Remember when Judas took money for betraying Jesus, he realized that he had betrayed an innocent man, and he deeply regretted his action (to the point of committing suicide). That is clearly great emotional regret.

Exodus 9:27d The Lord is righteous, and my people and I are wicked.

Pharaoh recognizes that he has sinned against God; that he has done exactly the opposite of what God has told him to do. The problem is not just with Pharaoh, but with his people. Y<sup>e</sup>howah is righteous; and Pharaoh understands himself to be sinful, corrupt and lawless.

Interestingly enough, whereas God recognized some Egyptians as believing Him (v. 20); Pharaoh does not appear to know this, and he classifies himself and all of his people as being wicked.

I would think that Pharaoh was angry with himself to have been given these warnings about his own livestock—warnings which were given to the people of Egypt through various means<sup>5</sup>—and yet, most of them ignored the warnings. In fact, much of Egypt defied God's warnings. As a result, most of their cattle were destroyed.

For several days Pharaoh has observed the destruction of a storm as he has never seen before. He has been told time after time that such and such a plague will occur and then the plague occurs. When the Hebrews are specifically singled out as being protected from the plague, he sends his men to verify that. He is sincere, he appears to be repentant, and he is confessing his sins to Moses. He is probably quite distressed right now. But, what Pharaoh has not done yet is to put his faith in Yahweh, the God of Israel. He recognizes that Yahweh is righteous and powerful. There are millions of people, if pressed, would agree that Jesus Christ is (and they would say was) a good man, possibly even a prophet of God. Unfortunately, most of these people will spend eternity in the lake of fire, where the worm does not die (Mark 9:44, 46, 48). One's faith must be placed in Jesus Christ in order to be saved; and in the era of Moses, one must place his faith in the Revealed God, the God of Israel.

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<sup>5</sup> The people of Egypt would have to hear their options in order to respond to them, as recorded in vv. 20–21.



Exodus 9:27 And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “I have sinned this time. The Lord is righteous, and my people and I are wicked.

This hailstorm—unlike any storm ever experienced by the people of Egypt—essentially destroyed the economy of Egypt—even beyond what had happened already. The Pharaoh was able to look out and survey enough of the damage to understand this.

Pharaoh decides that there is no reason to resist the God of Moses and Aaron any further (an emotional decision which he will go back on).

Remember that God had warned that this particular plague (along with the plagues that follow) would strike Pharaoh quite personally. So this hailstorm was particularly destructive to Pharaoh’s holdings (and probably to the livestock of those closest to him).

Now, if I were to make a guess, it would be that Pharaoh had many agricultural holdings, as a result of the actions that Joseph took some 400 years previous. Pharaoh’s land and crops would have been destroyed, along with all of his livestock (and you can bet that he left his livestock and slaves outside, not heeding Moses’ warning).

However, at this point, Pharaoh is backing down—at least temporarily.

## **Lesson 110: Exodus 9:25–30**

## **Hail Part VIII**

God brought a judgment against Egypt.

Exodus 9:25 And the hail struck throughout the whole land of Egypt, all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck every herb of the field and broke every tree of the field.

Everyone and every beast left out in the field in Egypt died, being pummeled by hail.

Exodus 9:26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, there was no hail.

The Hebrew people in Goshen did not have to worry about bringing their animals inside, as there was no hail at all in Goshen.

Exodus 9:27 And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “I have sinned this time. The Lord is righteous, and my people and I are wicked.

Pharaoh is concerned about what he did; and there are many slaves and livestock which have died over the past day or so (however long the hail storm lasted). Here in Texas, we have some pretty big hailstorms; but they tend to last for minutes rather than hours. We have no idea the length of time that this hail storm lasted, but the damage is clear.

Exodus 9:28a [Entreat the Lord,...](#)

Pharaoh continues speaking to Moses. He knows that Moses and Aaron are a conduit to the Lord; and he knows that the cursing of his people can only be stopped by going to the God of Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh asks for Moses to intercede for him. He wants the hail to stop permanently.

Exodus 9:28b [...that there may be no more mighty thundering and hail, for it is enough.](#)

There is apparent a respite from the massive hail storm; and that it could all start up again. Pharaoh recognizes that the thundering and hail all comes from the God of Moses and Aaron.

By what Pharaoh says, it sounds as if this is the end of it. He says, "For it is enough." It certainly appears the Pharaoh sincerely regrets standing against Moses. Pharaoh asks for the God of Moses to end it.

Exodus 9:28c [I will let you go,..."](#)

Pharaoh here appears to agree to what God has demanded. "I will send you all out," he promises. There are no caveats at this point.

The word *to release, to send out* has a cohortative conjunction, although in some contexts expresses a wish or a desire, here its meaning is that this is being done under compulsion. Pharaoh is saying this apparently because he believes that that he has no other choice.

Exodus 9:28d [...and you shall stay no longer."](#)

He tells Moses and Aaron, "You no longer will be required to remain here in Egypt." It would appear to anyone hearing these words that Pharaoh is at the end of his rope and he recognizes God's great power. It sounds as if Pharaoh suggests a permanent exit from Egypt.

Notice the contrast between this verse and v. 16. In v. 16, God has allowed Pharaoh *to take a stand; to remain* on earth, rather than to be quietly cut off (the word used was the Hiphil perfect of 'amad). Here, Pharaoh used the Qal infinitive construct of the same word. This construction means that this action would be simultaneous with or soon after the action of the main verb (*release*) and the infinitive, with the lamed prefixed preposition denotes purpose, result, explanation, or (as in this case) an imminent event. If Pharaoh releases the people, then they no longer *stand* in Egypt. Pharaoh releasing the people carries with it the *intent* that they no longer stand in Egypt.

Exodus 9:28 [Entreat the Lord, that there may be no more mighty thundering and hail, for it is enough. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer."](#)

This sounds very much as if this storm frightened Pharaoh and that he appears still to be in a state of fear. He calls in Moses and Aaron and asks them to speak to God. He wants this storm ended.

Pharaoh asks for it to stop. He asks Moses and Aaron to speak to God and for these storms to end. Once again, he is a beaten man.

Obviously, there must be some letup in the storm, enough for Pharaoh to get a message to Moses; and the ability of Moses and Aaron to return to wherever Pharaoh is (the palace or wherever) in order to hear him out. It is very likely that all can still hear the thundering; and very possibly, he can even see the hail coming down nearby as well as flashes of lightning. So, it is clear to Pharaoh in the palace that the storm was not going to let up.

Having personally observed some moderately extreme weather, I can testify that, quite often, it can be very specific in where it strikes—so one neighbor can have had great damage, while the person next door might not have any at all.

Exodus 9:27–28 [And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “I have sinned this time. The Lord is righteous, and my people and I are wicked. Entreat the Lord, that there may be no more mighty thundering and hail, for it is enough. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer.”](#)

To summarize the past few verses: we see the clear delineation between the sons of Israel and the Egyptians. Hail devastates the land of Egypt, but leaves Goshen untouched.

It also sounds as though the Pharaoh is truly repentant and has regretted his resistance to God. He is using holy language and, very likely, he is using it out of fear. We do not know what is in Pharaoh’s mind. I take him at his word here that he is very concerned about the storm and the destruction. He will say and do anything to make it stop.

Pharaoh appears to be frightened, and he has been sent reeling by the terrific thunder and lightning and hail storm. Few things can be as frightening as a storm of this magnitude; particularly to those who have never seen such a storm before.

In California, where I was raised, we experienced 5-12 inches of rain per year where a storm was a steady day or two of rain; when I later moved to Houston, 50-60 inches of rain each year was the norm and a storm lasting for four hours, would not only deliver the same number of inches of rain as a two-day California storm, but it would be devastating and violent. After one storm in Houston, replete with downburst and wind shear, I recall one street in particular where every other house had a tree on it or in it. Around the corner from where I lived, there was a completely uprooted tree, approximately 70 foot long, laying from end to end on the very peak of a neighbor's two-story house. So, It is easy to understand how such a storm could frighten the Pharaoh of Egypt and fascinate Moses to the point where he repeats over and over again the drama of this storm (in the narrative which he wrote).

Exodus 9:29a So Moses said to him, “As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will spread out my hands to the Lord;...

Although I could further break v. 29a into 3 component parts, none of the parts really stands alone. They are all closely related to one another.

Moses again is doing the speaking here. As God wanted, Moses was doing most of the talking with Pharaoh (as he has done in Exodus 8:9–10, 26, 29). Although it is clear the Aaron did the talking before the elders of Israel (Exodus 4:30), and that he apparently spoke directly to Pharaoh in Exodus 5:1, it is not long before God has Aaron using the staff to point towards the signs that God would do (Exodus 7:9–10, 19 8:5–6 etc.). This way, Aaron is not standing there like some 3<sup>rd</sup> party with nothing to do. God, out of respect for Moses (and for Aaron), continued to allow Aaron to have a place in all of this.

Pharaoh has indicated great regret in all that he has said and done; and has admitted that he was wrong and that Moses was entirely right. So Moses responds to this. He tells Pharaoh, “I am going to go out of the city and spread out my palms towards Y<sup>e</sup>howah.” This is interesting. Can Pharaoh see this? Will Pharaoh’s eyes follow Moses and will he see this? In any case, where Moses is right now—he is not lifting up his hands to God on behalf of Pharaoh.

There is the possibility that Pharaoh will not see this apart from in the picture painted for him by Moses—and if he cannot see Moses do this, is Moses required to do this? Of course. It is not as if Pharaoh and his inner circle are the only witnesses to the things that Moses does. I would suspect that nearly all the angels of heaven are watching what is going on here. This is really a spectacular series of events.

You have no doubt seen a movie and it builds up to a series of very intense drama (perhaps emotional drama, perhaps a stunning action sequence). This is what is happening for the angels of God, who are watching all of this happen. They observe human history each and every day; but what is happening right here is quite climatic.

Many of use enjoy movies and tv series and now have the ability to see them in our own homes. If you might imagine, God’s angelic creation observes human history very much like we might watch a movie. However, they can place themselves in any point within the action, something that we cannot yet do in a movie.

Exodus 9:29b ...the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail,...

Once Moses appeals to God, the thunder and hail will both stop. The latter portion of this suggests that there will not be hail like this ever again. Moses is still speaking to Pharaoh telling him what was going to happen.

Moses puts a very specific timeline to each plague. The time frame that he gives Pharaoh is the time that it takes for him to go out of the city. Pharaoh knows about how long this

will take. When Moses does this, and spreads out his hands, the thunder, lightning and hail will all stop.

No doubt, as Moses is speaking, thunder can still be heard; flashes of lightning may be visible from where they are. There may be the sound of hail striking the palace (if that is where they all are).

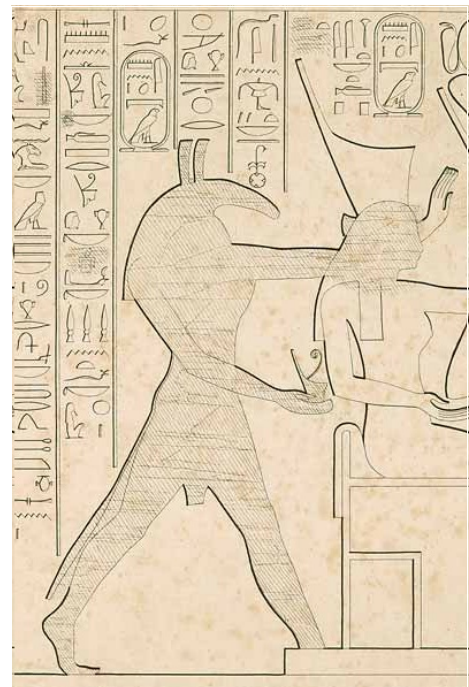
Exodus 9:29c ...that you may know that the earth is the Lord's.

God controls the thunder, lightning and the hail as well. All of this is God's domain.

Nowhere does Moses seem discouraged, nor does he seem taken in by Pharaoh's continual change of mind. A few weeks previous, Pharaoh promising to allow the Hebrews to leave and then reneging on that promise might have been a problem. By this time, Moses recognizes that God is in control of the universe and that Moses and the Hebrews are under His protection and guidance. Moses has developed a great faith in God during these experiences.

You may think that you would too, if you were faced with signs and wonders as this. However, that is not necessarily true. Aaron was with Moses the entire time, yet we will see him fail big time in the desert. He will participate in idolatry—this is the same Aaron who is an immediate witness to all of these miracles and likely still accompanies Moses to the palace to speak to Pharaoh. The Hebrews themselves—who see all of the great acts of God with their own eyes—will yet be a grumbling, faithless generation that God will have to kill off via the sin unto death. Their sons and daughters, many of whom did not witness these events, will have the spiritual wherewithal to go into the land take it. This simply tells us that we are not blank slates which are completely controlled by the events which take place in our lives.

**Seth — Egyptian God of Storms and Disorder** (a graphic); from [Wikipedia](#); accessed April 25, 2018.



No Egyptian god will come forward and deliver Egypt, as their gods are but figments of their imagination. Only God can deliver Egypt from His wrath. God is able to cause this great storm; Seth, the god of storms and disorder, can do nothing to stop God because he is nothing.



So far, Egypt was troubled by the plague of a massive hail storm. Pharaoh appears as though he is ready to give in to Moses.

### **The plague of hail and fire**

(The Phillip Medhurst Picture Torah 337); from [Wikimedia](#); accessed May 5, 2020.

Exodus 9:27–28 And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “I have sinned this time. The Lord is righteous, and my people and I are wicked. Entreat the Lord, that there may be no more mighty thundering and hail, for it is enough. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer.”



Exodus 9:29 So Moses said to him, “As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will spread out my hands to the Lord; the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, that you may know that the earth is the Lord’s.

All of the thunder and hail will cease when Moses calls for that to happen, with the purpose that Pharaoh recognize that God controls these things on earth. The plagues do not simply run their own course and disappear; God starts them up and God ends them. The things that Moses says and does make that clear.

Throughout all of these plagues, God makes it perspicuous, by the actions of Moses (and sometimes Aaron), that He controls each plague from beginning to end. That is why God requires some theatrics from Moses. This always allowed those who saw Moses, tell other people, with great enthusiasm (or with great dismay), “Moses lifts his staff into the air and...” whatever plague promised would then happen. Recall that Moses (or Aaron) did several different things: the staff was brought crashing down on the earth; it was lifted up in a specific direction, ashes were gathered and thrown into the air, etc. So, when a plague’s beginning was described by one who was there, the one telling about always started with, “And Moses...”

Exodus 9:30 But as for you and your servants, I know that you will not yet fear the Lord God.”

This time, Moses recognizes, “You are not there yet. You tell me that we can leave; you plead with me to ask God to remove this judgment; but you are not there yet.” Even



though the plague would be devastating and it would clearly do damage to that which belonged to Pharaoh and to his people, Pharaoh would continue to resist God to the end.

Moses has told Pharaoh what he is going to do, but then he adds this: “Listen, I know that you do not honestly fear God at this point; neither do your servants.”

Even I, at this point, wanted to believe Pharaoh; and to think that he is convinced. I want to take him at his word. Moses is less naive than me. However, v. 30 indicates that, despite what Pharaoh is saying, he is not even yet convinced of the power of God; and the same goes for his servants.

Exodus 9:30 **But as for you and your servants, I know that you will not yet fear the Lord God.”**

Moses has become people-smart. When he was younger, he possibly had it, but remember, he has lived in the desert for forty years with a small circle of family and acquaintances whom he knew quite well. However, since God brought him to Egypt, Moses has gotten to know Pharaoh well enough and he knows God's words well enough to realize that he is being placated. Pharaoh had not really changed his mind about God, Moses and the Hebrews; he was merely trying a new tact.

Moses can see right through him and he tells the Pharaoh as much. Visualize that this conversation is taking place in the midst of the storm, where they can still see and hear it. They may not be physically in the storm, but it can be heard by both men.

In the alternative, Pharaoh may be sincere in the moment, but Moses knows that, as soon as God removes the pressure, Pharaoh will go on back to his old used-to-be. “This sincerity and repentance means very little,” Moses might say, “If you are going to go back on your word as soon as the storm ends.”

What Moses knows is what God has told him. God has clearly indicated that Pharaoh has not yet completely given in. Moses now knows who to believe—no matter what Pharaoh says, Moses knows that God's words can be trusted.

Next—and this is quite fascinating—Moses gives a few agricultural facts.

Exodus 9:31a **Now the flax and the barley were struck,...**

What we are being told here is, the Egyptians were very organized in their growing of crops. There are 4 grains spoken of here, and the Egyptians planted them at different times to have them mature at different times of the year. This allowed them to have freshly picked and processed grain throughout much of the year.

However, this year, the flax and barley crops were ruined, because these crops were growing in the field when this storm hit Egypt.

Exodus 9:31b ...for the barley was in the head and the flax was in bud.

The barley being in the head (also translated, *ear*) means that it was nearly at maturity; and the flax was in the bud, indicating that it had just begun its cycle of producing grain. Because these plants were growing in the fields, they were completely destroyed.

Exodus 9:31 Now the flax and the barley were struck, for the barley was in the head and the flax was in bud.

The flax and barley were completely destroyed by the hail; this year's crop was gone. So there would be a considerable period of time when there would be no grain for the Egyptians, which could mean starvation for many. Ironically, in their past, Joseph, a Hebrew, has worked out a system of storing this grain so that the people did not starve.

As an aside, remember back to Exodus 5, when we saw the first meeting between Moses and Aaron and Pharaoh? We experienced that meeting from man's perspective. Pharaoh made a big deal out of withdrawing the straw from his Hebrew slaves, a key ingredient in their making of bricks. These crops—the flax and the barley—all of that straw came from these crops. The grain was preserved and the unused portion was the straw that was used for the bricks. Now, with this great hail, it was all destroyed. The plants would be destroyed before the grain could ripen.

Exodus 9:32a But the wheat and the spelt were not struck,...

There were two other grains grown in Egypt, wheat and spelt. They possibly had not even been planted yet.

Exodus 9:32b ...for they are late crops.

These two crops were planted later than the first two grains. It is possible that they were in the ground; but my guess is, they had not been planted yet; (or, if they had been planted, they may have not germinated yet).

Exodus 9:32 But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they are late crops.

The wheat and spelt (whatever that is) could be planted and harvested later. It makes sense that Pharaoh and others considered this. First thing on their minds was, no doubt, food for the country (and themselves, of course).

Apparently, the barley comes in first, then the flax, and after that, the wheat and spelt. These are 4 kinds of grain which may or may not match the names given to them in the English. The Egyptians worked out a timetable on when to plant these various grains. The idea, of course, is to provide there freshest grain for the longest period of time possible; as well as to spread out the work required to grow each grain.

Modern farmers do this all of the time, so that they are harvesting their crops according to when they planted them.

Exodus 9:31–32 *Now the flax and the barley were struck, for the barley was in the head and the flax was in bud. But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they are late crops.*

What we read here is an interesting aside. This reveals another area where Moses has great knowledge. Moses was raised up in the palace of Pharaoh, and he would have had a first-rate education. This verse suggests that his knowledge of things agricultural was vast.

I know that corn is in the field and it is planted, it grows, and then it is picked. I know what a corn stalk looks like. I also suspect that there are different kinds of corn which mature more slowly. But that is all that I know about corn or any other vegetable that I eat. Moses, on the other hand, can distinguish the vegetables from their plants, he knows when they ripen, when one is in ear and the others are in flower and when some are just beginning to grow. Moses did not have to even go out to a field to observe this. As training to become the king of Egypt, Moses had an exceptionally wide range of knowledge (something I have previously discussed). He has spent years at the University of Egypt under the very best of private tutors (and, I believe that Moses occasionally had in classes about the people of Israel). Knowledge of the crops would have been central to his study as this was a major part of the economic backbone of Egypt's economy.

Furthermore, this is just one branch of knowledge that he possessed. He was very well-educated in many different fields.

As an aside, Zodhiates Old Testament tells us, that, spelt (or rye) was a wild wheat which, on the one hand was more edible than barley; but on the other, inferior to wheat. Its harvest came after the harvest of the barley and it was difficult to separate it from its chaff. It was from this grain that the Egyptians made their basic bread.

Exodus 9:33a *So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh...*

What we read here in the NKJV and the Hebrew are somewhat different. This verse begins *and so goes Moses...* This is followed by 2 prepositions, *min* (מִן) [pronounced *mihn*] (Strong's #4480 BDB #577) and *ʿim* (עִם) [pronounced *geem*] (Strong's #5973 BDB #767). Together, these two prepositions mean, *from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from among, from the possession of, from the custody of, from the house of, from the vicinity of, out of the power of*. This is followed by *Pharaoh*, so this gives us, *and so Moses goes out from being with Pharaoh*. Then there is another word, *ʾeth* (אֶת) [pronounced *ayth*], which is the sign of the direct object. It is usually not translated; but when it is translated, it is rendered, *to, toward*. Strong's #853 BDB #84. So, despite what your Bible reads, so far, this verse would literally be translated, *Moses went out from Pharaoh towards the city*.

Moses leaves Pharaoh, but it appears that he walks towards the city and not away from it.

Also, I am not really certain exactly what city we are speaking of. However, it is quite normal for the city of Pharaoh to be the capitol city. It sounds as though Pharaoh's palace was not in the middle of the city, but on the outskirts (again, I am assuming that this is where Moses and Pharaoh met during the storm).

Exodus 9:33b ...and spread out his hands to the Lord;...

Moses walks towards the city so that people there will observe his actions. I would suppose that Moses is a reasonably well-known figure in Egyptian society by this time. So, when he stretches out his hands toward Y<sup>e</sup>howah, this would be observed by the people there.

The Jewish people were very demonstrative, and part of the reason for this is, sometimes information was conveyed from a distance. For instance, Moses might hold up his staff towards the heavens. Now, people can see this from a distance further away that people can hear Moses.

Exodus 9:33c ...then the thunder and the hail ceased,...

Now, quite obviously, Moses and Aaron are not being harmed by the thunder and hail. There may have even been a respite in the hail or there may simply be no hail around where Moses and Aaron stood. However, when Moses raises up his hands, then all of the thunder, lightning and hail stop. Let me suggest again that this is very theatric and that the cessation would have been sudden.

Exodus 9:33d ...and the rain was not poured on the earth.

There are several ways to understand this: (1) it had not rained at all during this particular plague; or (2) it had rained, but that was not the destructive part of the storm, and, therefore, not really discussed; or (3) this speaks of the hail raining down. I think that (2) is the correct understanding here, as hail is mentioned separately.

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<b>Lesson 112: Exodus 9:33–34</b>	<b>The Hail Ceases; Part X; Doctrine of the Heart</b>
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Egypt was struck by a hail storm as it had never seen before; and this hailstorm killed any living thing left out in the field; and destroyed Egypt's crops.

Exodus 9:33 So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh and spread out his hands to the Lord; then the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain was not poured on the earth.

Normally, I do not quibble with the NKJV translation. However, here, I would instead translate this...

Exodus 9:33 Moses went out from Pharaoh towards the city. He stretched out his hands towards Jehovah and, as a result, the thunder and hail ceased. No rain has been poured out on the earth. (Kukis paraphrase)

The way that I read and understand this is, Moses has gone to a more public setting in order to raise up his hands to God (which is the reason why I previously went into detail about the Hebrew at this point). Moses would be seen by many to petition God; with the result that the inclement weather suddenly stopped.

I find it interesting that Moses and Aaron are always before Pharaoh, in one place or another, when they bring on the plague; but they seem to go quite a distance away in order for the plague to be removed. I can only guess as to why that is. My first conjecture is, Moses and Aaron cannot do this in the palace, as that would have been considered to be a corrupted structure, from which God would not hear Moses. Or, perhaps some credit would have been given to the itinerant religious illusionists that Pharaoh kept on hand. Or, perhaps Goshen was close and Moses needed to commune with God from Goshen? In this case, right now, it appears as though Moses acts in or near the city (I have assumed it to be the capitol city of Egypt). This would place the palace on the outskirts of the city (assuming that this particular meeting took place in the palace, which seems logical).

Just as Moses had promised, he spread out his hands towards heaven, and the thunder and hail ceased. I believe that the intent was for many in Egypt to see this. Obviously, this horrendous storm would not have been on Moses and Aaron, no matter where they were; and it is possible that they brought with them the only calm in that storm. Therefore, people could still hear the thunder and see the lightning; but it was clear that deadly hailstones were not coming down where Moses and Aaron were. Making a few logical assumptions like this would suggest that, as Moses walked nearer to the city, that the calm of the storm remained with him and around him; and people came out to see what was going on, when they found themselves in the midst of this calm as well. They would have seen Moses raise up his arms towards the heavens, and for the storm all around them to completely and suddenly cease. Moses was clearly connected to the beginning of each plague; but here, he is seen by many as the one who ends the plague (obviously, Moses does not end any plague; I am simply speaking of what people could see).

Moses called upon God to end the storm; and God did. From the safety of his palace, Pharaoh could no longer hear the storm; but it left behind utter devastation.

Moses knows the drill. He simply appeals to Y<sup>e</sup>howah and God removes the plague of the storm forever from the land of Egypt. We know what will happen next: Pharaoh will renege on his promise to Moses.

Although we are not told this here, angels are also observing every move that Moses makes and watching this incredible drama of God's deliverance of the Hebrews. In like fashion, the angels also watch the unfolding of the drama of our lives; they see our spiritual successes and our many failures. Our lives are very instructive to the angels (elect and fallen).

At this point, we have come to the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> plague. Moses has just reached out to God to remove it (v. 33).

Exodus 9:34a *And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had ceased,...*

*Ceased* is in the perfect tense. The storms have stopped pretty much for good throughout all Egypt.

Pharaoh, like everyone, could hear and then see that the rain, hail and thunder had all ceased. Logically, Pharaoh remained in his palace during the storm until he could hear that it stopped.

Pharaoh also sees a pattern. He notices that when he talks to Moses, the plague is removed and it is never reinstated (I am assuming that he can see that pattern). He was upset and sincere-sounding at first, but now, in retrospect, he realizes that Moses had requested that God stop the storm forever and Y<sup>e</sup>howah has. So Pharaoh will now revert back to his negative volition.

Exodus 9:34b *...he sinned yet more;...*

Pharaoh sins again; he returns to the exercise of his negative volition. Pharaoh has no personal character; he does not stand by his word. He sins and hardens his heart; and his servants follow suit. Likely there was even a discussion among themselves after the storm had abated and they decided to go back on their word.

Just as before, when the pressure was removed, Pharaoh went back to his old way of thinking, which was to sin against God. For every plague so far, when the plague was removed, Pharaoh turned against God once again, taking back whatever he had promised.

Exodus 9:34c *...and he hardened his heart, he and his servants.*

We do not have a clear subject here; and it is possible that some understand God to be the subject. However, Pharaoh is spoken of here twice as the subject of the verbs. *Pharaoh saw...and he sinned again* clearly refer to Pharaoh. Therefore, we would understand Pharaoh to be the one to harden his own heart.

*To harden* is the Hiphil (causative) imperfect of *kâbêd* (כָּבַד) [pronounced *kaw<sup>b</sup>-VADE*], which means, *to make heavy, to be oppressive; make dull, make unresponsive*. Strong's #3513 BDB #457.

Pharaoh had a cabinet of advisors. Although we do not know the exact inner dynamic between Pharaoh and his cabinet (nor do we need to), it appears that Pharaoh and his advisors were in agreement with him. They are not going to heed the words of God; they are not going to send the people of Israel out of Egypt. The heart of Pharaoh is hardened and his servants agree with him, making hard (*dull, unresponsive*) their hearts as well.



Whether some discussion between Pharaoh and his servants takes place or not, we don't know.

Exodus 9:34 *And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet more; and he hardened his heart, he and his servants.*

Back in v. 28, Pharaoh appeared to be a beaten and broken man. He could not resist what God required; but, as soon as the pressure was off, he strengthened his resolve against Moses and against God. Furthermore, this was not just Pharaoh, but those who were with him also strengthened themselves against God. It appears that they encouraged one another (which would explain why Pharaoh's servants are mentioned here).

Perhaps the interaction was something like this: "It's over, we have survived that storm." "Yeah, and we're stronger for it." "What more can Moses do?" "Nothing, I say." "Our crops will come back—stronger than ever." (Obviously, I am speculating here.)

They refused to respect or even recognize God's power. The hearts of those working in the palace were hardened as well.

The servants of Pharaoh are mentioned nearly two dozen times while these plagues are taking place, but this is the first time God the Holy Spirit records the fact that their hearts are hardened. It is quite likely that they had been siding with Pharaoh all along, but their volition is not mentioned until now. Again, I believe what is being implied is, Pharaoh and his servants encouraged one another to go against God.

Exodus 9:35a *So the heart of Pharaoh was hard;...*

Pharaoh hardens his own heart here. This simply means that he strengthens his negative volition against God. The verb here is different from the verb in v. 34. It is the Qal imperfect of *châzaq* (חָזַק) [pronounced *khaw-ZAHK*], which means, *to be strong, to be firm, to strengthen*. Strong's #2388 BDB #304.

Let's just take a moment and examine the heart:

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This is a brief doctrine of the heart in order to ready ourselves to study the Hardness of Pharaoh's heart prior to the exodus.

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## The Heart

1. The Greek word is καρδία and the Hebrew word is *lêb* בל or *lêbâb* בבל. Both words mean *heart, the literal physical heart*, the organ inside of us. However, these words are never used to actually refer to the literal heart in the Bible, despite that being their fundamental meaning.
  2. When we come across the word *heart* in the Bible, it refers to the unseen part of our person.
  3. The heart can have a negative attitude toward God. Psalm 101:5 uses the
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# The Heart

- phrase "...arrogant heart." This is a heart in opposition to God.
4. The heart can feel emotion. "My heart has become smitten like grass (or, herbage) and has withered away." (Psalm 102:4a) "Wine, which makes my heart glad." (Psalm 104:15). In Acts 14:17b, we have the phrase, "...satisfy your heart with food and gladness." Therefore, our hearts can be satisfied with food and emotional stimulation.
  5. God knows our hearts (Psalm 44:21 Luke 16:15); He examines our hearts (1Thess. 2:4 Jer. 12:3); He tries or tests our hearts (1Chron. 29:17); He prepares our heart (1Chron. 29:18), God opens our heart (Acts 16:14), God enlightens our heart (Deut. 29:4 Isa. 6:10 60:5 66:14 Matt. 13:15); and finally, God creates a new heart within us (Psalm 51:10 Ezek. 36:26).
  6. Creating a new heart means...
    - a. The person has just believed in Jesus Christ (or in the Revealed God), so God creates a new heart in him.
    - b. What is happening is, God removes the scar tissue from the soul and activates our human spirit. (Scar tissue is a build up of negative volition against God—called *hardness of heart* in the Bible; and the human spirit is the potential repository for Bible doctrine so that we might commune with God.)
    - c. Salvation marks a *start-over* time, where the new believer begins his life anew, as he has been spiritually reborn. The new believer can choose to return to the sins which caused the build up of scar tissue and build up new scar tissue. Or, the new believer can also take advantage of this new state (having the scar tissue removed from his heart) and leave behind whatever was harming his soul in the past (for instance, alcohol, drugs, sexual proclivities, materialism lust, etc.).
    - d. Salvation is truly a point at which a person may change their lives entirely, and some do. This is not, however, necessarily a personality change (unless one's personality was tied directly to his sins).
  7. Our hearts are capable of thinking or of having thoughts (Heb. 4:12).
  8. Our hearts can be strengthened and we can take courage in our hearts (this is a command, in fact in Psalm 27:14).
  9. We are fools to trust our own heart (Prov. 28:26). This means to revert back to human viewpoint thinking.
  10. Without going into a full blown examination of the doctrine of the heart, suffice it to say that the heart is immaterial. The heart does our thinking, it emotes, it has a relationship to God (that is, God is most interested in what occurs in our hearts and He has a direct impact upon our heart). The heart has volition or will; it can operate in a moral sphere (positive or negative); it can grieve and it can be broken. It appears to be the entire unseen function of our lives, directly related to our body and physical needs, but outside the realm of the physical. What we do not see is the most important aspect of the human experience. The thinking and emotions of the heart can cause some sort of physical reaction or response;

# The Heart

but it is the heart which causes the physical change.

And Pharaoh's heart was strengthened; [so] neither would he let the children of Israel go, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke by the hand of Moses. [Exodus 9:35]

**Pharaoh's Heart Through the Plagues** (a graphic); from [Slide Player](#); accessed May 5, 2020. Bear in mind that there are primarily two different words translated *harden* in every one of these cases; and that these words are *not* translated *harden* apart from this section of the book of Exodus.

## *Pharaoh's Heart Through the Plagues*

- **Aaron's Rod** – *"Pharaoh's heart grew hard" (7:13).*
- **Water To Blood** – *"Pharaoh's heart grew hard" (7:22).*
- **Frogs** – *"he hardened his heart and did not heed them" (8:15).*
- **Lice** – *"Pharaoh's heart grew hard" (8:19).*
- **Flies** – *"Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also" (8:32).*
- **Death of Livestock** – *"the heart of Pharaoh became hard" (9:7).*
- **Boils** – *"the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh" (9:12).*
- **Hail** – *"he hardened his heart" (9:34).*
- **Locusts** – *"the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart" (10:20).*
- **Darkness** – *"the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart" (10:27).*

I hate to have a 3 week lesson, but this is quite intense and it will take time for it to gel in your thinking.

Exodus 9:33 Moses went out from Pharaoh towards the city. He stretched out his palms to Y<sup>e</sup>howah and (as a result) the thunder and the hail ceased. No rain had been poured on the earth. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

For whatever reason, Moses did not remove a plague while standing before Pharaoh; but the plagues were begun when Moses and Aaron stood before Pharaoh (which event did not always take place in the royal palace).

What Moses does here is theatric and no doubt seen by many people. The inclement weather came to a sudden end and Moses is seen by the people as the one bringing that to pass (God always works through intermediaries).

Exodus 9:34 And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet more; and he hardened his heart, he and his servants. (NKJV)

We like to think that man, when faced with what must be true, would give in and say, "I believe." But this is not what happened. Pharaoh, when the inclement weather was gone, hardened his heart; and so did his servants.

Politics is a wonderful illustration of this. People of one party look at the presidential candidate for the other party (I write this in 2020) and see a plethora of negative aspects. Sometimes, we wonder, *why can't the other side see these things as clearly as I can?* Yet, those of the other party can reasonably wonder the exact same thing about us. And, many times, it is not about fundamental moral issues that the voter cannot get over. For instance, I have heard many people speak about Donald Trump's adulteries, as if this is the greatest betrayal of all. However, one of the most beloved presidents of the Democrat party is Bill Clinton, who had multiple affairs, before, during and (likely) after his presidency. Republicans are supposed to be known for fiscal conservatism, but a balanced budget was delivered up by Bill Clinton (credit also Dick Morris and Newt Gingrich); whereas, President Trump signed a series of irresponsible spending bills that would have made any tax and spend democrat proud. Finding examples of hypocrisy from both parties is perhaps the easiest thing in the world; and yet, if Charley Brown has always voted Democrat, then he is probably going to vote Democrat again in 2020, despite all of the undemocratic things which have already taken place in the Democrat party (and will take place before the election<sup>6</sup>). And if Lucy Van Pelt has always voted Republican, then it is equally likely that she will continue to vote Republican, even though the amount of spending to take place under a President Trump has been breathtaking. That spending is anything but conservative.

Exodus 9:35a So the heart of Pharaoh was hard;...

Here we see the actual mechanics of the "hardening" of Pharaoh's heart. When Pharaoh's heart is made dull [and heavy}, this is what we understand as the hardening of his heart.

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<sup>6</sup> Despite the popular vote for Joe Biden, there is almost no way he can be the final candidate for the Democrat party—I write this in May of 2020.

This is a synonym for scar tissue. This is a build-up of negative volition toward God and God's plan. The strengthening of his heart is the power and fortitude to carry out its desires and wishes. It is Pharaoh who has sinned and has made himself negative toward God. God has both provided him the opportunity to express this negative volition and, on occasion, the strength when necessary to express this negative volition. Pharaoh's negative volition is a constant; however, he is not always able to express it. When the pressure is too great, Pharaoh relents.

The physical heart is a muscle and muscles are built up and made stronger by using them. For instance, if you are a jogger, you strengthen your heart by jogging. Heart-pumping exercise builds up the strength of the heart; just as Pharaoh's negative volition is built up and strengthened by using it.

To understand the building up of negative volition, consider some of the various addictions of man: alcohol, drugs, pornography, various sexual addictions. The first time a person takes a drug, he probably enjoys the experience and wants to repeat it. However, the 5<sup>th</sup> time or the 10<sup>th</sup> time or the 50<sup>th</sup> time that he uses that drug, they are addicted (psychologically and/or physically). They need to have that drug as an integral part of their lives at some point, even it is a drug that they say they can stop taking anytime that they want to. (I recall speaking with a drug user about this, and he told me, "I can stop anytime that I want to." "Why don't you stop?" I asked him. "Because I don't want to.") The same is true of the exercise of negative volition against God. When it is used over and over again, it is strengthened.

**Illustration:** Another way to view this is, consider the previous presidential election which took place; or, if there is an election coming up, consider it. Very unpleasant revelations have come out concerning one or both candidates. Sometimes, these revelations are very similar to those revealed about a previous candidate from the other party.

**Illustration:** In 2016, a candidate was thought to have committed a very unsavory act—something which he himself appeared to admit to privately (I do not believe that any accuser came forth). A very big deal was made out of this and he was given many unpleasant nicknames based upon this act. In 2020, the presidential candidate for the other party finds himself accused of doing the exact same thing, by a very credible accuser. These people who cried out fervently about the first candidate are strangely mute regarding their own candidate. They have simply dug themselves in deeper support of their own candidate (not everyone but a considerable number).

**Illustration:** Politics is such a wonderful illustration. There was a Supreme Court candidate up for confirmation, and he had an accuser of really terrible things which he allegedly had done 30 or 40 years previous. People of the opposite party (those who opposed this man's nomination) began using the slogan, *believe all women*. Then, two years later, their own candidate is facing accusations from a woman who appears to be far, far more credible than the accuser of the Supreme Court nominee. Suddenly, that slogan *believe all women* has disappeared from their basic set of mantras.

I have given these as they stand out to me; but members of both parties are quite guilty of so many things. But supporters of one party just build up tremendous opposition to the other party, and nothing is going to change their minds. This is where Pharaoh was; he could be beat down by any given plague/judgment; but once that plague was gone, he would strengthen himself against God and build up scar tissue against God. Think of Pharaoh as a die hard supporter of one political party, and God being the presidential candidate for the other political party. There is no convincing Pharaoh of God's power, justice or love.

Pharaoh had some specific negative ideas about the God of the Hebrew people (he would have been aware of this God for much of his life). No doubt, he believed their God to be weak because, the Hebrew people are slaves and the Egyptian people are their rulers. Now, at this point in time, the mistaken notion that the God of the Hebrews is weak—that has been clearly disproven. Pharaoh has witnessed the power of the Revealed God over and over again; and yet, he continues to resist the God of Moses.

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R. B. Thieme, Jr. originated this doctrine and the related vocabulary. I took the work of Pastor James H. Rickard (which is based upon Bob's work and Rickard's own personal study) and added in the work of Maranatha Church and then made some minor changes and additions of my own.

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Unless otherwise noted, the ESV; capitalized is used below.

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At the very end of this doctrine, I have tacked on a vocabulary list related to this doctrine. You will be able to jump back and forth between the vocabulary words and the doctrine.

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### **Doctrine of Scar Tissue and Blackout of the Soul**

1. [Scar tissue](#) of the [soul](#), also known as [hardness of the heart](#), is the result of continuous resistance to God and prolonged residence inside Satan's [Cosmic System](#). Scar tissue is what develops on the soul as a result of negative volition toward God and/or [Bible doctrine](#). The [right lobe](#) becomes hardened toward God.
  2. There are both Greek and Hebrew words which may be reasonably translated *scar tissue*. I will give only the New Testament (Greek) vocabulary:
    - a. Feminine noun: pōrōsis (πώρωσις) [pronounced *POH-roh-sis*], which means, 1) *the covering with a callus*; 2) *obtrusiveness of mental discernment, dulled perception*; 3) *the mind of one has been blunted*; 3a) *of stubbornness, obduracy; hardened*. Strong's #4457. Mark 3:5 Rom. 11:25 Eph. 4:18
    - b. Verb: pōroō (πωρόω) [pronounced *pon-ROH-oh*], which means, 1) *to cover with a thick skin, to harden by covering with a callus*; 2) *metaphorically*; 2a) *to make the heart dull*; 2b) *to grow hard, callous, become dull, lose the power of understanding*. Pōrōsis is the substantive cognate of pōroō. Strong's #4456. Mark 6:52 8:17 John 12:40 Rom. 11:7 2Cor. 3:14
    - c. Noun: sklêrotēs (σκληρότης) [pronounced *sklay-ROHT-ace*], which means, 1) *hard, hardness, petrified*; 2) *obstinacy, stubbornness*. Strong's #4643.
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## Doctrine of Scar Tissue and Blackout of the Soul

- Rom.2:5
- d. Verb: sklêrunô (σκληρύνω) [pronounced *sklay-ROO-no*], which means, 1) *to make hard, to harden, to petrify*; 2) *metaphorically*; 2a) *to render obstinate, stubborn*; 2b) *to be hardened*; 2c) *to become obstinate or stubborn*. Strong's #4645. Rom.9:18 Heb. 3:8,13, 15 4:7 Acts 19:9
  - e. Noun: sklêrokardia (σκληροκαρδία) [pronounced *sklay-rok-ar-DEE-ah*], which means, *hardness of heart, a hard heart*. Strong's #4641. Matt.19:18 Mark 10:5
  - f. Adjective/noun: sklêrotrachêlos (σκληροτραχηλος) [pronounced *sklay-rot-RAKH-ah-los*], which means, 1) *stiff-necked*; 2) *stubborn, headstrong, obstinate*; 3) *bull headed, stiff necked*. Strong's #4644. Acts 7:51
  - g. The previous 4 words are all cognates of one another.
3. The soul has “lungs” for the breathing in and out of the Word of God, which is inhaled and exhaled as Bible Doctrine (or, divine viewpoint). The Pneum. (Who is God the Holy Spirit), breathes Bible doctrine into your human spirit as you learn the Word of God.
- a. 2Tim 3:16-17, **All Scripture is inspired by God (God-breathed) and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.**
  - b. Eph 4:23, **And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind.**
  - c. We breathe in Bible doctrine and we exhale [divine viewpoint](#). We breathe in cosmic system thinking and we exhale [human viewpoint](#).
  - d. When you have a soul filled with Bible doctrine, you will be able to recognize cosmic system thinking, whether it is on the news, on a late night show, on a television series, in an editorial, in the speech of a politician, or as part of the curriculum in public school or college.
4. The soul has two “lungs”, which will hereafter be called the left bank and the right bank. Each lung has five breathing apparatus that accompany the five parts of man's soul: volition, mentality, self consciousness, conscience and emotions. The left bank is used for the inhale of Bible Doctrine. The right lobe is used for the exhale of [epignosis doctrine](#) (Bible doctrine which you have believed). The [old sin nature](#) is the distorter of the soul but is not in the soul. With Bible Doctrine the old sin nature is frustrated, without Bible Doctrine the old sin nature has greater freedom to act (however, do not think of the sin nature as being an entity over which you have not control; we choose to place ourselves under the control of the sin nature. Rom. 6:6 7:7-18).
- a. We are first exposed to [gnosis information](#). Ideally speaking, this is accurate Bible doctrine taught by a well-qualified pastor-teacher. Although there are other ways to take in doctrine, this is how 90–99% of believers should be taking in doctrine.
  - b. We *inhale* this information, which means we listen and we understand it. If this is accurate Bible doctrine, the Holy Spirit helps to make it understandable to us.

## Doctrine of Scar Tissue and Blackout of the Soul

- c. Then we choose to believe this information, which converts it into epignosis.
  - d. So, ideally speaking, correct information is presented to us as gnosis (= *knowledge*); and we believe that so it becomes epignosis (= *over and above knowledge*).
  - e. If we do not believe the Bible doctrine that we hear, then it is of no benefit to us, even if we remember the principles taught (theoretically, it is possible to hear accurate information, not believe it, but set it aside and believe it later).
  - f. Other methods of spiritual activity do not cause a person to grow. For instance, giving, witnessing, doing things around the church; reading your Bible, listening to inspirational sermons or music on the radio. You do not grow by means of any of this stuff; and the Bible never associates these things with causing spiritual growth.
  - g. Although the left bank and the right bank of the soul sounds rather complex, you simply breathe in the truth (Bible doctrine) and you exhale divine viewpoint in various situations and circumstances in your life.
  - h. Parts a, b and c above are called *Operation Z* by R. B. Thieme, Jr.
5. The left bank is designed for the inhale of correct information about God. Our response to that information affects our relationship with God.
- a. 2Tim 2:15 **Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.**
  - b. James 1:5 **If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.** This does not mean that God mystically imparts knowledge to us; but that He uses a specific process by which divine knowledge is provided for us (this usually involves the classroom of the local church where the information is taught by a well-qualified pastor-teacher).
6. The right bank is designed for relationship with mankind. The right bank is the exhale towards man. 2Cor 5:20 **Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.** (Our ambassador function is our exhale towards man) James 2:8 **If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well.**
7. Scar tissue is built up on the left bank of the soul by means of neglecting Bible Doctrine or becoming negative towards God's Word. This automatically switches on the "mataiotes" (emptiness or vanity). By this negative volition, a vacuum of the soul is created, into which kosmos evil (Satan's system of thinking) and arrogant words of vanity flow. Human viewpoint and cosmic system thinking are sucked into the soul that rejects God's Word. Eph. 4:17–19
8. The entire process just described is found in Eph. 4:17–19: Syndein's (not his real name) notes of R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s translation (with some editing) are given below:
- a. Eph. 4:17 **Therefore I communicate this and I insist** (nose to nose with them) **and because of the Lord, that you no longer walk** (enjoy a lifestyle)

## Doctrine of Scar Tissue and Blackout of the Soul

even as the gentiles (that is, unbelievers) walk, in the vacuum (the lack of divine viewpoint in the soul; that the emptiness—or the vacuum—of the soul then sucks in false doctrine) of their mind (left lobe of soul),

- i. First of all, Paul is writing here to believers, not to unbelievers. This tells us that believers are also susceptible to scar tissue of the soul.
  - ii. Paul warns these believers not to walk as the gentiles walk. Paul sometimes uses the word *gentiles* to refer to unbelieving gentiles. Many of the believers in Ephesus would have been gentiles, but they would have understood Paul's vocabulary.
  - iii. They are not to live or have a lifestyle in the emptiness (or vacuum) of their souls. When they reject the truth of Bible doctrine (and believers reject the truth of Bible doctrine all of the time), their souls act like a vacuum, sucking in false doctrine.
- b. Eph. 4:18 **And they were darkened** (blackout of the right lobe of the soul - where the rate of forgetfulness exceeds memory) **in the left lobe** (noús (voús) [pronounced *noose*], which is translated *mind, thinking*; and it refers to them being distracted in their way of thinking) **and having been alienated** (excluded) **from the life of God because of ignorance which is in them, because of the hardening** (of their souls; this is callousness, petrification, which we know as scar tissue of their right lobes). See Exodus 9:16 Mark 3:5 Romans 9:17 2 Corinthians 3:14
- i. Eph. 4:18 tells us that *they* have been *darkened*, but it is the *souls* of such believers which become darkened.
  - ii. The believer can take in divine viewpoint (Bible doctrine) and they can take in human viewpoint. This is why consistent teaching from a well-qualified pastor is so important. You are exposed to human viewpoint virtually your every waking hour. You need something to combat that with, which is the teaching of the Word of God.
  - iii. It does not take an hour of doctrine to neutralize an hour of human viewpoint. An hour of Bible doctrine with your listening, exhibiting positive signals, can not only neutralize a full day's worth of human viewpoint, but you will also grow spiritually on that *spiritual diet*. We must eat enough food to cover the burning of calories in any given day. By eating the proper amount of food, we continue to grow and advance physically. Just as a child must eat more calories than he burns; so the growing believer must consume more doctrine than he needs at any given time.
  - iv. *Their souls become darkened* means the soul becomes covered in scar tissue.
  - v. The **ignorance which is in them** refers to incorrect human viewpoint which is in their souls.
  - vi. Lack of Bible doctrine in the soul is key to the build up of scar tissue. This is the result of negative volition. Your soul can embrace human viewpoint and develop scar tissue, or it can

## Doctrine of Scar Tissue and Blackout of the Soul

- embrace divine viewpoint, which causes you to grow spiritually. That is the daily choice of every believer.
- vii. Let's say you are awake 16 hours each day—much of that time is spent listening to human viewpoint in a variety of ways (what is on your radio, what is on television, hearing what your friends think when they feel that they need to tell you, reading what is on the internet, hearing or reading what various politicians say, hearing what is being taught in the classroom, reading clever facebook memes). It is a good idea to counteract all of this with at least one hour of Bible teaching by a well-qualified pastor-teacher. A reasonable amount of divine viewpoint teaching on that day will help to counteract all of the false information that you are being fed. There are entire television programs devoted to changing your way of thinking; their intent is for you to develop the cosmic system viewpoint.
  - c. Eph. 4:19 **Who because they having become calloused by scar tissue of the soul and they have given themselves over to licentiousness** (lasciviousness, debauchery, unrestrained thoughts or actions), **resulting in the practice of every kind of immorality and with greediness and insatiable lust** (lust in these categories - sexual, arrogance, power, intoxication, money).
    - i. The person suffering from blackout of the soul might turn themselves over to lascivious behavior (this is one trend of the old sin nature).
    - ii. A person whose soul is covered with scar tissue will often give in to the lust of his own soul; which can be sexual lust, arrogance lust, intoxication lust, approbation lust, materialism lust, and power lust. Every person has a different lust pattern; and a person with power lust is not superior or inferior to a person with sexual lust.
9. Scar tissue may be built up on the right bank of the soul (lungs) by:
- a. Adultery; Prov 6:32 Eph 4:19.
  - b. Mental Attitude Sins: bitterness, pride, jealousy, hate, vindictiveness (revenge), implacability (hostile anger), guilty, worrying, etc; 1John 2:9, 11.
  - c. Drunkenness and drugs cause scar tissue. (There is nothing wrong with alcohol but it is wrong to drink to excess, meaning, to the point of drunkenness). Rom 13:13 Eph 5:18.
  - d. Giving into one's lust pattern; by satiating one's lusts.
  - e. Have you ever spoken to someone who is filled with human viewpoint? You try to speak to them of the importance of divine establishment in human society and they harp on and on about fairness, economic justice and socialism? That is a soul which has been covered in scar tissue. When you wonder why logic and reason have virtually no affect on such a person, it is because they have scar tissue covering their souls (something that both believers and unbelievers can have). They are

## Doctrine of Scar Tissue and Blackout of the Soul

unable to breathe in divine establishment thinking at this point.

10. Scar tissue is built up when you have emotional revolt of the soul, which is when your emotions revolt. Your emotions are supposed to be the appreciator of the soul. Some music or a particular scene in a movie may stir your emotions; and you feel good to have heard the music or to have seen that movie. However, when your emotions attempt to control your soul and your volition, you are in emotional revolt of the soul. As a result, any Bible doctrine stored in the heart of your soul shuts down. Bible doctrine circulating in your soul—affecting your volition, your conscience and your norms and standards—should be the ultimate determiner of your soul. You should function according to God's thinking. Under emotional revolt, your emotions begin to run your soul instead of responding to the doctrine in your thinking. Emotions contain no doctrine and do not have conscience. When there is a conflict between divine viewpoint and how you feel, divine viewpoint is correct, and the way that you feel about something is wrong. If you have consistent negative volition toward Bible Doctrine it is inevitable you will have emotional revolt of the soul and you will be miserable. As a result you no longer inhale or exhale Bible Doctrine in either the left or right lobe. I have seen this with my own eyes in people that I have known. The more that they resist doctrine, the more their emotions rule over their souls and the more unhappy they become.
11. Scar tissue can build up on the soul of the believer as well as the unbeliever. All that is necessary is the rejection of the Word of God either post-salvation for the believer or pre-salvation for the unbeliever towards the gospel of Jesus Christ. Again, both believers and unbelievers can suffer from scar tissue and from emotional revolt of the soul.
  - a. 2Peter 2:22 **It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A dog returns to its own vomit," and, "A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire".**
    - i. Blackout of the soul and scar tissue of the soul combine to reject all forms of truth. "Vomit" in today's society might include: socialism, communism, the welfare state, redistribution of wealth, social equality, social justice and being saved by anything except faith in Christ.
    - ii. At one time, you might understand the socialism is evil; that the welfare state is problematic, and that redistribution of wealth destroys the work ethic of a society. (This is not to say that we ignore the helpless members of society.)
    - iii. What Peter is describing is, a person understands all of the problems related to socialism, the welfare state and redistribution of wealth. However, when the unbeliever is exposed to the gospel (or the believer is exposed to a doctrine that they do not like), they reject it.
    - iv. Oft times, after rejecting divine viewpoint, that person (believer or unbeliever) goes back to the things which they have previously



## Doctrine of Scar Tissue and Blackout of the Soul

- rejected (called *vomit* in this analogy) and searches through it to find things that they might now accept.
- v. In other words, there are totally false concepts which the person has rejected in the past, but now they consider these false concepts, because they have begun to build up scar tissue on the soul.
  - vi. Have you ever known a person who understands many principles of divine establishment; and then, suddenly, they start to lean in to progressivism? That is a person who has returned to his vomit.
- b. John 12:40 **He has blinded their eyes** (blackout of the soul), **He has hardened their heart** (right lobe), [= scar tissue of the soul], **lest they should see with their eyes, and perceive by means of their heart** (right lobe), **and receive conversion, and I restore them** (Israel as a client nation).
- i. The person experiencing blackout of the soul become blinded to truth. The mechanics of this is what we are studying: the buildup of scar tissue on the soul.
  - ii. If this scar tissue could be removed, then they could see with their eyes was is honest and true.
  - iii. When a person begins to turn away from their life where they are maladjusted to God, God will restore them.
- c. 2Thess. 2:10-12, **...and with all deception of maladjustment** (rejection of Jesus Christ) **for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, so as to be saved. And for this reason, God sends them a deluding influence** (scar tissue of the soul leading to blackout of the soul), **so that they might believe a lie, in order that they might all be condemned, [those] who do not believe the truth, but take pleasure in unrighteousness.** That is, they choose to think, speak and do exactly the opposite of what God's Word would tell a person to think, speak and act.
- i. The person who has rejected Jesus Christ is maladjusted to the justice of God. The believer who rejects Bible doctrine is maladjusted to the justice of God.
  - ii. The *love of the truth* is another way of saying, *they want to know and understand God and His plan*.
  - iii. If they do not have a love of the truth, then the human soul is designed to suck in falsehood as a substitute. That person *believes the lie*.
  - iv. A person who does not believe the truth (whether we are talking about the gospel or about Bible doctrine), they will take pleasure in unrighteousness. An excellent example of taking pleasure in unrighteousness is cheering on a person who *comes out* as a person who prefers the same gender; or supporting a person who thinks that they are in the wrong gendered body.
12. Examples of where scar tissue finally chokes out the soul.



## Doctrine of Scar Tissue and Blackout of the Soul

- a. Believers:
    - i. Ananias and Sapphira died the sin unto death as a result of scar tissue on their souls. Acts 5:1-11, 1John 5:16-17.
    - ii. King Saul might be a better illustration of a believer who suffered from emotional revolt of the soul. The buildup of scar tissue on his heart continued over a very long period of time, as it was not yet time for David to assume control of Israel as king. God allowed Saul a very long time as king, not because God was giving him some sort of break, but because the timing was not yet right for David.
    - iii. The Exodus generation (more accurately, Gen X, the adults who left Egypt), were filled with negative volition and emotional revolt of the soul. Eventually, all of them were killed by God via the sin unto death. They were believers, but they continually went into [reversionism](#) and they continually rejected God and God's man Moses through negative volition and emotional revolt of the soul. Heb. 3:8-19 4:7
  - b. Unbelievers:
    - i. Judas Iscariot built up scar tissue on his soul. He heard divine viewpoint taught day after day and he still rejected it. After so many chances at salvation, Judas finally went to the ultimate in self-centered arrogance: suicide. The scar tissue of the soul built up in his soul until he expressed it in an act of maximum arrogance. Matt. 27:3-10
    - ii. The Pharaoh of Egypt heard divine viewpoint from Moses and saw great signs and wonders. However, even in the end, he went out after Moses and the people of Israel (after they had left Egypt based on his insistence), hoping to kill them all. Exodus 7-14
13. How is scar tissue removed?
- a. For the unbeliever, at the point of salvation all scar tissue is removed (however, human viewpoint remains). Isa. 43:25 44:22.
  - b. For believers:
    - i. Rebound (naming your sins to God the Father—1John 1:9) provides the filling of the Holy Spirit but it does not remove scar tissue.
    - ii. A conscious choice to take in Bible doctrine.
    - iii. A crash program on Doctrine (Heb 6), which builds the [edification complex](#) of your soul (a designation for a mature believer).
    - iv. Exhale of residual doctrine (epignosis) from the Edification Complex of the Soul (which is built in your human spirit).
14. The problem of scar tissue of the soul is given in Eph. 4:17-19, so logically, we would expect for the verses that follow to provide the solution.
- a. Eph. 4:20 **...but you** [the royal family of God, believers in Ephesus] **have not been taught Christ in this manner.**

## Doctrine of Scar Tissue and Blackout of the Soul

- i. Remember what the problem was—the production of scar tissue of the soul because the believer is rejecting Bible doctrine and turning to the cosmic system.
  - ii. Paul is telling the Ephesians, *you did not learn the buildup of scar tissue of the soul as the spiritual life*. Or, another way to express this, *you did not learn from me to reject divine viewpoint*.
- b. Eph. 4:21 **If** (1<sup>st</sup> class condition - And you have) **indeed you have begun to hear Him, and have been taught by Him, because of the doctrine** (truth) **is in Jesus:**
  - i. Hearing Christ and being taught by Christ *does not mean* that the Christians in Ephesus (who were mostly gentiles) had heard Jesus publically teach. Hearing Christ and being taught by Him is hearing the correct teaching of the Old Testament and the new dispensational teaching of the Apostles.
  - ii. The Bible doctrine being taught in Ephesus is the truth which is in Jesus, as God is truth.
  - iii. Jesus, the Son of God, is the fundamental truth of the Church Age. Everything is built upon Him. Christianity is different from all other religions, which are, ultimately, a set of standards that religion's adherents must obey. Our life is in the Person of Jesus Christ; our relationship to God is through Jesus Christ; our righteousness is the righteousness of Jesus Christ.; and our forgiveness is based upon his substitutionary spiritual death, taking upon Himself the punishment for our sins.
- c. Eph. 4:22 **With reference to your former lifestyle, lay aside the old man who is becoming degenerate** (or, *corrupted*) **on the basis of the lusts of deceit.**
  - i. All of the believers in Ephesus had a former lifestyle, and this did not include taking in Bible doctrine or the filling of the Holy Spirit.
  - ii. The *old man* is a synonym for the sin nature, and they are told to set the old man aside, which would happen when a person named their sins to God.
  - iii. The sin nature would guide the soul into degeneracy, where full reign is given over to the lusts of the soul.
  - iv. Psalm 32:5 **I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.**
  - v. Col. 3:9–10 **Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.**
- d. Eph. 4:23 **Therefore then become refreshed** (renewed or reinvigorated via 1John 1.9) **through** (by means of executing the spiritual life through) **the** (instrumental) **agency** (personal teaching ministry) **of God the Holy Spirit** (Who is the 1<sup>st</sup> power option and personal agent for fellowship with God)

## Doctrine of Scar Tissue and Blackout of the Soul

(The Holy Spirit is the Paraklêtos—or mentor; John 14:16–17, 26 16:12–14 Acts 1:8 Romans 8:26) **and** (the Word of God) **by means of your spiritual** (objective) **thinking** (the 2<sup>nd</sup> power option, which is metabolized doctrine circulating in the stream of consciousness; spiritual system of learning, thinking, solving)

- i. Refreshment comes through the filling of the Holy Spirit. Here, they are becoming refreshed through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit provides the power to refresh the thinking.
  - ii. From that point, they are to refresh their spiritual thinking, which means they are to listen to Bible doctrine being taught by a well-qualified pastor-teacher and they believe it.
  - iii. Genesis 6:5 Isaiah 59:7 Jeremiah 6:19 Proverbs 23:7 (nephesh = soul) John 16:13 Romans 8:16 12:2-3 2Corinthians 2:9–11, 17 10:4–8 12:10-18 Galatians 6:3 [dokeo = emotional, subjective] (self-deception) Philippians 2:5-8, 11 [hegeomai] (thinking in terms of leadership) 3:15 Colossians 3:2 2Timothy 1:14 (guard the noble deposit in the right lobe via the Holy Spirit) James 4:6
- e. Eph. 4:24 **And put on the new man** (analogous to having a new suit in the clothes) **of the sophisticated spiritual life** (this is the clothing of the soul, not of the body, which is known as building the edification complex), **according to the specification** (and provision) **of God has been created by means of virtue righteousness and reverence** (or, *the sacredness*) **from the source of absolute truth** (= word of God).
- i. **Putting on the new man** means, the sin nature has been set aside by means of rebound. **Putting on the new man** is the same as **laying aside the old man** (v. 22).
  - ii. The sophisticated spiritual life is building the soul up by means of breathing in Bible doctrine so that your soul grows spiritually. This requires more time than 20 minutes of a superficial sermon every Sunday.
  - iii. The sophisticated spiritual life does not occur by reading your Bible. A believer has limited growth potential based upon reading the Word of God. In the Church Age, God has designed for a well-qualified teacher to teach the Word of God.
  - iv. Virtue righteousness, reverence and absolute truth all play a part in one's spiritual growth.
- f. Eph. 4:25 **Therefore having laid aside the lie** (cosmic system thinking or cosmic system involvement) **each one of you speak the truth with his fellow since we are members one of another,**
- i. The lie which is set aside is false doctrine; or cosmic system thinking.
  - ii. Believers are to speak the truth; they are not to spread the teaching of the world. The believer is not to be the source of human viewpoint.

## Doctrine of Scar Tissue and Blackout of the Soul

- iii. We are all members of the same body, which is the body of Christ. We all belong to the same family, the royal family of God. Our life is following the royal family honor code, which is Bible doctrine.
- iv. Zech. 8:16–17 *These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another; render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace; do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath, for all these things I hate, declares the LORD."*
- g. Eph. 4:26 *Become angry (or, enraged) but do not sin; do not permit the sun to go down on your intensified/sinful anger*
  - i. The believer must remain in opposition to the cosmic system; the believer must oppose human viewpoint. One might understand *anger* to be associated with opposition to the cosmic system and opposition to human viewpoint. We might understand this as applying a human emotion to the concept of opposition; but, actually not allowing this opposition to escalate into actual anger. Our emotions are not to take over.
  - ii. The believer sometimes gets out of fellowship, described here as anger. So, there can be opposition to the cosmic system; but there can also be a sinful anger. The believer needs to be opposed to the cosmic system but without the human emotion *anger*.
  - iii. Even when you are about to go to sleep, do not nurture a sinful anger. Name that sin to God and go to sleep in fellowship.
  - iv. Psalm 4:3–5 *But know that the LORD has set apart the godly for Himself; the LORD hears when I call to Him. Be angry, and do not sin; ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent. Selah. Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the LORD.* Also see 1John 1:9 - Rebound and keep moving
- h. Eph. 4:27 *And stop giving opportunity (possibility, territory, place, room) to the devil (or, the slanderous one).*
  - i. When the believer is out of fellowship, giving in to their lusts, and thinking the way the most people think. Our thinking, when out of fellowship, is giving opportunity to the adversary.
  - ii. Interestingly enough, we are never told by God to go on the offensive against Satan; we always take the defensive position. Luke 4:5-7 John 12:31 14:30;16:11 Ephesians 2:2 1Cor. 4:4
  - iii. Satan rules fallen angels (demons) and there are two groups incarcerated in Hades (Tartarus and the Abyss). We do not want to end up like the angels who followed him.
- 15. As you can see by the exegesis of Eph. 4:17–27, that Paul lays out the entire problem of scar tissue, and then provides the solution for it.

From:

<http://www.gracedoctrine.org/word/012311.htm>

Maranatha Church no longer has this doctrine from their website.

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The Syndein material (not his actual name) are his notes from R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s teaching; and the lengthy passage from Eph. 4 is found [here](#) and [here](#). The translation of Eph. 4:17–27 comes from both of those web pages. Some of the explanation of those passages expands on the notes found on those pages; some I developed myself.

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Other places where this doctrine is found:

<https://www2.gracenotes.info/topics/hardness-of-heart.html> (compiled from studies by R. B. Thieme, Jr., late Pastor, Berachah Church, Houston, Texas)

<https://gbible.org/doctrines-post/doctrine-blackout-scar-tissue-soul/> (Robert R. McLaughlin)

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I suggest many of these links because most represent ongoing ministries with well qualified pastor-teachers. Many of these ministries have easy availability of online teaching; and none of them charge for their materials.

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The doctrine of scar tissue of the soul is an extensive doctrine with a very specialized vocabulary. Therefore, I provide here a vocabulary which allows you to move back and forth between the doctrine and the technical words used in the doctrine.

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Even if you did not use the links to go back and forth between the doctrine and the technical vocabulary, it is important that you read through the technical vocabulary anyway. Part of spiritual growth involves developing a technical vocabulary.

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As an aside, do not be afraid of the concept of a *technical vocabulary*. In every profession, hobby, discipline, etc., there is a vocabulary specific to that profession, hobby, discipline, etc. That is what is called a *technical vocabulary*.

## The Vocabulary for Scar Tissue of the Heart

Word	Meaning
<a href="#">Bible doctrine</a>	This is the truth of the Scriptures; this is spiritual information. Knowledge of Bible doctrine is a fundamental building block of the spiritual life. In the first letter to the Corinthians, this is called the mind of Christ.
<a href="#">Church Age</a>	The Church Age is the new dispensation (or, <i>new age</i> ) in which the Apostles and all believers were now living. God previously worked through nation Israel (during the Jewish Age, aka the Age of Israel); and now God works through the universal church (which is not a reference to any particular church or denomination, but to the body of believers).
<a href="#">Cosmic System</a>	The term "cosmic system" refers to Satan's plan and process for controlling the world, and his attempt, using his organization of fallen angels, to counteract the plan of God in all respects.

## The Vocabulary for Scar Tissue of the Heart

Word	Meaning
<a href="#"><u>Dispensational teaching</u></a>	The teaching of the new era, the Church Age; where it becomes clear that the Revealed God of the Old Testament is, in fact, Jesus. Another change in this new dispensation is that God works through the universal church rather than through nation Israel.
<a href="#"><u>Divine establishment</u></a>	These are divine laws and concepts which apply to all people, believers and unbelievers alike. For example, that nations are separate and independent is a divine establishment principle. The idea that there should be some sort of world government and anti-establishment and anti-freedom. This does not mean that every believer should be a part of a concentrated movement to force these concepts on others (as it is not our job to clean up the devil's world), but that these principles, when applied, provide better outcomes for all involved.
<a href="#"><u>Divine viewpoint</u></a>	Divine viewpoint is how God thinks. This is very different than how man thinks. <i>The Lord says, "My thoughts are not like yours. Your ways are not like Mine. Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so My ways are higher than your ways, and My thoughts are higher than your thoughts."</i> (Isa. 55:8–9; ERV; capitalized)
<a href="#"><u>Edification complex</u></a>	This is constructing a mature spiritual life in the soul of the believer. The foundation of this spiritual life is Jesus Christ and exercising faith in Him. The first floor of the edification complex is the filling of the Spirit; the second floor is the intake of Bible doctrine.
<a href="#"><u>Epignosis doctrine</u></a>	This is the (gnosis) information which you have heard about God and/or about His plan; and then you have believed it. The Greek word gnôsis means <i>knowledge</i> ; and epignôsis means <i>over and above knowledge</i> . Gnôsis which you have believed is epignosis.
<a href="#"><u>Gnosis information</u></a>	This is accurate spiritual information to which a person has been exposed. In the context of our study, this is accurate teaching presented (usually) by a well-qualified pastor. Accurate Bible teaching is available elsewhere, but in the classroom of a local church is the most common place for it to be presented (as well as the preferred place to learn Bible doctrine).



## The Vocabulary for Scar Tissue of the Heart

Word	Meaning
<a href="#"><u>Hardness of the heart</u></a>	This is the strengthening of one's negative volition towards God. R. B. Thieme, Jr. coined the term <i>scar tissue</i> as a modern update to this phrase.
<a href="#"><u>Human viewpoint</u></a>	Man's thinking apart from Bible doctrine and divine establishment.
<a href="#"><u>Lust</u></a>	Sexual lust, arrogance lust, approbation lust, intoxication lust, materialism lust and power lust are the various lusts of the soul. These are the things which a person desires. When someone gives into their lust pattern, they build up scar tissue against God. Giving into lust distorts the thinking of a person. Each individual is motivated by a different set of lusts.
<a href="#"><u>Old sin nature</u></a>	The old sin nature (or simply, the <i>sin nature</i> ) is the distorter of the soul. We genetically inherit this from our fathers; and ultimately from Adam. Every believer and unbeliever has a sin nature. When we align with our sin nature, we sin against God. The sin nature cannot act apart from the consent of our volition.
<a href="#"><u>Reversionism</u></a>	This concept is usually applied to the believer who has rejected Bible doctrine and has returned (reverted) to his old way of thinking.
<a href="#"><u>Right lobe</u></a>	This is where man <i>exhales</i> towards his fellow man or towards God. What is happening in the right lobe of the soul determines how a man thinks, speaks and acts.
<a href="#"><u>Scar tissue</u></a>	This is the strengthening of one's negative volition towards God. It is called <i>hardness of heart</i> in most Bibles.
<a href="#"><u>Soul</u></a>	This is the immaterial part of man. This includes a person's thinking, emotions, volition, conscience, self-consciousness, norms and standards, and memory.

A significant portion of this vocabulary was originally coined by R. B. Thieme, Jr.

The context of what we have been studying is the judgment of hail, which God brought down upon the Pharaoh and people of Egypt. At Pharaoh's insistence, this plague was removed, Pharaoh promising to let the people go—but, as soon as the plague was removed, Pharaoh withdrew his promise.

Exodus 9:35a is what led us on the examination of scar tissue of the soul. It reads as follows:

Exodus 9:35a *So the heart of Pharaoh was hard;...*

Having now presented the doctrine of scar tissue, I think that we can understand the *hardness* of Pharaoh's heart in two ways (which is based upon there being two different verbs used, one of which is incorrectly translated, *to harden*): (1) God strengthened Pharaoh's heart in this way: God allowed Pharaoh enough strength to continue to exercise his negative volition (but God did not make Pharaoh negative towards God). Whereas, some men in the same position would have been beaten down and completely defeated; God gave Pharaoh the strength to carry on. (2) Pharaoh, as he continued to act negatively towards God, continues to build up scar tissue on his soul. Each negative response to God was built upon previous negative responses, allowing Pharaoh to build up a progressively stronger negative volition responses towards God.

A few chapters from now, Pharaoh will allow the children of Israel to go; but he has them followed. At the first sign of perceived trouble, Pharaoh gathers an army to go after them. This is despite all that has happened; despite all the havoc that has been brought down upon Egypt. Pharaoh will chase down the people of Israel, traveling with what remains of his army, and he will go after Israel with the intent of destroying them—not to bring them back as slaves. This is how negative he is towards the people of God. What he wants to do is exactly the opposite of divine viewpoint.

At this point in the narrative(at the end of Exodus 9), God had brought a hail storm upon Egypt as had never been experienced before. Pharaoh begged for the storm to be stopped and agreed to let the children of Israel go (v. 28). But, as soon as the storm was stopped...

Exodus 9:35b *...neither would he let the children of Israel go,...*

Much of the conversation between Pharaoh and Moses is not given to us. We have enough of it to know that Pharaoh called to Moses, asked for him to entreat the Lord. Pharaoh even said the Lord is righteous and he and his people are wicked. And, most importantly, he promised to let the people go (vv. 27–28). But, when the storm was ended, Pharaoh goes back on his word.

Because Pharaoh had built up scar tissue on his soul, he rejected the demands of God.

Exodus 9:35c *...as the Lord had spoken by Moses.*

More literally, Exodus 9:35c reads: *...just as Y<sup>e</sup>howah has said by the hand of Moses.*

This chapter ends on an interesting Hebrewism: *...as Yahweh spoke by the hand of Moses.* The Pharaoh was not deaf so that Moses had to give him hand signals. We use our hands

to work and to express ourselves. There are some people who would find it very difficult to speak if you tied their hands behind their back.

This is an interesting way to put it. Y<sup>e</sup>howah is not speaking by the *mouth of Moses*, but by his hand (this is found in the Hebrew of v. 35, but not often translated). The idea is, Moses spoke with more than words to Pharaoh. The things which happened at Moses' hand testified to his representing the power of God. God worked through Moses and expressed Himself through Moses. Furthermore, God often used the gestures of Moses throughout (such as lifting up his staff, or slamming it against the ground). That is the significance of this phrase.

Exodus 9:35 *So the heart of Pharaoh was hard; neither would he let the children of Israel go, as the Lord had spoken by Moses [lit., by the hand of Moses].*

Pharaoh had promised the children of Israel that they could go; and now his resolve is strong enough to resist that. Despite giving his word, now he would not let the children of Israel go. Again, Pharaoh's heart is hardened (strengthened); meaning that his resolve against God—his negative volition—was strong. His heart had become dull or obstinate towards God, indicating scar tissue. In some way or another, he makes it known that the children of Israel are not going anywhere.

Pharaoh knows that two crops of grain have been taken out for this season; but there are two more grains still to come in. So, apparently, he places his faith in the grain still to grow. He keeps thinking that the God of Moses can do no more—that he has reached the end of His power (at least, I am assuming that this is what he is thinking).

This completes the 7<sup>th</sup> plague, with 3 plagues remaining. This completes Exodus 9, but there are still several chapters to go before Israel actually leaves Egypt.

A Review of Exodus 9, using the Urim Thummim Version, and subheadings from the Niobi Study Bible:

### **The Fifth Plague: Livestock Diseased**

Exodus 9:1 *Then YHWH spoke to Moses, Go in to Pharaoh and tell him, This is what YHWH Elohim of the Hebrews declares, Let My people go that they may serve Me.*

Each plague scenario is presented is separate from the others, but there was likely an overlap not ever noted in the text. When Pharaoh refused to send the people of God out after the 4<sup>th</sup> plague (Exodus 8:32), it is highly unlikely the Moses and Aaron stood there before Pharaoh, dumbfounded, and exited quickly saying, "Well, then, we have to speak to our God to find out what to do next." I believe that, most of the time, Moses and Aaron walked into the refusal of Pharaoh with a loaded gun (I am speaking metaphorically). When Pharaoh refused to let the Hebrew people go, then Moses let fly with the next judgment. I don't believe that he needed to regroup, go back to God and then ask God what to do next.

We do not know what interaction exactly takes place between Pharaoh and Moses when Pharaoh refuses to let the people go, but Moses appears to be ready with God's next judgment.

The narrative is abbreviated. We will go from God speaking to Moses to God taking action against Egypt. The transitions are almost seamless.

Exodus 9:2–3 For if you refuse to let them go, and will continue to hold them, the hand of YHWH is on your livestock that is in the field, on the horses, donkeys, camels, oxen, and upon the sheep, there will be a very grievous plague of disease.

In our narrative, God is speaking to Moses and Aaron, telling them what to do next. However, we may reasonably assume that Moses and Aaron stand before Pharaoh, and Moses speaks these words.

Pharaoh is warned that all of the animals in the field will succumb to a great plague.

Exodus 9:4 But YHWH will make a division between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, and there will nothing die of all that belongs to the children of Israel.

This same plague would not kill off the livestock belonging to the people of Israel. However, any animal belonging to an Egyptian out in the field would die of this plague.

Exodus 9:5 YHWH appointed a set time declaring, Tomorrow YHWH will perform this thing in the land.

As was often the case, God would give Pharaoh some time to consider his actions. For a period of approximately 24 hours, Pharaoh could call Moses back and say, "Listen, there is no reason for this next plague. Start packing and move out." But he did not.

Exodus 9:6 And YHWH took this action the following day and all the livestock of Egypt died, but of the livestock belonging to the children of Israel, not one perished.

You will take note of how we seamlessly moved from God speaking to Moses (vv. 1–5) to God taking action (which means Moses



spoke the words of God to Pharaoh and Pharaoh was unmoved).

**Plague of Diseased Livestock - Patagonia** (a graphic) from [Fox Studios India](#); accessed May 20, 2020. This brief trailer appears to feature diseased livestock from Patagonia, South America. The 20 second trailer features what appears to be real footage of livestock succumbing to a plague.

Exodus 9:7 [And Pharaoh sent, and found there was not one of the livestock of the Israelites dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened and he did not let the people go.](#)

When it happened, Pharaoh sent his servants to make sure that the livestock in Goshen was unharmed, just as Moses said—and that turned out to be true. Nevertheless, he chose not to let the people of God go.

### **The Sixth Plague: Boils**

Exodus 9:8 [Then YHWH spoke to Moses and to Aaron, Take to you handfuls of ashes from the kiln and let Moses sprinkle it toward the sky in the sight of Pharaoh.](#)

Throughout these confrontations, Moses and Aaron were always quite theatric in what they did, which was at the direction of God. We do not know if Pharaoh refused Moses and Aaron face to face and they already had ashes in their hands. Or perhaps they had set those ashes in a small heap outside of the palace. Or, they may have exited the palace, gone to a nearby kiln, and then did this. Whatever the events were, I believe that Moses and Aaron knew that Pharaoh would refuse them; and they knew what the next step was. I believe that in most cases (perhaps every time), Moses and Aaron were ready with the next plague. I believe that Moses was ready to pronounce the next judgment of God as soon as Pharaoh said, “No, I have changed my mind; your people cannot go!”

So Moses and Aaron take these ashes and throw them up into the air:

Exodus 9:9 [Then it will become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and will be an inflammation breaking forth with blisters upon man and upon beast throughout all the land of Egypt.](#)

Like the narrative of the last plague, it begins with God speaking to Moses and Aaron (vv. 8–9) and immediately transitions into Moses and Aaron going into action (v. 10).

Exodus 9:10 [Then they took ashes from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh and Moses sprinkled it up toward the sky, and it became an inflammation breaking forth with blisters upon man and upon beast.](#)

The theatrics before the plague and the plague itself all take place out of doors. Although nothing is said about who is there (besides Moses, Aaron and Pharaoh), we may reasonably assume that there was a crowd of Egyptians of an undetermined size, which likely included Pharaoh’s cabinet.



Unwittingly, they all became the first ones infected. Both the breaking out of the blisters and the communication of what took place probably spread throughout Egypt, the explanation following close behind the outbreak itself.



**The Plague of Boils** (a graphic); from [The Exodus Story](#); accessed May 20, 2020.

Exodus 9:11 [But the diviners could not stand before Moses because of the inflammation, for the inflammation was on all the diviners, and on all the Egyptians as well.](#)

The religious illusionists have not been mentioned for quite awhile, but they are mentioned here (suggesting that they were a part of the regular palace crowd with Pharaoh). However, at this point, they cannot stand before Pharaoh. Whether this means that they did not go into the palace, or they went in, but could not stand up in respect, we don't know. But, they could not stand.

As a young child, I accidentally stepped into a hole where a recent fire had been, and my entire foot was suddenly encased in burning hot coals. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns suddenly appeared all over my foot. I had blisters on that foot—perhaps a dozen or two dozen—which were very large boils filled with pus. There was no way that I could walk on that foot. Although the religious illusionists had boils all over their body for a different reason, the end result was the same. Their religious authority was inferior to the power of God.

Despite these boils, rendering most of Egypt immobile for a time, Pharaoh's heart was still filled with negative volition towards God. Did Pharaoh plead with Moses to take these boils away? Were they removed by God? I would assume so. However, that is not a part of the written narrative. We close out this judgment with the following words:

Exodus 9:12 [YHWH hardened the heart of Pharaoh and he would not listen to them as YHWH had spoken to Moses.](#)

In all of this, God gave Pharaoh strength to resist, and Pharaoh resisted. The negative volition was there; but Pharaoh's inner resolve was waning.

### **The Seventh Plague: Hail**

Exodus 9:13 [YHWH spoke to Moses, Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh and say to him, This is what YHWH Elohim of the Hebrews declares, Let My people go that they may serve Me.](#)

For each plague, Moses and Aaron and sent to stand before Pharaoh and give him the two alternatives—let the people of God go or face the next plague.



Exodus 9:14 For this time I am sending all my plagues onto you and on your slaves, and on your people, that you may know that there is none like Me in all the land.

Had Moses come before Pharaoh and only a single plague occurred, this would have been amazing, but easily forgotten. However, God will bring 10 judgments upon Egypt, so that His power is clearly unrivaled. There is no god of Egypt that can stand against the God of Moses. Furthermore, all of Egypt is exposed to this narrative and to these judgments.

Exodus 9:15 For now I will stretch out My hand that I may strike you and your people with pestilence; and you will be cut off from the land.

Moses and Aaron tell Pharaoh that God could have brought a single plague of pestilence against the Egyptians, killing almost all of them; and Moses could have easily led the people out. Them being cut off from the land indicates that God could have killed them all, in one single act. However, God was looking to accomplish more than the simple extrication of Israel from Egypt.

Exodus 9:16 But indeed for this I have caused you to stand, so as to show you my power, and for the sake of declaring my Name in all the land.

God has allowed Pharaoh to continue to stand—to show his continued negative volition towards God; and that nations all around Egypt would be aware that this is taking place. Now, we may wonder, *how do they know?* *There are no television cameras, no on-the-spot live coverage of these events.* Egypt was the most powerful country in the world at this time (or one of them); and they likely had an army which collected tribute (or destroyed those who refused). They would have traded goods. But if any of this was going on, it was on a greatly reduced scale. Traders may be aware of these things and have a great desire to get out of Egypt at this time.

Just as word got around Egypt, so that all of the people of Egypt knew what was going on; so word got out about Egypt to all of the countries in their periphery.

Egypt was seen in that era as the strongest country in the region, and all of the neighboring countries would know that Egypt was being destroyed by the God of the Israelites.

Exodus 9:17 Are you not still exalting yourself against My people so that you will not let them go?

God, through Moses, asks, “Are you still standing against Me?”

Now, how is Pharaoh able to still stand against God? God continues to give him strength and Pharaoh continues to build up more scar tissue on his soul. Rejecting God’s demands has become habitual for Pharaoh.

Exodus 9:18 Mark tomorrow about this time, for I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail such as has never been in Egypt, even from the day of its being founded even until now.

Again, 24 hours is given for the Pharaoh and his people to think about what is going to happen and to reconsider their negative volition. I believe that information regarding Moses' words also were circulated during this 24 hour period of time.

Exodus 9:19 Dispatch instructions now and gather your livestock, and all that you have in the field, for upon every man and beast that will be found in the field that will not be brought home, this hail will fall on them and they will die.

God allows the people—despite the negative volition of Pharaoh—to save their own livestock. “Tell everyone to bring their people and animals inside; otherwise, they will die in this hail storm.”

Exodus 9:20 Then he that feared the Word of YHWH among the slaves of Pharaoh made his slaves and his livestock take refuge into the shelters.

At this point, there is some scattered positive volition in Egypt; and some Egyptians protectively bring their slaves inside. They have heard of Moses' warnings, followed by the judgments of God and this has occurred six times already.

We have somewhat of a play on words here—the *slaves of Pharaoh* are to make *their slaves* (and livestock) come under shelter.

It is my assumption that, because God is just, every person who potentially would heed this warning received the information needed to act during the 24 hours before the plague was enacted.

Exodus 9:21 But he that regarded not the Word of YHWH left his slaves and his livestock in the open field.

I would think that most people ignored this warning.

Exodus 9:22 YHWH spoke to Moses, Stretch out your hand toward the skies that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt upon man and beast, and upon every green plant of the field throughout the land of Egypt.

There was more to this plague than Moses and Aaron going into Pharaoh and warning him, “24 hours from now, that hail is coming down!”

Moses was going to act, stretching out his hand towards the heavens (while holding his staff). It is likely that this took place in a very public area.

Again, we seamlessly move from God speaking to Moses (vv. 13–22) to Moses acting as per God's directives (v. 23).

Exodus 9:23 Then Moses stretched out his staff toward the skies and YHWH sent thunder and hail, and ball lightning ran along the ground, and YHWH rained hail upon the land of Egypt.

There appear to be theatrics associated with nearly every plague. Moses lifted up his staff towards the heavens, and God rained down a great hailstorm on the land.

Exodus 9:24 And there was hail and fire catching itself in the midst of the hail, very grievous, such as has never been in all the land of Egypt since it has become a nation.

The hail storm was the most horrendous storm in all Egyptian history. I suspect that no hail storm has been this strong.



**The Seventh Plague—A Hailstorm** (a graphic); from [Reformed Fellowship](#); accessed May 20, 2020.

Exodus 9:25 The hail struck throughout all the land of Egypt, all that was in the field of both man and beast, and the hail beat down every green plant of the field, and broke every tree in the open field.

Everything out in the field—man, beast or crops—were destroyed.

Exodus 9:26 Only in the land of Goshen where the children of Israel lived, was there no hail.

Like many of the previous plagues, the people of Israel, who live in Goshen, are unaffected.

I have written about how these plagues *overlap*. Let me try to put a portion of this chapter into a very strict chronological order (starting with the plague of boils and moving into the judgment of hail). What has likely taken place is this:

### **An Example of How the Plagues Overlap**

1. Moses and Aaron throw the ashes into the air. These ashes come down and boils break out all over the epidermises of the Egyptians. Vv. 8–11
2. Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron and asks for these boils to be removed. He agrees to send the children of Israel out. (Not a part of the narrative.)
3. Moses speaks to God about removing the boils, relaying the promise of Pharaoh to let the people go. (Not a part of the narrative.)
4. God then speaks to Moses and tells him to rise up early the next day and speak to Pharaoh. V. 13

## An Example of How the Plagues Overlap

5. God tells Moses what to say to Pharaoh about how He could have brought a deadly judgment upon Egypt. Vv. 14–16
6. God tells Moses that the next plague would be a massive hail storm. Vv. 18–19
7. God tells Moses exactly what he should do and say prior to the hail storm. V. 22
8. Bear in mind, 6<sup>th</sup> judgment has not actually been closed out yet. The boils are removed (not a part of the narrative) and Pharaoh turns negative towards God again. V. 12
9. Moses and Aaron appear before Pharaoh—after the boils have been removed and perhaps Pharaoh then expresses his negative volition. Then Moses speaks the words of God to Pharaoh and his inner circle, regarding what God could have done and the great hail storm to come. (Not a part of the narrative.)
10. God through Moses addresses Pharaoh's negative volition. V. 17 (this verse is actually God speaking to Moses telling him what he is to say to Pharaoh.)
11. Some Egyptians bring their livestock under cover and some ignore this warning from Moses. Vv. 20–21
12. Moses stretches out his staff toward the heavens and what follows is thunder, lightning, hail and rain. Vv. 23–24
13. The hail is extremely destructive (v. 25) but it does not strike Israel (v. 26).
14. Pharaoh sends for Moses. V. 27

For the purposes of narration, the way that Moses presents this material—keeping each plague separate from the previous one and seamlessly moving from God speaking to Moses to placing us right into the midst of the action—is much easier to follow than the chronology which I offer above (and much less repetitive).

Being in the midst of the action and recalling events after the fact can be two very different things, even without distorting any of the events in question.

Exodus 9:27 *Then Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron and confessed to them, I have sinned this time, YHWH is righteous and I and my people are wicked.*

Pharaoh—apparently in the midst of the storm—called for Moses and Aaron, confessing his sins to God.

It is possible that Pharaoh's confession of sin was what he believed Moses wanted to hear.

There was apparently enough break in the storm, in a very specific area, so that Pharaoh could reach Moses by messenger. Likely, Moses would have been in Goshen, where the storm was not. Somehow, a messenger from Pharaoh was able to reach Moses.

Exodus 9:28 *Make supplication to YHWH and it will be enough so there will not be anymore thunderings of Elohim with the hail, I must let you go and you will not be delayed again.*

Pharaoh decides that he has had enough. He asks Moses to petition his God to end the storm. He promises that he will not delay the people of God from going out to worship their God.

Exodus 9:29 Then Moses replied to him, As soon as I am gone out of the city I will raise my hands to YHWH and the thunder and hail shall stop, then you will know that the land belongs to YHWH.

Moses tells Pharaoh exactly what he is going to do. There was a problem with the translation here; I believe that Moses went forth *towards* the city (most translations did not translate it this way).

Exodus 9:30 But as for you and your slaves I know that you will still not fear YHWH Elohim.

Moses tells Pharaoh, "I know that you still do not fear God." I don't think that Moses simply said this, but that God, on many occasions, told Moses that Pharaoh would change his mind again. Moses believes God; he does not believe Pharaoh.

Exodus 9:31–32 So the flax and the barley were destroyed, for the barley was budding and the flax had already bloomed. But the wheat and the spelt were not destroyed for they were late crops.

The knowledge that Moses reveals here indicates that he was a man of many disciplines.

Exodus 9:33 Then Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and he raised up his hands to YHWH, and the thunders and hail stopped and the rain ceased pouring on the land.

Moses did exit the palace, going out from Pharaoh (literally, *Moses goes out from with Pharaoh towards the city*). However, I should note I might be the only person who sees it this way. Nevertheless, in many good translation, I find the addition of a few words necessary to give this sense. For instance, Young, who provides a very literal translation, has this: *And Moses goes out from Pharaoh, from the city,...* The second *from* is not there, which Young himself indicates by italicizing it. What is there, before the word city, is the direct object, which can also be translated *to*, *towards*. This slight disagreement does not appear to change anything overall, apart from where Moses is when he petitions God to stop the hail storm. I rather like the visual of Moses, at the edge of the big city, calling upon God to end the storm, and then the storm ends. I can see many people peering out of their homes to this familiar figure, watching his every move.

Exodus 9:34 When Pharaoh saw that the rain, hail and the thunders had stopped, he sinned still more by hardening his heart, both he and his slaves.

Even though God, through Moses, held up His end of the bargain, Pharaoh did not. What he said and what he promised meant nothing. His personal entourage was with him on this.

Exodus 9:35 Then the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he would not let the children of Israel go as YHWH had spoken by Moses.

At this point, we noted that there are two very different words translated *to harden* in vv. 34 & 35. In v. 34, Pharaoh makes his own heart *heavy and dull*. In v. 35, his heart is strengthened.

With chapter 10—next lesson—we will begin the plague of the locusts, which is the 8<sup>th</sup> plague, followed by the 9<sup>th</sup> plague, the plague of thick darkness. There are 10 plagues in all.

## Lesson 118: Exodus 10:1

## The Plague of the Locusts I

Exodus 10 contains the eighth and ninth plagues: the plague of the locusts, which receives a great deal of coverage; and the far more interesting curse of darkness, where darkness will cover the land. Despite the unusual nature of the ninth plague, Moses will only devote 9 verses to it.

The chapter divisions seem to be nearly arbitrary. It seems like, once enough verses have been accumulated, a new chapter is begun. The 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> plagues will be found in this chapter. There is nothing which naturally separates the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> plagues, to place them in separate chapters. However, the 10<sup>th</sup> plague (which is threatened in Exodus 11) needs to be considered apart from the others.

Chapter 10 begins with what could have been a problem for some. However, we have covered the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, so we can breeze through this translation. This chapter begins by God saying that "I have hardened [made heavy or dull] Pharaoh's heart." and this corresponds to our concept of scar tissue, which we have studied extensively. However, what has occurred is that God has given Pharaoh the opportunity to express his negative volition as well as the strength to do so. God has made it possible for Pharaoh to completely reveal his negative volition. By expressing his negative volition so many times, Pharaoh further built up scar tissue on his own soul. This is not too different from building up muscles on your arms. The more weight that you lift and the more often that you lift it, the stronger and larger your muscles will become.

So, to some, it may appear that God has caused Pharaoh to be negative toward His plan and that Pharaoh is nothing but a pawn which God will sacrifice for the benefit of many others who would believe in Him. However, we know that God is not the author of sin; He is **not willing that any should perish but that all should come to the point of a changed mental attitude** (2Peter 3:9b). So we cannot misinterpret what is being said here.

Let's take this in points, because this information cannot be overemphasized:

### God and the Negative Volition of Pharaoh



1. God is not the author of sin. Rom. 6:1,15 7:7 1Cor. 6:18-20 Gal. 2:17
2. God is not the author of negative volition, nor will He change our positive volition into negative volition under any circumstance. 2Peter 3:9
3. God has continually given Pharaoh the opportunity to change his mind. Exodus 8:10,29 9:5,18
4. Pharaoh has, at best, acted as though he had changed his mind about God's plan. It is very likely that he is sincerely upset over what transpired (Exodus 9:27–28); however, as the more modern characterizing proverb goes, *he never said nothing that he couldn't take back* (from Dan Jenkins).
5. Pharaoh's attitude did not change and Moses recognized that. Exodus 9:29,30
6. God gave Pharaoh the opportunity to express his negative volition (Exodus 9:15–16). This is not the same as causing Pharaoh's negative volition.
7. God gave Pharaoh the strength to express his negative volition (Exodus 9:12 10:20, 27). This is not the same as causing Pharaoh to be negative.
8. God permitted Pharaoh to express his negative volition. Exodus 9:29-30
9. When Pharaoh expressed his negative volition, scar tissue continued to accumulate on his soul; just as muscle accumulates when you lift weights; just as addiction becomes stronger with each cigarette that you smoke. Pharaoh, by his continued negative volition and by the way that God designed man, resulted in him developing greater and greater strength to act against the dictates of God.

Let me suggest that the pharaoh was ready to shut down; on several occasions, he had gotten to a point where he could not make a decision. We have had a president like that—President Barack Obama—who had a very difficult time making decisions about foreign policy and would spend days, weeks and even months pondering decisions which should have been made in hours, if not minutes (interestingly enough, the press carried on as if this were a great thing).

So, on several occasions, Pharaoh had reached a point where he could not render a decision; he was just not strong enough to go out there and tell Moses *no*. God strengthened him enough to be able to do this. God did not make Pharaoh say *no*; God gave Pharaoh the strength to say *no*.

### **The Eighth Plague: Locusts**

So now we come to the eighth plague, but God prefaces it by speaking of Pharaoh's hardened heart.

Exodus 10:1a [Now the Lord said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh;...](#)

At this point, we begin the 8<sup>th</sup> plague, the plague of the locusts. Recall that Pharaoh was willing to let the people go at the last plague (the plague of hail); but once the hail and thunder of the previous chapter stopped, he changed his mind, hardening his own heart.

God tells Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh...” Even though Moses and Aaron had been going in to speak to Pharaoh, you may recall on several occasions in the previous chapter, Moses spoke directly to Pharaoh, something he originally considered himself incapable of.

God knows that Moses will go back to Pharaoh with Aaron; but God’s orders are for Moses in particular, as He uses the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative.

You may notice that, God does not rub it in. He does not sit Moses down and say, “Look, you have spoken to the Pharaoh face to face; you were able to deal directly with him. Did I not tell you that you could do this in the first place?” God simply allows for the decisions of Moses, Aaron and Pharaoh to all play out.

Previously, when the Bible spoke of God *hardening* Pharaoh’s heart, God merely strengthened his heart, giving him the strength and power to resist God. But here, we have a different word, which does not mean *to strengthen*, but means, *to make dull, to harden*. It is my opinion that we can reject the idea that God steps in and changes Pharaoh’s mind. Why do we know this? Back in Exodus 9:34–35 *But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants. So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people of Israel go, just as the LORD had spoken through Moses.* (ESV) So, *if Pharaoh hardened his heart* back at the end of the previous chapter, then we cannot, at the beginning of this chapter, understand that God hardened Pharaoh’s heart, in the sense of changing his mind Pharaoh did not first want to send the Hebrews out of Egypt, but God sneaked into his heart and changed it. Pharaoh *already* made that decision, and God is not changing it.

So, how do we understand this? The Hiphil perfect tense is used here, which is the causative stem which views the action of the verb as a completed event; or the action or the verb is not considered a future or a progressive event. So, we should understand that, in eternity past, God placed this act into the divine decrees. His *causing* this to happen does not mean that God stepped into Pharaoh’s volition and turned it from positive to negative; but that God’s plan called for Pharaoh to turn negative towards God—but it is Pharaoh who actually made the decision from his own volition. God simply worked within the boundaries of Pharaoh’s free will choices.

All of this falls within the divine decrees because God will now explain *why* He did all of this (10 judgments against Egypt, instead of simply destroying every Egyptian and letting the people of Israel walk out of Egypt—which they would not have done, by the way). This is the focus of what God tells Moses.

Exodus 10:1b *...for I have hardened his heart...*

The Hebrew word used here is the Hiphil perfect of *kâbad* (כָּבַד) [pronounced *kaw-BAD*] and it means *to make heavy, to burden, to weigh down*. The Hiphil is the causative stem; however, in the Hebrew, the Hiphil does not necessarily refer to compulsion but also is a

permissive stem<sup>7</sup>. The perfect tense refers to God's decrees from eternity past to allow Pharaoh to make these choices against Himself; and to bolster Pharaoh up when his strength begins to wain. God also gave a similar strength of conviction to those under Pharaoh. What Pharaoh needs in his time of trouble to give him the strength to continue to defy God is some *yes-men* who will agree with Pharaoh's opposition to the Lord. This had been determined In eternity past, so that the lands throughout the middle east and eastern world could be evangelized, God saw to it that Pharaoh would surround himself with loyal yes-men, who would agree heartily with his every decision and applaud, when necessary, these decisions (however, there will be some disagreeable things said by those under Pharaoh near the very end).

Pharaoh's negative volition is strictly his responsibility; however, God has taken his negative volition and has used it for His Own ends. This is what God has caused.

To set up an analogy, perhaps you as a parent have tried to convince a skeptical young son (say, age 12–16) about something he would probably enjoy doing. Now, his immediate reaction to anything is, "I don't wanna do that." So with enthusiasm and some reasoning, you convince him. You are working with his negative volition and you are working around his negative volition. This analogy is different inasmuch as, the end game, is to change your son's negative volition to positive; but you work things out within the confines of his personality (another approach is, "Dammit, kid, this is what you are going to do!"). God is working His will within the confines of the Pharaoh's negative volition.

Another analogy: in sports, you occasionally look at the weaknesses of your opponent (s) and determine how to take advantage of that. Your plan is to beat the other team; and you will take advantage of one player's weakness in order to make your plan work. Mohammed Ali often trained specifically for each fighter, and designed a strategy which took advantage of whatever weakness that fighter might have (Ali would also train for the other fighter's strengths). God is simply using Pharaoh's negative volition to God's Own advantage.

Exodus 10:1c ...[\[for I have hardened\]...the hearts of his servants,...](#)

The same verb from v. 1b applies to this phrase, because we find the untranslated sign of the direct object. So, whatever verb applied at the previous sign of the direct object applies here as well. All of the commentary of that portion of v. 1b belongs here as well.

Exodus 10:1b-c ...[for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants,...](#)

Pharaoh is not the only person operating on negative signals; his cabinet—his servants—have also changed their minds as well. Very often, people with negative volition support one another. When a person has rejected God as a part of his reality, then he often will seek out others who have done the same. There are web pages and fb pages dedicated to such things, where people who choose not to believe in God gather with others of the same persuasion and encourage one another not to.

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<sup>7</sup> Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study of the Old Testament* p. 2274

Exodus 10:1d ...that I may show these signs of Mine before him,...

Why is this a part of the divine decrees? So that God can place His signs in their midst. Everything that God does, Pharaoh and his cabinet are acutely aware of. At no point should we understand this to mean that God changed their volition; but that they are completely responsible for their own volition.

This verb is followed by l<sup>e</sup>ma'an (למען) [pronounced l<sup>e</sup>-MAH-ġahn], a word denoting purpose or intent. This could be translated *for the sake of, on account of, to the intent of, or in order that*. It is also quite reasonable to render this word and its preposition with a simple *that*. The following verb reveals God's purpose here: the Qal infinitive<sup>8</sup> (with the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular suffix) of shîyth (שׂיֵּת) [pronounced *sheeth*] which normally means *to set, to place, to put*. Even though, strictly speaking, God is not the subject of this verb, it is often translated this way (in fact, even Benner's mechanical translation renders this *(so) that I can set down these, my signs, within him*). More literally, this could be rendered *with the intent of My placing these, My signs in his midst*. Although the final set of words, *in his midst* can refer to one's inner being (compare with Exodus 9:14's words *upon your heart*); it can also refer to one's inner circle—in this particular case, Pharaoh and his cabinet (called *his servants*). This is the second passage where Pharaoh and his inner circle of associates are said to be particularly affected by these judgments of God, but without specifying exactly how (see Exodus 9:14).

The fact that Pharaoh's cabinet is mentioned here is quite important; and there will be more references to these men during this narrative. These plagues have hit Egypt so hard that even some of Pharaoh's servants will attempt to set him straight in this chapter: *Then Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long shall this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God. Do you not yet understand that Egypt is ruined?"* (Exodus 10:7).

In eternity past, God determined a vast number of things in order to evangelize the earth. He saw to it that a Pharaoh would ascend to the throne of Egypt who was particularly negative toward God's plan. God surrounded that Pharaoh with yes-men (most of the time). When Pharaoh became weak from opposing God, God gave him more strength to continue in his opposition to God.

Exodus 10:1 *Now the Lord said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him,...*

An important point often left out of a study of these chapters of Exodus: any time that God drastically changes His program (that is, a new dispensation is begun or a new portion of a dispensation is begun); God accompanies this change with a great many signs and wonders. Because our knowledge of things Biblical is sorely lacking, many people think that there are great and tremendous miracles found on every page of God's Word because

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<sup>8</sup> Owens has the Qal passive participle and I spent a very long time trying to determine who was right, exploring even conjugations of this verb, but without a clear resolution.

they know a few stories about Moses, David and the first advent of our Lord. When it comes to great signs and wonders and miracles, there have actually been very few of them in the past several thousand years; most of them came to introduce a new wrinkle in God's plan. Here, God was beginning nation Israel and was identifying the Hebrews as His people. Therefore, He needed to do something spectacular to the entire world would know that God's hand was with the Hebrews. As a result of this, men from all over the world realized that God was with the Hebrews, that God had given them the land of Palestine, and that anyone who opposed the Hebrews would find themselves up against unsurmountable odds.

## Lesson 119: Exodus 10:1–2

## The Plague of the Locusts II

Exodus 10:1 Now the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him,...

This statement is interesting. It appears that Pharaoh hardened his own heart in Gen. 9:34. It reads: *But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants.* (ESV) However, for the exact same experience, God says, “*I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants.*” This is slightly more difficult to sort out. Now, we could certainly understand *he* (as in *he strengthened*) to mean *He*, referring to God. However, generally speaking, when a subject is not specified, usually there are clues as to whom that pronoun refers to, and the nearest noun and verb are *when Pharaoh saw...he sinned yet again and he hardened his heart...* Obviously, the subject of *sinned* has to be Pharaoh, as his title is right there; and God does not sin. Logically and linguistically, Pharaoh is the subject of, *he hardened his heart.*

Now, if Pharaoh observes that the hailstorm has stopped, and then he sins, which sin is hardening his heart, then God cannot be blamed for this. We cannot understand God to have come in and switched his volition, because then Pharaoh would be committing a sin against his own will. That makes little sense to say that Pharaoh sinned, and yet, at the same time, indicate that God hardened his heart which makes Pharaoh sin against God. This both defies logic and grammar.

Since God does this, this forces us to understand that Pharaoh strengthens his own negative volition against God, but, at the same time, God has a hand in this process as well. How exactly does God figure into Pharaoh's negative volition?

We have the same verb in the Hiphil imperfect in Exodus 9:34; and the Hiphil perfect in Exodus 10:1. Pharaoh is the subject in Exodus 9:34; God in Exodus 10:1. The difference in tenses simply means, it is a process for Pharaoh, but God speaks of it as a completed action. As a matter of some interest, there is a slightly different verb used in Exodus 9:35. Nevertheless, it still means *to strengthen*; and the Qal imperfect is used in v. 35.

We might understand this very much like we understand election—we have free will in our lives and make free will choices, either for or against Christ. God, with His perfect foreknowledge, makes that a part of His plan. God knew what we would do, and He incorporates it as a part of His perfect plan. Recall that God chose Pharaoh to be a part of His plan. God knew exactly what Pharaoh would do. God uses the powerful negative volition of Pharaoh in order to further His Own plan.

**Application:** Now, we can sin until the cows come home, and God's plan will include your sins and their effects as a part of His plan. However, in time, He will also discipline you for those sins. On the other hand, if you are in fellowship and act according to doctrine, we may receive blessing in time and blessing in eternity.

In v. 2, we see how God uses Pharaoh's negative volition to further His plan.

Exodus 10:2a *...and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son...*

God is speaking to Moses, so *you* and *your* refer to Moses. God is speaking to Moses about what is happening here in Egypt—God's great signs and the negative volition of Pharaoh—this is to be told to Moses' sons and to their sons.

*Moses* here is a metonym for every father among the Hebrews. God is not speaking to Moses in specific, but to all fathers among the Hebrews. They are to tell their sons; and their sons are to tell their own sons.

Therefore, even though the grammar is directed towards Moses, speaking specifically of his sons and his sons' sons, this is really directed towards the next several generations of Israelites. It is personalized with Moses, but its application is to the next generation coming up and the generation after that, and, for many generations after that.

Exodus 10:2a *...and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son...*

God has also done all of this so that Moses will tell these things to his sons and to his grandchildren (along with the rest of the Hebrews). What God is doing here is unique in human history.

If you have studied the book of Genesis, you will recall that God isolated the people of Jacob (they did not, for instance, intermarry with any random family). God also isolated them from the Canaanites, whose horrendous sins would result in their own destruction.

At the same time, God protected and prospered the Hebrew people, moving them to Egypt. In Egypt, they were isolated, protected and prospered (despite being made slaves). All of this information is a part of what a Hebrew father tells his sons.

Exodus 10:2b *...the mighty things I have done in Egypt...*



God accomplished His full and complete purpose in the land of Egypt with His people. As we have studied, some of His people were hard-headed and needed guidance and discipline (or, *guidance through discipline*). We have seen those of the Hebrew family who completely rebelled against God's plan here or there. Nevertheless, regardless of Moses' faithfulness and the disobedience of many in Gen-X (those who are adults when they leave Egypt), what God wanted to happen, happened. What God decreed took place, despite having people who disobeyed Him.

Pharaoh did not slow down God's plan; Pharaoh's negative volition was God's plan. The grumbling Hebrew adults who left Egypt were a difficult generation for God. In the both Testaments, we read, *I loathed that generation*. Yet, God brought all Israel out of Egypt, He gave them the Law, and He took them into the land of promise for them to take it. Everything which God had planned for Israel took place, despite the scar tissue of Pharaoh and the negative volition of Gen X (= the adults who left Egypt in the exodus).

Exodus 10:2a-b ...and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son the mighty things I have done in Egypt,..."

What God is telling Moses here is continued even until today.

The final judgment of God against Egypt will be the death of the firstborn, which can be avoided by participating in the Passover. For a very long time, parents have taught the Passover story to their children; and they have told them all that happened. I would suggest to you that, at the first, the entire narrative was read (probably memorized and spoken aloud), one generation teaching the next. However, at some point—we don't know when—the narrative was compressed. These chapters of Exodus probably would take 1–2 hours to read aloud. Having observed one Seder (admittedly, on television), it appears to be much more common today for the person giving the Seder to do a very abbreviated version of the Biblical text (it appeared to be a personal summation done by one of the characters<sup>9</sup>). Ideally speaking, those attending the Seder are aware of the entire Exodus narrative.

There are multiple witnesses to various events in Scripture. We have the Scriptures themselves, but then we have the actions of the Hebrew people as well in their obedience to the Scriptures.

Exodus 10:2c ...and My signs which I have done among them,...

V.2 continues with the prepositional purpose clause from v. 1 (lamed + ma'an). And I was expecting the same construction and the same verb used in v. 1 repeated here, but there is another word which means *to place, to set* and it is the word *sûwm* (שׂוּם) [pronounced *soom*]. This time the verb is in the Qal perfect, 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, meaning that God is the subject of this verb (since God is speaking at this point in the narrative).

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<sup>9</sup> Meaning, I don't believe that there is an abbreviated text prepared and read by all Jews at Seder.

The signs here are the judgments or the plagues done by God in Egypt among the people.

Exodus 10:2d ...that you may know that I am the Lord.”

This next phrase is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular, Qal perfect of *yâda'* (יָדָע) [pronounced yaw-DAHG], a verb which means *to know, to see*. Strong's #3045 BDB #393.

The end result is, all of Egypt and all of the people of Israel would know Who God is. They would understand His relationship to Israel. They would understand His great power, against which Egypt was powerless.

God clearly points out His purpose here, as He did previously in Exodus 9:15–16; these signs will evangelize the world and they evangelized Israel as well. Various people in other national entities around the world would hear about the God of the Hebrews Who defeated the Egyptians, and they would exercise faith in the Revealed God.

Exodus 10:2d ...that you may know that I am the Lord.”

One of the few advantages of the KJV, besides being an excellent but dated translation, is that they distinguish between the singular and plural second person. We simply use the word *you* to represent both the singular and the plural. The south has tried to clear up this little problem, adding the descriptor *all* to the plural sense of *you*, however, this has never caught on outside of the south. V. 2 begins with *you* in the singular. Each individual Jew (represented here by Moses, as God is speaking directly to Moses) will tell his son in the future about the exodus and the great signs and wonders which God performed. However, at the end of v. 2, when God says “...that you may know...”, *you* is in the plural—speaking to all of Israel. The significance of this is emphasis. When we move from the singular to the plural, it is a way of the speaker, in this case our Lord, grabbing us by the collar and shaking us. It is a way to grab one's attention linguistically.

Exodus 10:2 ...and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you [all] may know that I am the Lord.”

These judgments are to be told to the next generation and the generation after that. At that point in time, there was no widely distributed Bible; at best, Moses had documents which had been added to over the years at the writing of Exodus, which could have occurred at this time and could have occurred during the 40 years wandering in the desert. Moses did not write the first books of the Bible (the books of Job and Genesis probably predated Moses; and we do not know if these books were in written form at this time; if they were, there would have been very few copies). Furthermore, the primary method of passing on spiritual information is the oral tradition of a father teaching his son about Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Israel and he in turn will teach his son. There were various events which took place to act as training aids, such as the bones of Joseph, to give parents the opportunity to express to their children what has occurred up until their slavery in Egypt. *Whose bones*

*are those? Why are we carrying them?* This allowed for the parents to tell their children who Joseph was and what he did; and how Israel ended up in Egypt.

**Application:** We as parents should do the same; we should teach our children about Who Jesus Christ is and why He came to earth in the form of a man. There is no substitute for parental training, starting at a very early age. So many parents teach their children about Santa Claus; and too few teach them about Jesus.

The exodus, the carving out of one people out of a nation, the judgments—all of this is a unique event in human history. Nothing like this has ever happened before or since. Furthermore, these things took place in Egypt, one of the strongest nations in the ancient world. Fully armed military forces from most countries would not be able to take on the people of Egypt; and certainly not an army of weaponless slaves. But God, on the other hand, can bring any nation down.

**Application:** This is why the believer should not worry about Russia, China, Iran or North Korea. We should be concerned with our own nation, and we show this concern by growing spiritually. No matter what the circumstances, the believer cannot lose by growing spiritually.

Exodus 10:2 ...and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you [all] may know that I am the Lord."

As we will find out, the most solemn and important worship cycle for the Hebrew people will be the Passover, which is closely tied to God's great works in Egypt.

There are theological *experts* who claim that the books of Moses were written long after the time of Moses. If nation Israel did not practice the Passover from the beginning—which celebration included a recounting of this historical narrative that we are studying—at what point did Israel begin to celebrate it?

Based upon what we read in the Scriptures, the feast days of Israel are very well-defined and practiced from the beginning. How could these feast days—which are based upon historical events—all of a sudden appear as celebrations in Israel's culture hundreds of years later, but without the corresponding historical events? After all, logically, if a celebration is based upon an historical event, this would mostly like mean that the traditions would have begun soon after the actual historical events. It is very illogical to believe that these historical events never occurred, yet, somehow, someone fooled an entire nation, a thousand years later, into keeping a tradition which is not based on anything and had not been kept before. It is also illogical to think that some historical event occurred, but no historical records of it are preserved; and, 1000 years later, someone writes about it. These theories that the books of Moses were written up to 1000 years after the fact are illogical.

This is what we have studied so far:

Exodus 10:1–2 Now the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him, and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son’s son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I am the Lord.”

There are a lot of traditions which occur in churches which are very influential. Joel Osteen, before he teaches, says a few things about the Bible (“This is my Bible, it says who I am, it says what I have...”). Joel is a very influential pastor in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries; but do you think that every church will, at some point in time, repeat the words that he says at the beginning of a sermon? Not going to happen. R. B. Thieme, Jr. and his successor, R. B. Thieme, III read off the same set of verses before a Bible class, and several pastors who came out of that church do the same. Do you think that, at some point in time, every church is going to start reading those verses before giving a sermon? Not going to happen.

My point being, no matter how influential you are, no one is going to pick up a tradition which you started for no other reason than, it seemed to be a good idea. Some will; but most will not. On the other hand, if you have a tradition which is based upon an historic event, then the near universal observation of that tradition (within a nation) is much more likely to occur (like the establishment of national holidays).

The point I am trying to make is, these events that we are studying are either true, partially true, or they are false. Let’s assume that these events did not take place; that the Scriptures are false. Then, how does a culture begin to observe a series of feasts—all of which are tied directly to historical events—but without the historical events actually occurring? This would mean that, in one generation, these things are not celebrated at all (since they never occurred); but, in the next generation, they are celebrated, using Scriptures which speak of the events as occurring, as if they had been observed from the very beginning (several generations would know this to be false). On top of all this, these events are supposed to be taught by one generation to the next. If they never occurred, when does one generation start telling the next generation, knowing that these things did not actually occur? If these events never occurred and if Moses never recorded this information, then a sudden nation-wide observation of these events seems like a lot to have a people swallow.

There are theories developed around the 18<sup>th</sup> century which claim that Moses did not write the books of Moses (specifically, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy); and that the final product was written hundreds of years later. This is illogical, because it implies that the historical events and subsequent traditions may have never occurred; yet, somehow, were fabricated hundreds of years later; followed by an obedient population

who, suddenly decided to believe Scriptures that had not existed before and to follow traditions which had never been traditions before.

It is well accepted in many seminaries today that Moses did not write the books of Moses, but that they were written by several different men, long after the fact, and then assembled and intertwined at a much later date. And, somehow, these Scriptures, which sort of show up out of nowhere, with both historical incidents and traditions being established in the text of these Scriptures; and somehow, the entire nation of Israel buys into them. Does that sound logical? Do you think that happened?

Let me give a more modern illustration that most of us know about. On occasion, a book or two might be added to the Bible, and actually be received by a very limited number of people (the Mormons added two books to the Bible and they understand these books to be legitimate additions). Yet, even though a small and enthusiastic group of people accept 2 new books into the Bible, the vast majority of Christians will never accept those books. How many churches embrace *Doctrines and Covenants* or *The Book of Mormon*? None! Only a small, cultic group has ever accepted these two books. The Mormon cult has grown considerably; but they will always be just a small percentage of people who call themselves Christians; and they will always be a cult.

So how likely would it have been for someone or some group among the Hebrews to suddenly introduce a whole group of books suddenly (the Old Testament is not made up of a single book), and somehow force this upon the Hebrew people? And, at the same time, do you think that this same individual or group was then able to convince the people that there are a complex set of traditions and rites which they need to follow. These traditions and rites are very complex—not difficult to follow if developed as we will study. But to be introduced hundreds of years after the fact; or to be followed, but without any written material or explanation as to what they are doing—that is patently absurd. Traditions which are followed because of historical events are rather difficult to simply fabricate hundreds of years later, based upon fabricated historical events.

I know that I am going on and on about this; but this is what many seminaries teach (possibly most of them). It is claimed to be some sort of a spiritual breakthrough to think that Moses did not write the books of Moses. This is the claim of some Bible critics, that the books of Moses were written much, much later, and are the composite writings of several individuals or groups.

Now, a very charismatic leader might get a small percentage to go along with holy books that suddenly materialize, 1000 years after the fact; but all Israel? Highly unlikely, if not impossible. Furthermore, that charismatic leader would like be known as a man who changed the Hebrew religious culture; but nothing like that appears to have happened. If this actually happened—it did not—then we would know the man's name responsible for changing Israel's religious practices.

There are so many weird theories about the Bible, most of which contradict what the Bible says of itself; and such theories are often very illogical when carefully examined and logically followed out.

It makes much more sense that all of this takes place together: the historical event of God's plagues on Egypt; the writing and preserving of the Scriptures; the celebration of the events; and one generation telling the next generation about what they experienced (and imploring them to do the same with their sons and daughters). (1) People actually witness these events themselves; (2) they tell their children about what they saw; (3) Moses documents these events in Scripture (which Scriptures are not in dispute) and (4) traditions and celebrations look back on these events (3 or 4 witnesses, depending upon how you look at this).

Such traditions are logically established from the very beginning, and they take place every year, and they continue as a tradition from generation to generation. If all of this begins with a tri-fold witness (of the event—or parents telling their children about the event, of the Scriptures and of the celebrations), then Israel's history and celebrations all make perfect sense. Leaving just one of those witnesses out of the mix makes much less sense. Change the timing of any one of those witnesses, and the worship system of Israel no longer makes logical sense.

What I am saying is, the people of Israel really and truly observed these events; they told their own sons and daughters about the events; Moses wrote down an historical narrative documenting these events (in a timely fashion); and there are traditional observations (or, celebrations) which take place which look back on the historical events. This is what happened. Any other explanation is logically bereft.

Back to our narrative:

Moses, in his recording of this narrative, changes things up again. You may recall in the previous plague that most of the discussion took place within the confines of God speaking to Moses. This time, our narrative places Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh almost from the start (that will begin in v. 3):

Exodus 10:1–2 Now the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him, and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I am the Lord.”

What is quite amazing throughout the book of Genesis is how God can take all of these very imperfect people, who are surrounded by other imperfect people, and still He is able to accomplish His purposes and His plan. Everything was determined in eternity past. This same dynamic continues in the book of Exodus. Moses is not a perfect person; nor are the Egyptians and certainly not the Hebrew people. However, God, even with such imperfection before Him, can work all things out to accomplish His plan and purpose.



Exodus 10:3a *So Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh...*

The first verb, *to come, to go*, is a masculine singular, Qal imperfect. It looks like it should be a masculine plural, but not the way that the Hebrew is written. The Hebrew literally reads, *And so goes in Moses (and Aaron)...* There are no parentheses in the Hebrew, but the masculine singular verb followed by the masculine singular noun *Moses* essentially places Aaron into parentheses. He is there, he goes along with Moses; but Moses has taken the lead in all respects.

God commanded Moses to go before Pharaoh; he takes Aaron along with him. Moses also appears to have completely lost his shyness when it comes to speaking before Pharaoh, as he does all or most of the speaking.

Exodus 10:3b *...and said to him, "Thus says the Lord God of the Hebrews:..."*

The second verb, *to say*, is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect. So, both men have something to say here. Moses is not standing to the side of Aaron and whispering to him what should be said. Like many Biblical conversations, we are probably getting just the gist of what is being said.

Exodus 10:3a-b *So Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus says the Lord God of the Hebrews:..."*

As Moses and Aaron had said many times to Pharaoh, they tell him that these are the words of God. These words would have seemed impertinent to be coming directly from Moses.

Exodus 10:3c *...'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me?*

Pharaoh is refusing to humble himself before God and do what God has ordered him to do. Now, if God reached into his volition and switched it from positive to negative, then these words would make very little sense. His answer would logically be, "Well, as soon as You allow me to obey You, then I will."

If we understand Pharaoh to be making his own decisions, then these words make perfect sense.

You may ask, *how can a man witness so many signs and yet be negative?* The simple answer is, Pharaoh has free will and he is negative towards God and towards the Hebrew people. In fact, let me suggest that Pharaoh was concerned about his economy, and that the removal of his slaves, the Hebrew people, would, in his mind, destroy his economy. Quite obviously, his negative volition towards God has destroyed the Egyptian economy. Despite the many signs, Pharaoh misjudged the situation.

**Application:** There are many events which take place, which are outside of our control. No matter what we say or do, we are unable to bring them under our control. So, what do we do? We just roll with the punches; we go along with it.

**Application:** Let me give you a current example of this: right now, the United States and the rest of the world is dealing with the COVID19 pandemic; and, even though there is a possible vaccination on the horizon, that is probably 6 months to a year away. As a result, some states which have re-opened (like my state of Texas) and we have seen an increase in numbers testing positive for the virus. As a result, some country official, whom I did not vote for, has issued an order for us to wear masks in public places—or be fined. Now, as an individual, I do not really like this; I don't care for the face mask. But, what do I do? I wear a face mask in public venues (stores, etc.). That is the current requirement, and we should obey public officials (at least, up to the point where they interfere with evangelism or with Bible teaching). I have my own opinions, but this is outside of my personal control, so I live with it. I may not want to wear a mask, but I do. [Additional restrictions have been added since I wrote those words.]

**Application:** As a believer, for me to disobey county officials and refuse to wear a mask and defy anyone to tell me different would be to misread the situation—which is what Pharaoh appears to be doing.

Exodus 10:3a-c [So Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh and said to him, “Thus says the Lord God of the Hebrews: ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me?’](#)

They speak here, again, on behalf of the God of the Hebrews, the Creator God, the God of the Universe.

Moses and Aaron simply repeat what God has said to Moses.

Pharaoh has continued to defy God. Every time the pressure is off, Pharaoh strengthens his own heart and turns against God once again. At no time is Pharaoh willing to recognize God for Who He is. When God removes a plague, then Pharaoh's arrogance emerges. He is still alive, the plague is gone, and he is not going to give in to this God of the Hebrews.

Each and every time, God gives Pharaoh the chance to consider all that has happened and to make the right decision. Each and every time, Pharaoh has the chance to humble himself before God and to submit to Him. Each and every time, Pharaoh rejects God.

**Application:** How many times have you known what was right, and yet you did just the opposite? I would not want to publically recount the number of times for myself. Such disobedience is negative volition. If you are reading this, you no doubt have a number of correct concepts from Scripture about, say, giving. Not just giving to the church but giving to individuals who are in need (I am *not* speaking of myself here). How many times have you had the substance, but not the willingness to give it? This is not a weakness that all believers have; nor am I suggesting that you give so much money away, that you have

nothing left to live on. I am just speaking of giving as God has prospered you. Have there been times when you have fallen short of that? I know that certainly have.

Exodus 10:3d **Let My people go, that they may serve Me.**

Moses repeats to Pharaoh what God has demanded on many occasions prior to this: **“Send My people out of Egypt so that they may serve Me.”**

*Serving God* means that the people of Israel will offer up animal sacrifices to Him.

In the midst of all these signs, God is very careful to let Pharaoh know that He is the God of the Hebrews. Since so many countries had their own pantheon of gods, God has to distinguish Himself from them and show that He is the true God of the Universe. All of the judgments which God brings against Egypt confirms again and again that He is the True God, the most powerful Being in the universe.

## **Lesson 121: Exodus 10:1–6b**

## **The Plague of the Locusts IV**

This is what we have studied so far:

Exodus 10:1–2 **Now the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him, and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son’s son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I am the Lord.”**

God speaks to Moses about Pharaoh’s hardened heart and the signs which God has done in Egypt to convince them all that He is sovereign.

Exodus 10:3 **So Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh and said to him, “Thus says the Lord God of the Hebrews: ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, that they may serve Me.**

Moses and Aaron come before Pharaoh and confront him with the words of God.

There is a slight difference in the narrative approach of this, the eighth judgment: only two verses are given over to God speaking to Moses and Aaron; and vv. 3–6 have Moses and Aaron standing before Pharaoh and warning him, repeating what God spoke to them (we are not hearing the same information repeated, but what Moses and Aaron are saying were first spoken by God to them).

They continue with God’s words:

Exodus 10:4a **Or else, if you refuse to let My people go,...**

Moses and Aaron are speaking to Pharaoh and giving him a warning. We do not know which man said what; but it is clear that Moses appears to be doing most of the speaking before Pharaoh.

God knew that Pharaoh would not send the people out of Egypt; Moses, guided by God, began to realize that Pharaoh would continue to be negative.

Exodus 10:4b ...*behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your territory.*

The plague or judgment would be locusts. They would descend upon the land the next day after the warning. God allows Pharaoh some time to think about this and to exercise positive volition towards His requirement, if he wanted to stop this judgment. But Pharaoh remained negative.

The locust was known to Egypt, however, never in such huge numbers have they been seen before.

**God Sends the Locusts Against Egypt** (a graphic); from [WordPress](#); accessed May 5, 2020.

Exodus 10:4 *Or else, if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your territory.*

There are 10 plagues or judgments; the plague of the locusts is #8.

Exodus 10:5a *And they shall cover the face of the earth,...*



In v. 5, there is some figurative language which is rarely translated literally yet the figure of speech is easily understood. The locust will cover the 'ayin (עַיִן) [pronounced *GAH-yim*] of the land. 'Ayim means eyes. Too often this is ignored or translated *face*.

There is a play on words here, generally lost in the English. The literal translation is, *they will cover the eyes of the land*; and some understand this to mean, *cover the face of the land*. It is the next phrase which explain the play on words.

The picture being painted here is, the land of Egypt cannot see out, as it is so covered with locusts.

Exodus 10:5b ...*so that no one will be able to see the earth;...*

The locusts will cover the face of the land with such thickness, so that the land itself cannot be seen. The land cannot see out; and no one can see the land.

No doubt Egypt has been attacked by mass swarms of locusts before; but never like this before. I have provided some photographs, but none of them really approximate the invasion which we see here.

Exodus 10:5c ...and they shall eat the residue of what is left, which remains to you from the hail,...

*The residue of what is left* is actually 3 Hebrew words. The first is the masculine singular construct of yether (יֶתֶר) [pronounced YEH-ther], which means, *residue, remainder, remnant, [the] rest [of]; other part; excess*. #3499 (#3498) BDB #451. It is affixed to the feminine singular noun pelêyṭâh (פֶּלְעִיטָה) [pronounced pehl-ay-TAW], which means, *escape; deliverance; escaped remnant; who or what has escaped*. Strong's #6413 BDB #812. These two words are then followed by the feminine singular Niphal (passive) participle of shâ'ar (שָׂאָר) [pronounced shaw-AHR], which means, *the remaining one, the one that is left over; the leftover, the surviving*. Strong's #7604 BDB #983. Using 3 words to describe what remains, emphasizes that there is not very much remaining.

The hail destroyed all of the men and animals that were left out; and most of the plants and trees. What was not destroyed by the hail would be eaten up by the locusts. Whatever sprouted up would be eaten by the locusts.

A person who would look over the landscape of Egypt would not see any ground or any plants, but just this massive undulating covering of locusts.

All of this is a warning to Pharaoh, given by Moses.

Exodus 10:5d ...and they shall eat every tree which grows up for you out of the field.

Some translations have the locust eating up the trees which *grow* in the field. This leaves us with some confusion—locusts do not generally eat entire trees, to the best of my knowledge (which is quite limited in the realm of locusts). Furthermore, we have just seen a devastating hail storm which likely destroyed the trees of the field. The word which helps to explain this is tsâmach (צָמַח) [pronounced tsaw-MAKH], and this means *to sprout up*. So, anything sprouting up after the hail was eaten by the locusts.

I grew up in a fairly rural area, so I have, on several occasions, witnessed a field burn down; but, after the first rain, I would see sprouts of various things coming up, including trees.

Some trees survived or partially survived and the locusts would descend upon those trees and eat them up. There would be no foliage remaining in the land.

Throughout this narrative, the word *locust* is in the singular. The text treats the locusts as though they were a singular organism. It is one miracle and they act in one accord; to ravage the land of Egypt. The language is beautiful; the eye of the land is covered so that the one in the land cannot see out and those above the land cannot see in; and the locusts are so thick as to appear to act against the land as a single entity.

What remains in the land after the hail is sprouts of plants returning from the ground; some of them seedlings, some of them the same plants which had been beaten down by the hail. And the locusts will devour these plants. The locusts devour anything that is attempting to grow from the land.

Exodus 10:5 And they shall cover the face of the earth, so that no one will be able to see the earth; and they shall eat the residue of what is left, which remains to you from the hail, and they shall eat every tree which grows up for you out of the field.

Although the hail destroyed the flax and barley crops, what remained of it in the field and whatever has sprouted would be eaten by the locusts. They also ate the soft seedlings of any trees which were beginning to sprout.

Exodus 10:6a They shall fill your houses, the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians...

It is locusts which would fill up the houses of everyone in Egypt, including Pharaoh and his personal servants (*servants* also means *citizens* in this context).

Out in the field, as they observe, it will look as one great undulating locust; eating the entire field. However, when these locusts move indoors, there will be thousands upon thousands of locusts, everywhere the inhabitants look.

There is a lot happening in the Hebrew which we are not really aware of when reading the English. So far, this is what we have in the NKJV (which is typical): Exodus 10:4–6a Or else, if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring **locusts** into your territory. And **they** shall cover the face of the earth, so that no one will be able to see the earth; and **they** shall eat the residue of what is left, which remains to you from the hail, and **they** shall eat every tree which grows up for you out of the field. **They** shall fill your houses, the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians...

I have bolded the words which are not exactly what they seem. *Locusts* is actually a singular noun; and the first 3 *theys* are actually masculine singular verbs (which refer back to *locust*); and the 4<sup>th</sup> *they* is a masculine plural. Now, given the consistency of the masculine singular verbs referring back to *locust*; that would suggest that this verb does not. Therefore, how v. 6a should read is: And your **houses will be full**, and the houses of all your servants, and the houses of the Egyptians,... (Green's Literal translation). Green has it right with his translation, despite that last verb being a Qal stem (the normal form of the verb) as opposed to the Niphal stem (the passive form of the verb). The verb itself is generally understood to be passive in meaning and usage.



The majority of translations follow the NKJV and the KJV<sup>10</sup> here, even though that is not completely correct. The general sense of the text is not dramatically changed by using the literal approach or by taking a more relaxed approach to the original Hebrew. I mention this because these are decisions which translators must constantly make. Many of them know what is happening in the Hebrew, and yet, they may slightly alter the text, as it is more English-friendly (there is a nice flow of verbs). I say this not by way of criticism, but just to be informative.

Exodus 10:6b ...—**which neither your fathers nor your fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were on the earth to this day.**”

Nothing like this has ever been seen before. This is a great historic occurrence. And, again, what God will do in Egypt is very theatric.

Although we began with Moses and Aaron in v. 3, here, God does not say that they both walked out; but that Moses walked out. Aaron was not God's chosen man for the job of going to speak to Pharaoh. He just happened to be there at the beginning to hold Moses' hand throughout the initial proceedings, which was not God's original intention.

God has a plan for Aaron's life; but speaking to Pharaoh in His behalf was not it; that is God's plan for Moses.

**Application:** This is analogous to our spiritual gifts in the church age; we all have spiritual gifts and we cannot behave as though our spiritual gifts are different than those which we have received. There are some people who are pastor-teachers who ought not be (I sound like J. Vernon McGee here). Thieme once related the story of Billy Graham who originally pastored a church and in a meeting with the deacons said that his gift was one of evangelism, not pastoring a church and they agreed and that was the direction that he took. It retrospect, it is obvious that is his place in God's plan. Isn't it amazing the various types of application that we can get from the Old Testament? Just the use of a singular here instead of a plural introduces a New Testament concept.

**Application:** We can even remove the spiritual aspect of this and consider individuals. Everything in your life is dependent upon hundreds, if not thousands of other individuals, most of whom you will never see. I am a milk drinker. Someone had to raise that cow on some farm. In order to raise that cow, there was feed involved, and that feed had to be made somewhere and then moved from point A to point B and, finally, to the farm. The dairy cow is hooked up to a machine in order to milk it, and that machine was designed and produced, often using materials which may have come from all over the world; including parts which may have been manufactured in a dozen or more different places (all of which had to be transported, some from other countries). In just the things I have mentioned, there may have been hundreds of people involved, and that only takes us to the point where the milk is harvested. In order for me to have that milk, thousands of people had to be performing a variety of tasks to get that milk from the cow into my refrigerator. The

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<sup>10</sup> The KJV, produced in the 1600's, still has influence over many modern translations.

ones who fed the cows are completely separate from those who made the machines to milk the cows; they are not interchangeable.

**Application:** You may or may not have ever looked at the engine of your vehicle (and if you have not, you have thousands of people to thank for that); but you cannot take headlight and somehow rig that so that it will act as a spark plug. Every part of your vehicle has a specific function and it was manufactured often within thousandths of an inch in order to perform its own very particular function.

Here is how Paul applied this concept to the spiritual body of believers: **Some of us are Jews, and others are Gentiles. Some of us are slaves, and others are free. But God's Spirit baptized each of us and made us part of the body of Christ. Now we each drink from that same Spirit. Our bodies don't have just one part. They have many parts. Suppose a foot says, "I'm not a hand, and so I'm not part of the body." Wouldn't the foot still belong to the body? Or suppose an ear says, "I'm not an eye, and so I'm not part of the body." Wouldn't the ear still belong to the body? If our bodies were only an eye, we couldn't hear a thing. And if they were only an ear, we couldn't smell a thing. But God has put all parts of our body together in the way that he decided is best. A body isn't really a body, unless there is more than one part. It takes many parts to make a single body. That's why the eyes cannot say they don't need the hands. That's also why the head cannot say it doesn't need the feet.** (12:13–21; CEV)

Forgive my detour; we will return to the narrative next time.

## Lessons 122–123: Exodus 10:1–10

## The Plague of the Locusts V

Exodus 10:1–5 Now the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him, and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son’s son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I am the Lord.” So Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh and said to him, “Thus says the Lord God of the Hebrews: ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, that they may serve Me. Or else, if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your territory. And they shall cover the face of the earth, so that no one will be able to see the earth; and they shall eat the residue of what is left, which remains to you from the hail, and they shall eat every tree which grows up for you out of the field.

Moses and Aaron go into Pharaoh and warn him of the next judgment, which is a massive invasion of locusts. At this point, the judgment has not yet fallen upon Egypt. Moses will graphically describe what is about to happen, and allow Pharaoh and his cabinet time to consider their response before the actual judgment.

Exodus 10:6a-b They shall fill your houses, the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians—which neither your fathers nor your fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were on the earth to this day.”

This invasion will be something that is unparalleled in Egypt's history.

Exodus 10:6c And he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

Moses and Aaron are both with Pharaoh, but Pharaoh's eyes appear to be on Moses. From Moses' point of view, he is recording what he is doing. However, from the view of God the Holy Spirit, this is what Pharaoh sees. Moses turns around and exits.

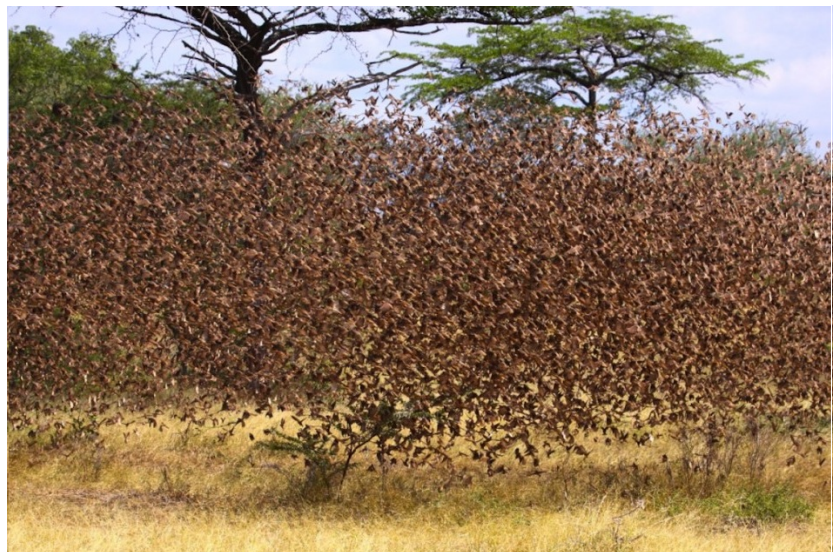
Exodus 10:6 They shall fill your houses, the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians—which neither your fathers nor your fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were on the earth to this day.” And he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

There was to be no escaping these locusts; they would be on everyone and everything. Anything that was edible would be eaten. The locusts would leave nothing behind for the people.

This is interesting—Moses and Aaron come to Pharaoh, deliver the message and then they leave. What will follow is an impromptu cabinet meeting.

**Locust Invasion in Sokoro State** (a photograph); from [Gourmet Guide](#); accessed December 11, 2019.

From this page: *Quelea birds and grasshoppers have reportedly destroyed farm produce worth millions of naira in twelve villages of Illela Local Government Area of Sokoto State.*<sup>11</sup>



Exodus 10:7a Then Pharaoh's servants said to him,...

Pharaoh's servants saw everything that he saw; but they had some perspective. Pharaoh, I would guess, took all of this too personally, and was unable to be objective—in part because his soul was covered in scar tissue. His servants appear to be able to be more objective at this point about the Hebrew people.

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<sup>11</sup> From [Gourmet Guide](#); accessed December 11, 2019.

Exodus 10:7b ...“How long shall this man be a snare to us?”

It is clear, by the previous 7 plagues, that whatever Moses promises that his God would do, this would happen.

The way that this is expressed is fascinating. Pharaoh’s servants don’t say, “Listen, *you* have to change your mind about the God of Moses. When Moses tells you that he wants something, then just give it to him.” This would be seen as a direct attack upon Pharaoh himself, and it would not have been tolerated.

Instead Moses is portrayed as the problem to Egypt. However, the solution they offer up is to give in to Moses (but they will not express their approach in this way).

Exodus 10:7c *Let the men go,...*

These words represent a break in the ranks. This is the first time that someone on Pharaoh’s own staff wanted Moses to be let go with his people (insofar as we know). Since *servants* is in the plural, there is more than one man speaking up. I would guess that this is not a large majority of them, or we would possibly read, *and all of the servants of Pharaoh said to him...*

Behind the scenes, days before this meeting, a few of these men from Pharaoh’s cabinet are no doubt speaking to one another; first commiserating, but then, talking about a way to deal with this great disasters. This is why several men felt comfortable with speaking up; because there would be backup for that position.

Pharaoh’s servants give their solution. “Send out the Hebrew people,” they tell Pharaoh. “This is the solution to our problem. When they are gone, so is Moses and Aaron.” Members of the cabinet express their solution in such a way as to not directly oppose Pharaoh.

This is the first time that we are aware the Pharaoh’s underlings actually give him some pushback. Considering that this occurs prior to plague #8 occurring suggests that, it was a rare occasion to disagree with Pharaoh (which is normal for many autocratic governments). Nevertheless, they state their disagreement in very careful terms.

Exodus 10:7d ...*that they may serve the Lord their God.*

Pharaoh’s servants are apparently there for most of all of the times that Moses speaks to him. They know what is being requested. “*Send these people out so that they may serve Y<sup>e</sup>howah their Elohim,*” they plead to Pharaoh.

Exodus 10:7a-d *Then Pharaoh’s servants said to him, “How long shall this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God.*

Even Pharaoh's servants, before the plague came to pass, urged Pharaoh to reconsider. You will recall that, after the previous plague, they also strengthened themselves against God; but now they are reconsidering their position. They know what is coming; they know that the God of Moses and Aaron are capable of causing such destruction.

Note how carefully these men make their argument. They portray Moses as the problem, but offer the simple solution that he lead the people of Israel out of Egypt to worship their God. This solution removes Moses, the problem.

This is the first internal weakening which we have seen, where members of Pharaoh's own cabinet are turning against him. I would guess that, each pharaoh is different, and some you could discuss things with, and others you could not. No matter what kind of a pharaoh this man was, even his own staff at this point felt driven to suggest giving in to the God of Moses and Aaron.

Then we have an observation that, perhaps up until now, no one was willing to make and say out loud:

Exodus 10:7e *Do you not yet know that Egypt is destroyed?"*

*The Voice* inserts the following line: *"Just look around you? Can't you see that Egypt has been destroyed?"* This is not an exact quote from the Voice, but it is in the same vein. "Can't you see what has happened all around you?" they seem to be saying to Pharaoh.

Why would Egypt want to keep these Hebrew slaves? They did their building projects; they probably planted and harvested many of their crops. Perhaps Pharaoh thought, "They can stay here and help build up Egypt again." On the other hand, Pharaoh's soul may be so built up with scar tissue that he is unable to see any of this situation objectively. To this point, Moses and Aaron have warned of 7 judgments, and all of these judgments have come to pass; each judgment being as devastating as warned. There seems to be no reason to doubt them or their God.

Exodus 10:7 *Then Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long shall this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God. Do you not yet know that Egypt is destroyed?"*

Pharaoh's servants say, "Don't you see what is right in front of your eyes? Egypt is ruined. Our country is in tatters." (I suspect that this may have been the consensus opinion of most men who are there.)

Egypt has been destroyed the same as if an army had come through and destroyed them. Pharaoh was convinced. He listened to his servants and he agreed with them. Therefore, he called for Moses and Aaron to return (as per the next verse).

The intervening discussion was spontaneous, beginning immediately at their leaving. The servants of Pharaoh are no longer interested in bolstering up Pharaoh's opinion and



standing by him. They are sick of the destruction and personal pain and discomfort that they have had to endure. Most importantly, they believe Moses and Moses' God. In fact, their faith is strong enough that they are even willing to stand against Pharaoh.

All of a sudden there is some dissension among Pharaoh's *yes-men*. This does not mean that Pharaoh's entire court was in favor of letting the Hebrews go; however, it is more than just one man's opinion. The speaker obviously believes God because the plague has not yet come; the plague of the locusts is not until the next day. But they have come to realize that what Moses says God will do, He does. Whether they have believed in Yahweh or not is another matter; but they have come to accept the power and Word of Yahweh. There is no doubt in their minds that this plague will occur as Moses has told them and that Egypt is in veritable economic ruin already. Furthermore, after suffering the lice and the frogs and the stinging flies, these men do not want their households invaded by locusts.

Exodus 10:7 Then Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long shall this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God. Do you not yet know that Egypt is destroyed?"

Here is a question which I have not seen asked before—how do we know about this conversation between Pharaoh and those in his cabinet? I believe that most of the time, the author of Scripture—particularly narrative—has a very normal and natural way of writing about what takes place. In most cases, the author was there; or he knows people who were there. Moses is not there while this is being discussed.

For this conversation, I can suggest two possibilities: (1) some of Pharaoh's cabinet believe in Israel's God, are converted, and become a part of the mixed multitude who join the people of God when they leave. They could have informed Moses at some point in time about what happened. I think that this is most likely. (2) When Moses and Aaron are called back in before Pharaoh, some of the men actually express their own opinions in addition to what Pharaoh says. In most situations, this would not have happened. To express an opinion difference from a Pharaoh might result in being summarily executed or being made a slave). However, these are some very unusual circumstances. What we are reading is clearly dissension among the ranks; and they appear to have convinced Pharaoh.

Exodus 10:8a So Moses and Aaron were brought again to Pharaoh,...

We do not know the time frame involved here, but let's just say that, in 5–15 minutes, Pharaoh's staff have convinced him to give in to Moses and Aaron.

We have no idea where Moses and Aaron hang out or what they did afterwards. I think that this happened so fast that they had not traveled far. Perhaps they were simply standing outside the palace with the elders of Israel. Wherever they were, Pharaoh's people were able to locate them and bring them back into the royal palace.



A delegation was unnecessary. An individual is sent out to find Moses and Aaron (the verb is a masculine singular). They are found and returned to Pharaoh. No force was necessary.

Exodus 10:8b ...and he said to them, "Go, serve the Lord your God."

Right up front, Pharaoh tells Moses and Aaron, "Go and serve Y<sup>e</sup>howah your Elohim." It appears at this point that Pharaoh was finally willing to send the people of God out of Egypt, if just temporarily.

Exodus 10:8a-b So Moses and Aaron were brought again to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, serve the Lord your God."

Moses and Aaron were found; the messenger tells them to return; and they do.

This is the first time that Pharaoh has capitulated prior to the occurrence of the plague. He appears to be weakening. His court of yes-men has begun to hold a variety of opinions, the majority this time favoring to skip this plague and to let the children of Israel go. After a cabinet conference, Moses and Aaron are sent for and are brought back before Pharaoh. It is time to talk capitulation to their God.

We cannot see into the souls of Pharaoh's servants. Have they gone so far as to realize that if the God of the Hebrews can do what He has done, then He is the true God of the Universe? Do some cabinet members realize that they ought to believe in Him and to join the Hebrews in this trek into the desert to worship God? That would be my guess.

We have an analogous thing taking place today. We have unbelievers refusing to believe in Jesus Christ because they are worried that it might disrupt their relatively insignificant lives. In their frantic search for happiness, they are worried that they might not eek as much of it out if they turn toward God (even though, exactly the opposite is true).

For many unbelievers, they seek various pleasures, whether it be drugs, alcohol, sex; or even unbridled attacks against authority. They know enough about Christianity to know that such things are frowned upon. Some think that, if they give up these pleasures, they will be giving up happiness. But quite the opposite is true.

Believers have a similar problem. Believers tend to attend church once or twice a week and never lead a life the rest of the time which is honoring to God. To be fair, this is sometimes not their fault; if their church does not teach them how to rebound (confess their sins to God), then they are out of fellowship from ten minutes after they were first saved to the end of their lives. Once and awhile, during a *re-dedication* service (which is bogus), they, among other things, might confess their sins (putting them back into fellowship for a short time). They have been outside of the power of the Holy Spirit for so long that it is an emotional uplifting and for sometimes as long as 30 minutes, they stay in fellowship. However, when they fall out of it, they behave, at best, like self-righteous, religious unbelievers.

Pharaoh's servants needed to follow through; they needed to gather their families and join with the Hebrews. We need to lead our lives as though God has a true impact on them. We are not going to miss anything worthwhile by doing so.

Exodus 10:8c **Who are the ones that are going?"**

Pharaoh has a question, however. "Who exactly is going?"

Prior to this, Moses and Aaron have not specifically said who was going. They repeated the words of God, Who said to Pharaoh, "**Let My people go!**" (Exodus 7:16b). I do not recall God, or Moses and Aaron, being any more specific than this. If they were, it was not recorded in Exodus.

Exodus 10:8 **So Moses and Aaron were brought again to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, serve the Lord your God. Who are the ones that are going?"**

Pharaoh orders them to go and serve their God. Then he asks, "Just exactly who is going?" With that question, you can almost feel the hardening of Pharaoh's heart taking place.

A short time has passed between Pharaoh's staff convincing him to capitulate, and Moses and Aaron returning to the palace. Perhaps only 5 or 10 minutes have gone by, but whatever time passed, this gave Pharaoh some time to reconsider his actions. Therefore, he asks, "Now, who exactly do you think you're taking with you, Moses?"

Exodus 10:9a **And Moses said, "We will go with our young and our old;..."**

Moses continues to do the talking. Pharaoh certainly understands by now who is in charge.

Moses answers Pharaoh's question: everyone goes; all men, women and children; and all of their animals.

Moses, as a communicator of God, has moved to the forefront; and Aaron has taken a back seat. Whereas, Aaron's name is found 7x in Exodus 8; he is mentioned only thrice in this chapter. In fact, in Exodus 10, Moses' name will be found 9x where Aaron is not mentioned along with him.

Aaron plays an important part in Israel's history, but, before Pharaoh, Moses is God's point man. And, it is most interesting that Aaron's descendants will have a prominent place in Israel's future; but Moses' sons will not.

Exodus 10:9b **...with our sons and our daughters,..."**

Their sons and daughters of the Israelites would go with them. Everyone was to be a part of this worship. In fact, these sons and daughters will play a more significant part in Israel's future than their parents will.

Exodus 10:9a-b And Moses said, "We will go with our young and our old; with our sons and our daughters,..."

Moses clearly lays down God's requirements. This feast would include all the people. It would be for the young and old. All of the Israelites would go out with them.

I do not recall God being specific in this area, but Moses appears to have a ready answer. Let me offer two possible understandings: God did tell Moses and it was not recorded; or, Moses just simply understood that every person should be involved in this first nation-wide worship of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

There is another minor issue. Most of us know that all of Israel will leave Egypt permanently; they will be ordered to do so by Pharaoh. However, at this time, it does not appear that Moses expects to do anything more than lead his people out of Egypt to worship God, and then return.

Exodus 10:9c ...with our flocks and our herds we will go,...

They would take their flocks and herds, as there would be animal sacrifices. Obviously, this would appear to Pharaoh as if they are moving completely out of Egypt.

Exodus 10:9d ...for we must hold a feast to the Lord."

All of these went because this would be a great feast to the God of the Hebrews.

Moses tells Pharaoh exactly who will go and how they will travel. As of this point in time, they are still only to go out to the desert and have a feast to God. Nothing is said about them leaving Egypt for good. This is not a trick engineered by God.

A complete separation from Egypt is on the agenda, but that will be a result of Pharaoh's choice. Pharaoh had earlier expressed his opinions as to these matters (Exodus 8:25–29) but his conditions were not acceptable. Here, Moses tells him what is acceptable.

Exodus 10:9 And Moses said, "We will go with our young and our old; with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds we will go, for we must hold a feast to the Lord."

Moses and the Israelites would take their livestock for offerings to God. Not all would be offered, but Moses does not know at this time how many sacrifices would be required.

Moses tells Pharaoh that everyone is going. Their sons, daughters, flocks and herds. No one is being left behind. Now, Pharaoh is concerned.

Much of v. 10 and the first half of v. 11 are rather difficult to translate. There will be many differences in the translations found below. However, the key to understanding these two verses is God's response in v. 12, where he kicks this next plague into high gear. What Pharaoh is doing is attempting to find a halfway meeting point between what Pharaoh wants (no one going anywhere) and what Moses and Aaron want (taking all of the wives, children and animals). Pharaoh will tell Moses that he will allow, that they may leave with just their males.

Apparently, the difficulty of translation is not just with me. The MEV, NASB and the NKJV are often very close; but here, they had a wide divergence of understanding.

Modern English Version	Then he said to them, "The Lord indeed be with you when I let you and your little ones go. Beware, for evil is before you. Not so! Go now, you that are men, and serve the Lord, for that is what you desire." Then they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.
NASB	Then he said to them, "Thus may the Lord be with you, if ever I [Lit <i>when I</i> ] let you and your little ones go! Take heed, for evil is in your mind [Lit <i>before your face</i> ]. Not so! Go now, the men among you, and serve the Lord, for that is what you desire [Lit <i>you desire it</i> ]." So they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.
New King James Version	Then he said to them, "The Lord had better be with you when I let you and your little ones go! Beware, for evil is ahead of you. Not so! Go now, you who are men, and serve the Lord, for that is what you desired." And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

Let me suggest that the Pharaoh was answering in the Hebrew language, but, he was, at the same time, flustered and angry, so what came out was not easy to understand.

Exodus 10:10a Then he said to them, "The Lord had better be with you...

What Pharaoh says is less clear than most of the rest of the narrative. The gist of what he is saying is reasonably clear. "If I ever let you and your people go, Moses and Aaron, then your God had better be with you. Now, you two, vamoose." That is the gist of what Pharaoh is saying in vv. 10–11.

"Let it be so" indicates that what Moses and Aaron could get what they have asked for, and they will need God with them if this happens.

Exodus 10:10b ...when I let you and your little ones go!

Pharaoh continues his warning, which is that God had better be with Moses and Aaron if he sends them all out. Pharaoh is making a threat to the well-being of all Israelites.

What Moses and Aaron want is to go into the desert with all of their children and Pharaoh is not going to allow this. There may be something in Pharaoh's tone of voice, which makes what he is saying more clear. There seems to be some difficulties with the Hebrew language; but Pharaoh perhaps is insistent here to use it?

Exodus 10:10a-b *Then he said to them, "The Lord had better be with you when I let you and your little ones go!"*

Pharaoh balks at the release of everyone, even temporarily. What he says here is a threat. "Your God better be with you if you try to take your little ones with you!" What this means is, "You are not taking everyone out to worship God; that is a bridge too far."

My assumption would be that, Pharaoh is worried that Moses will lead the people out into the desert-wilderness and then just keep on going. I reject this possibility on the basis that God would not negotiate in such a dishonest fashion with Pharaoh. God is not going to have Moses lead the people out to the desert-wilderness and then suddenly say, "Now run for it!" That would be against God's character.

Essentially, God has always left the option open that, the Hebrew people could leave Egypt, but they would return—as slaves—but Pharaoh would have to agree to their leaving in the first place. A temporary exit was always the option open to Pharaoh, and option which he continually rejects.

God is making such a requirement based upon what He knows about Pharaoh's volition. In the end, Pharaoh and the people of Egypt will demand that Israel leave Egypt entirely, and to never come back.

Pharaoh mistakenly thinks that he is able to bargain with Moses (and, ultimately bargain with God). Or that he can set the limits. He cannot. All of his interaction with God to this point should tell him that.

Exodus 10:10c *Beware, for evil is ahead of you.*

Many translators understand this to mean that Pharaoh is calling the intent of Moses and Aaron to be evil. They have a plan, which is evil, and includes stealing away with their children when they are out of Egypt.

Another way to understand this is, if Moses and Aaron make any attempt to take everyone out of Egypt, that would lead them to a bad end (in other words, this is a threat).

V. 10 is not easily understood with a literal translation. *Beware* (or, *look*) is the 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine plural, Qal imperative of the simple verb *to see*. As we have seen, there is the masculine and the feminine of the word *evil*; the feminine is not as intense and often means *harm*. So just exactly what is Pharaoh saying? Let's see if I can paraphrase this: *God better be with you if I think that I will release you **and** your little ones. You are in serious trouble to even suggest these things.* The NASB gives a better idea of what

Pharaoh has said: "Thus may the Lord be with you if I ever let you and your little ones go. Take heed, for evil is in your mind [lit., *before your face*]." I believe these words to be idiomatic.

## Lesson 124: Exodus 10:10–11

## The Plague of the Locusts VI

The context of where we are is this: Moses has warned Pharaoh of the plague of locusts; it has not happened yet. Pharaoh and his cabinet have discussed this and they have called Moses back in, with an offer to let him and his people go to worship their God. But there is a sticking point—the children. Moses wants to take them out of Egypt; Pharaoh wants them to remain behind—essentially as hostages, to insure that Moses and his people return.

We are going to take another look at v. 10, as it is difficult to translate literally and to understand.

Exodus 10:10 Then he said to them, "The Lord had better be with you when I let you and your little ones go! Beware, for evil is ahead of you. (NKJV)

Exodus 10:10 He said to them, "Let it be so [that] Y<sup>e</sup>howah [is] with you [all]. According as I will send you [all] out with your little ones. Look, for the evil [which is] before you [all]. (Kukis moderately literal translation)

I understand that most people, upon reading that, might remark, *what the heck?* And this is after I inserted several words to smooth out the translation. It is much more elliptical in the Hebrew. If you read my translation above, without the bracketed words, it is even more clipped and obscure.

I believe that Pharaoh is telling Moses, in the final statement, that if he goes down that road—taking his children out of Egypt—that he could be leading them as well as the people of Israel into evil—into annihilation. Without Pharaoh being specific, I think Pharaoh is warning Moses that he will bring his army out against them all, if necessary.

Today, we might say, *It will be a cold day in hell before I let you and your little ones go. You had better be careful with foolish thoughts like that.*

As you see with the examples below, translators found this verse difficult to translate. If translated word for word, this verse makes little sense (apart from context, which helps to guide us here); yet when the idiom is translated freely, then it is not a translation, per se, but an interpretation. We are fortunate to live in a time when God's Word has been translated into modern English by over 100 different individuals and groups. We learn which translations are literal and which interpret the idioms and can guide ourselves and our studies accordingly.

Here is how various translations dealt with this verse:



Bible in Basic English	And he said to them, May the Lord be with you, if I will let you and your little ones go! take care, for your purpose clearly is evil.
Good News Bible (TEV)	The king said, "I swear by the LORD that I will never let you take your women and children! It is clear that you are plotting to revolt.
Common English Bible	Pharaoh said to them, "Yes, the LORD will be with you, all right, especially if I let your children go with you! Obviously, you are plotting some evil scheme.
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	So the king replied, "I never want Yahweh to help you, and I myself will never let you take your children and your wives with you! It is clear that you are planning not to return.
New Living Translation	Pharaoh retorted, "The LORD will certainly need to be with you if I let you take your little ones! I can see through your evil plan.
HCSB	He said to them, "May Yahweh be with you if I ever let you and your families go! [Pharaoh's reply is sarcastic.] Look out—you are planning evil.
Christian Community	Pharaoh said, "May Yahweh help you if ever I let you go with your little ones! Oh no! It's clear you are bent on evil.
Complete Jewish Bible	Pharaoh said to them, "ADONAI certainly will be with you if I ever let you go with your children! It's clear that you are up to no good.
Kaplan Translation	'May God only be with you just as I will let you leave with your children!' replied Pharaoh. 'You must realize that you will be confronted by evil.

You may notice that there are two basic understandings of that final phrase: (1) Pharaoh is telling Moses and he is aware that Moses is planning evil. He fears that Moses will get outside of Egypt with all of their children and animals and then make a run for it. (2) Pharaoh is warning Moses that the results of trying to leave with all of their children and animals will be bad (for Israel). We may even understand that both things are in play, and that by not being specific, Pharaoh is saying both of those things.

It is very likely that Pharaoh already had it in his mind that the men only would go out to worship their God. Pharaoh assumed that it would be nearby; and that the children and wives would remain to guarantee the return of the Hebrew people.

To offer an analogy, Pharaoh feels that he is like the company president who has been beaten down by a strike. He is prepared to listen to some reasonable demands, and is faced with a dozen totally unreasonable demands (to his own way of thinking). The problem is, Pharaoh is completely in the wrong. God expects Pharaoh to allow everyone to leave and to take their animals; and anything less is not acceptable to God.

When we are born into this world, we are born into a family, into a status, into a structure, into a nation; and most of the time, we assume that everything is the way that it ought to be (a lot of propaganda taught to a child at an early age can change this state of mind).

Pharaoh was born into a world where he realized (probably) that he would (or might) become Pharaoh; and that Egypt had many slaves for a variety of reasons. This was the status quo that he was born into, and he would like to preserve the status quo.

Moses is suggesting that the slaves of Pharaoh ought to have some religious rights, and this has been hard for Pharaoh to wrap his mind around. The notion is very foreign to his thinking.

As an aside, I want you to consider something else: all of Israel is enslaved; and Moses comes to them from outside of this slavery. Moses was living as a free man. He comes to Egypt as a free man; and he will be the savior of Israel. Do you see the parallel to Jesus? He comes to this world free from the sin nature; He is not enslaved to a sin nature; He is not encumbered by imputed sin—because He is born of a woman. Jesus is qualified to lead us out of slavery because He Himself is not a slave.

Back to our narrative:

Exodus 10:10 Then he said to them, “The Lord had better be with you when I let you and your little ones go! Beware, for evil is ahead of you.

Pharaoh is warning Moses that if he tries to remove his children from Egypt, harm will come to them all. The word *evil* can mean *harm, misery, distress, disaster, injury*. This is a warning to Moses. “Your plans will lead you nowhere else but to disaster,” Pharaoh warns him.

Exodus 10:11a Not so!

Pharaoh states, “This will not be so” or “This is not going to happen” or “What you desire is not going to happen.” Then, he will tell them how it will all occur.

No doubt, Pharaoh believes that Moses has an ulterior motive or a scheme. Pharaoh seems to believe that, once they get out of Egypt, all Israel will then make a run for it. This is *not* what Moses plans to do; nor is this what God has told Moses to do. Remember, if God wanted to, He could level all of Egypt as if a nuclear weapon hit it; and leave Goshen standing. God does not need any sort of subterfuge in order for Moses to escape with all his people.

I believe that God wanted Egypt to remain as a sovereign nation, so that her rich history could help us better understand the divine history found in Scripture. God is looking to beat Egypt down; but not to a point where there is nothing left.

There is another important consideration. Let’s say that God simply destroyed all of the Egyptians. What motivation would the Hebrew people have to go to Canaan? They have lived in Egypt for 400 years; Goshen is their home. For the people of Israel to be led out of Egypt and into a land that none of them know, that is going to require an extraordinary set of events. We are going to find out, as we continue in the book of Exodus, that this

generation of Israelites are not easily molded by God into little helpful cherubs. They are quite the opposite.

Exodus 10:11b **Go now, you who are men, and serve the Lord,...**

This is what Pharaoh finds acceptable; the adult males can go out of Egypt and serve their God through whatever sort of worship they deem reasonable. But it is not going to be with their children or with their flocks.

Pharaoh is saying, "I agree to your worshiping, but within limits. These are my limits: adult males only."

Exodus 10:11c **...for that is what you desired."**

Then Pharaoh attempts to sell this to Moses and Aaron. This is what you desire; this is what you want. Perhaps Pharaoh is even saying, "Isn't this what you asked for originally?" Again, this may have been what Pharaoh had in his own mind, but the requirements set by God are different.

Exodus 10:11a-c **Not so! Go now, you who are men, and serve the Lord, for that is what you desired."**

Pharaoh tells Moses that the adult males can go and serve God. That is what Pharaoh finds acceptable. But that is not what God required to this point. Even though we have not heard it over and over again, Moses has, no doubt, laid out the requirements of God on several occasions.

Pharaoh cannot let the Hebrews go. He has to hold the children hostage. Moses anticipated Pharaoh's objections and began by saying "With our young..."

What Pharaoh does not want to do is (1) lose the upper hand and (2) lose the Hebrews as slaves. He is the ruler of Egypt and he is willing to make certain allowances for Moses and Aaron; but these allowances are going to be temporary.

I do have a question which bothered me for some time: why did God originally tell Moses to take the people out temporarily, when God's ultimate intention was for this to be a permanent status at some point? God would not lie and He would not act as though He was going to do one thing and then do another. He didn't need to do that. God does not have to be sneaky in order to remove the sons of Israel from Egypt. So let's take this in points:

### **Did God Lie to Pharaoh About the Permanence of the Exodus?**

1. God makes reasonable demands of us.
2. When it comes to eternal salvation, we may at any time in our lives simply believe in Jesus Christ and we are saved forever
3. Sometimes God has to make our lives difficult so that we will turn to Him

## Did God Lie to Pharaoh About the Permanence of the Exodus?

4. What God offered Pharaoh at first was a reasonable demand—allow the Hebrews to go out to the desert and worship Him for a week or two. They would walk out of Egypt for period of three days before stopping to worship their God.
5. Had Pharaoh at any time during the first eight plagues, allowed the Hebrews to go to the desert without any conditions, then God would have only required the Hebrews to go out to the desert to worship Him and then they would have voluntarily returned to slavery.
6. Just because God knows the outcome, does not mean that His early offers were not real.
7. Sometimes the police will pull a sting operation on someone they know to be a felon, but cannot prove. This alleged felon can at any time get out easily by walking away from the criminal activity. The police generally know in advance that he will react to the sting by joining into criminal activity, but the ability to walk away from the crime in the first place is always there.
8. There was (and probably still is) an investigative service for husbands and wives—they would set up one of the two with an opportunity for infidelity and photographically record the results. The husband is subjected to this because the wife believes that he will fail a test of fidelity; however, he can walk away from this at any time and he has passed the test. I am not commenting on whether or not this is a good or bad service; I am simply offering it up by way of illustration.
9. God has offered Pharaoh a simple demand, that, had he accepted Y<sup>e</sup>howah's conditions, then he would have been able to retain his slave population.
10. Since he did not allow the Hebrews to leave temporarily to worship God, he will place himself in a position where they will have no choice but to exodus from the country—in fact, Pharaoh himself will personally see to that.

An all-powerful God has no reason to lie to Pharaoh; He has no need to send Moses to Pharaoh with a false, invalid or misleading request. The fact that God knew Pharaoh would reject this request does not invalidate that theses are real options put before Pharaoh.

So it appears at first that Pharaoh is capitulating to the next plague before God brings it, but he tells Moses, "Only the adult males may go." This was not what God required; furthermore, this would have left the women, children and livestock behind unprotected. Was this the intent of Pharaoh or did he simply want them to remain behind? Whatever Pharaoh's motivation, what he was willing to do was not acceptable to God, and Moses and Aaron knew it.

Then Pharaoh appears to say, "This is my final offer; now get out of here if you don't want it!"

Exodus 10:11d [And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.](#)

At this point, Pharaoh saw himself as being done with Moses and his God. He sends Moses and Aaron out of his presence. The idea that Moses and Aaron and *driven from his presence* indicates that this parting was filled with animosity.

## Lesson 125: Exodus 10:10–14

## The Plague of the Locusts Part VII

So far, Moses and Aaron have warned Pharaoh about the next plague, which is locusts. Pharaoh is obstinate, so they leave. However, there is some dissension among the ranks of Pharaoh's cabinet. They believe that the God of Moses will bring on them this next plague; and they don't want it. "Make a deal with him," they urge.

So Pharaoh calls Moses and Aaron back and he tries to make a deal with them, but God has specific instructions, and Moses cannot negotiate God's instructions. Since they cannot come to an agreement, Moses and Aaron are driven out of the palace.

Exodus 10:11 *Not so! Go now, you who are men, and serve the Lord, for that is what you desired." And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.*

Pharaoh told Moses that he and the other men of Goshen can go and worship their God; but they cannot take their wives, children and animals with them. That was as far as Pharaoh was willing to go.

Pharaoh still believes that he is in charge. He has spoken; and that's the end of it. His cabinet members are right there hearing this discussion. Pharaoh cannot look weak in front of them. Therefore, Moses and Aaron are not simply asked to leave; they were thrown out, it appears.

Remember at the beginning of this chapter, at v. 3, the narrative changed slightly. In the previous plague, most of our information comes from God speaking to Moses. However, this time, most of our information comes from the actual meeting between Moses and Aaron and Pharaoh. What we see in this meeting is, Pharaoh will try to lay down the law and allow only the adult males to leave and worship their God; but God is not going to bargain with Pharaoh. From a literary standpoint, this set of events plays out better with Moses and Aaron standing before Pharaoh.

Exodus 10:10–11 *Then he [Pharaoh] said to them [Moses and Aaron], "The Lord had better be with you when I let you and your little ones go! Beware, for evil is ahead of you. Not so! Go now, you who are men, and serve the Lord, for that is what you desired." And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.*

Moses and Aaron have gone before Pharaoh and have warned him about the locusts that God would send upon the land of Egypt. At first, it appeared that Pharaoh was willing to work out a deal with Moses, allowing the adult males to leave and worship their God. However, this was not good enough. Moses said all of the people—including the women

and children—had to leave—along with their livestock. This was unacceptable to Pharaoh and Pharaoh drove them away. Therefore, what Moses promised would come to pass.

In v. 12, God will speak to Moses. We do not know if Moses returned to God for directions, or if this is what God had previously told Moses.

Exodus 10:12a *Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts,...”*

As has been mentioned previously, there is a certain amount of theater in what God does. Someone has to be watching Moses, even if it is not Pharaoh, who has sent Moses and Aaron away. Also, bear in mind that angels are observing us; and they observe Moses and this entire drama as well.

As an aside, by watching us, angels also learn about God. There is no reason to think that angels were created with complete knowledge of God infused into their minds. God has interacted with them on prehistoric planet earth; and God interacts with man in our current era. Angels are watching. They learn God’s character by watching what God does—they see how God interacts with His creatures (us). They more fully understand God’s Word and His character by watching Him interact with us.

Exodus 10:12a *Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts,...”*

The preposition before the word *locusts* is somewhat confusing. It is the preposition ב<sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced *b<sup>eh</sup>*], which means, *in, into, through; among, in the midst of; at, by, near, on, before, in the presence of, upon; with; to, unto, upon, up to; in respect to, on account of; by means of, about, concerning*. No Strong’s # BDB #88. Moses is stretching out his hand *concerning* the locusts to invade the land. The NKJV used the preposition *for*.

Notice that no longer is God having Moses to tell Aaron to stretch his staff over the land but now Moses is doing that. This was God's original plan; Moses just wasn't ready for it at the beginning; so they went to plan B. However, Moses just slowly assumed a position of complete leadership and Aaron appears to be tagging along.

Exodus 10:12a *Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts,...”*

God had already given these instructions to Moses.

Exodus 10:12b *...that they [the locusts] may come upon the land of Egypt,...*

The locusts will come up upon the land of Egypt in massive numbers. What we are reading here is likely connect to vv. 1–2.

Exodus 10:12c *...and eat every herb of the land...*



These locusts will come upon the land and eat everything that is green—every plant and every green shoot will be eaten by them.

Exodus 10:12d ...—all that the hail has left.”

The hail destroyed most of the plants and trees; but the locusts will eat whatever remains. As often occurs after a forest fire, small green plants begin to emerge from the ground—sometimes, even the next day, if there is water involved. This was probably taking place soon after the hail had struck. But the locusts will put an end to that, eating anything attempting to seek their way through the soil.

Exodus 10:12 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land—all that the hail has left.”

When Moses stretches out his hand over the land of Egypt, there are no doubt witnesses to that. God does this in part for the benefit of Pharaoh and all of Egypt. God requires them to see that Moses is acting at God directs him.

All of this is very dramatic, and God does this for effect and so that it is clear that He is acting through Moses. So Moses does not leave and suddenly there are locusts; but Moses raises his hand over the land of Egypt—something which is seen by many people—and this will be interpreted as if Moses is *summoning* the locusts (or that Moses is making a motion to God, indicating that it is time).

When it says that *the Lord said to Moses*, that does not mean that Moses stepped outside of the palace and then God spoke to him. This could have been what God told Moses earlier. We do not know for certain (here, the conjunction is a wâw consecutive followed by a Qal imperfect, which *usually* refers to action which occurs after the previous verbs).

God has already told Moses what he is to do.

Exodus 10:1–2 Now the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him, and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son’s son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I am the Lord.”

Exodus 10:12 Then the Lord said to Moses, “[When Pharaoh refuses to do what I have commanded, then you will] Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land—all that the hail has left.”

There is no reason for Moses to go running to God, asking Him, “What should I do next?” each and every time Pharaoh becomes obstinate. I believe that every time that Pharaoh is obstinate, Moses is ready with divine consequences.

I picture v. 13 as occurring almost immediately after Moses and Aaron step outside of the palace. I doubt that there was any intervening conversation between God and Moses.

Moses does exactly what God tells him to do.

Exodus 10:13a *So Moses stretched out his rod over the land of Egypt,....*

This rod appears to indicate that the God of Moses is about to act.

This is done in such a way that many Egyptians see what Moses is doing, and they understand that this means Moses is bring to their land another judgment from God. Whereas, those in the palace know what is coming, the people of Egypt do not. They simply see what Moses is doing, and they understand that means another judgment from the God of Moses.

This time, there is an elapse of time before this judgment of God comes to bear on Egypt. So, when Pharaoh's cabinet exit from palace, they are probably mobbed by the people, demanding to know what was happening next. Now, we do not know the decorum of Egypt at this time, so it is possible that Egyptian citizens approach these cabinet members more privately.

Exodus 10:13b *...and the Lord brought an east wind on the land all that day and all that night.*

Once Moses had lifted up his rod, giving the signal, then God used an eastern wind to blow through the land. The wind was felt by all of the people of Egypt immediately. This wind would blow all day and all night. Do you see how that functioned as a dramatic and prolonged introduction to the next plague.

All those who knew someone on Pharaoh's cabinet was contacting them immediately, asking to know what was happening, what was coming next; and why hadn't all of this been stopped.

I've noticed a slight variation in renditions of v. 13. The verb attached to Y<sup>e</sup>howah is the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular, Piel perfect of *nâhag* (נָהַג) [pronounced *naw-HAG*] and it means *to lead, to guide*. The Piel is the intensive stem because this was a strong, concentrated wind—a very particular wind in fact; driven with a purpose. The perfect tense indicates completed action. God gathered up all of the locusts and, in the space of perhaps half a day, and deposited them all upon the land of Egypt.

Exodus 10:13c *When it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts.*

When it was morning, it was apparent that God had used this eastern wind to bring in all of these locusts into Egypt. Bear in mind that Pharaoh and his cabinet know what to expect. It is likely that many of their friends and relatives accosted them for more information and spread this information to others. However, Egypt, for the most part, knows that something is happening, but they don't know what it is. So, they will be well aware of all the wind, but it appears that they would not fully appreciate what was happening until the next morning. People would wake up, and they themselves, in their own beds, would feel hundreds of locusts on top of them. When it is light, Egyptians would look out their front door and see locusts everywhere. They would completely cover the land.



**Locust Scourge in Africa** (a photograph); from the [South China Morning Post](#); accessed August 11, 2020.

## Lesson 126: Exodus 10:13–15

## The Plague of the Locusts VIII

Exodus 10:13 [So Moses stretched out his rod over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind on the land all that day and all that night. When it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts.](#)

This appears to be a very natural curse to come upon Egypt. There are a large amount of locusts in the Sinai area, and God brings them all into Egypt with an east wind (I am making the assumption that the east wind comes from out of the east).

It is interesting how God performs these miracles. He did not create these locusts out of nothing; otherwise, He would not needed a wind to pick them up. They were all elsewhere at this time, possibly scattered, possibly all in the same place. God picks them all up from wherever they happen to be in the orient and captures them in the wind and blows them all over into Egypt. Interestingly enough, none of this is necessarily supernatural. There is no doubt that God could have, in an instant, created the locusts right out of thin air—but He chose not to. He obviously prepared the locusts elsewhere and brought them to Egypt when the time was right. Had Pharaoh agreed to the conditions proposed by Moses, there would have been no wind to bring these locusts into Egypt.

All of these events take into account the volitions of Moses and Pharaoh. God knew that Pharaoh would be disobedient, so that another judgment would be brought against the land of Egypt. God also knew that Moses would be obedient and raise up his staff when the time came to do so.

Exodus 10:14a *And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt...*

Once Moses had lifted his rod into the skies, God brought the locusts in via an east wind. These locusts swarmed throughout all of Egypt.

Exodus 10:14b *...and rested on all the territory of Egypt.*

God moved the locusts into Egypt from wherever they were in the east, and they came to rest or they settled onto all of the territory of Egypt. This appears to be the next morning after Moses lifted up his hand.

Exodus 10:14a-b *And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt and rested on all the territory of Egypt.*

As has been discussed, these plagues, for the most part, appear to be natural phenomenon times 10 (or whatever). It is something which has been seen before, but never quite like this. The number of locusts was extraordinary. God seemed to simply allow conditions to be so that, a huge number of locusts are alive at the same time, and then He used this east wind to gather them all up and deposit them on the land of Egypt. There appears no reason to thinking that these locusts were magically created. God is capable of doing this—He is not limited by the environment, because it is His environment that He created.

Exodus 10:14c *They were very severe;...*

The locusts extremely numerous. There is an adjective and a pronoun used to describe the locusts in v. 14. The adverb is actually the masculine noun *m<sup>o</sup>ôd* (מֹד) [pronounced *meh-ODE*] and it means *muchness, force, abundance*. However, it can act as a superlative, acting as an adverb meaning *exceedingly, very*. I would not be surprised if these were not different words with similar meanings, both pronounced and written alike, but context determines whether the word is the noun or the adverb. Strong's #3966 BDB #547. The adjective it modifies is *kâbêd* (כָּבֵד) [pronounced *kaw-BADE*] and it generally means *heavy*, but it can also mean *numerous*, which is the sense in which it is used here. Strong's #3515 BDB #458. There is no noun or a verb to go with these two words; the virtually stand alone in the middle of two sentences. Therefore there is great emphasis placed upon these two words. The words *they were* are simply added by the NKJV to smooth out the translation.

Exodus 10:14d *...previously there had been no such locusts as they, nor shall there be such after them.*

The word translated *they* is actually *he*; and it refers back to the *locust*, which is actually a masculine singular noun, but used in a collective sense (like *herd*, *flock*). This makes perfect sense in the Hebrew; but not in the English. However, the word *swarm* would be a good translation, if one wanted to maintain the singular number. In any case, most translate *locust* as a plural. There had never been a swarm of locusts like this before; and there would never be one like this again.

Exodus 10:14c-d *They were very severe; previously there had been no such locusts as they, nor shall there be such after them.*

Literally, this verse is translated: *Before it [the locust swarm] so there has never been a swarm [of locusts] like it and after it, so [such a swarm] will never come to pass [ever again].* The bracketed words are not a part of the literal translation, but thrown in to smooth out and convey the meaning of the literal translation.

There are locusts in the land as has never been seen before. The quantity of locusts is pretty much beyond our imagination.

When describing that this has never occurred before and would never occur again, we have two negatives and the same verb, modified by the same adverb. The verb is *hâyâh* (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*] which is likely the most common verb in the Old Testament. It means *is, to be, to come to pass*. *Hâyâh* first occurs in the Qal perfect and then in the Qal imperfect. The modifying adverb is the very commonly used *kên* (כֵּן) [pronounced *ken*] and it means *so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted*; depending upon its context. It refers mostly to manner, but it also refers to degree, quantity, or quality. Here, it means, *after, afterwards*.

Exodus 10:14 *And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt and rested on all the territory of Egypt. They were very severe; previously there had been no such locusts as they, nor shall there be such after them.*

Throughout this verse, *locust* is in the singular. If you have a difficult time with that, but you want a very literal translation, then translate this *swarm [of locusts]*, and you have an English equivalent when it comes to number.

The description of what happens is quite remarkable.

Exodus 10:15a *For they covered the face of the whole earth,...*

The NKJV translates the final word *earth*, but *land* is a better translation here.

The locusts covered the face (lit., eye) of the land. You may recall that this was used before and it was a play on words. We have a play on words here as well. They cover up the eye of the land, so that it is darkened; it cannot see out and we cannot see it.



The locusts are treated as one as they act with one accord, ravaging the land of Egypt. Only a portion of Egypt is fertile; the land that receives its water from the Nile, Egypt's lifeblood. This is where the locusts settled and decimated the land. Here is where all their farms were and every bit of shrubbery was eaten; at least all the new growth (the green portions). What is left is barren land and barren trees. Every bit of new growth has been stripped off of it. The way Moses speaks of this in retrospect indicates that the concentration of these locusts was far greater than the concentration of the gnats or the blood-sucking gad flies.

Exodus 10:15b ...so that the land was darkened;...

The idea is, the land would be darkened by so many locusts. It appears that there are so many locusts in the skies that even the sun is blocked out, to some degree.

Exodus 10:15a-b For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened;...

Apparently, the locusts were so thick in the air that it made the land dark. They were like a massive cloud.

#### **Current Locust invasions in Africa:**

Interestingly enough, at the time that I began to write about the judgment of locusts on Egypt, much of Africa is under the threat of several locust swarms.

*From the Guardian: A second wave of desert locusts is threatening east Africa with estimates that it will be 20 times worse than the plague that descended two months ago.*

*The locusts present "an extremely alarming and unprecedented threat" to food security and livelihoods, according to the UN. A swarm of just more than a third of a square mile can eat the same amount of food in one day as 35,000 people.*

*This second invasion from breeding grounds in Somalia includes more young adults which are especially voracious eaters.*<sup>12</sup>

**A Plague of Locusts** (a contemporary photograph); from the [Guardian](#); accessed June 30, 2020. The copy for this picture reads: *Desert locusts in Kipsing, near Oldonyiro, in Isiolo county, Kenya.*<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> From the [Guardian](#), accessed June 30, 2020.

<sup>13</sup> From the [Guardian](#), accessed June 30, 2020.



Exodus 10:15c ...and they ate every herb of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left.

There was some greenery remaining after the horrendous hail storm which was a previous judgment. The locusts ate all of the green remaining on the plants and trees.



Exodus 10:15d So there remained nothing green on the trees or on the plants of the field throughout all the land of Egypt.

Nothing green remained of the plants and trees of Egypt. Even though the hail destroyed nearly every plant and tree in the land of Egypt, small green shoots began to peak out through the soil. The ravenous insects went after any sort of greenery that they could find.

Exodus 10:15 For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they ate every herb of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left. So there remained nothing green on the trees or on the plants of the field throughout all the land of Egypt.

There was nothing edible or close to edible that was not consumed by these locusts.

I don't know if there was any grain storage (as in the days of Joseph), but it is reasonable to assume that, if there was, the locusts got into that as well.

In several of these plagues, there were a great many small varmints which came down on Egypt; but these locusts were the worst of all of them. Previously, there were so many frogs as to be an horrendous nuisance, but these locusts were far more than just a nuisance.

#### **Locusts as a Swarm (a question from the Guardian):**

Apparently, locusts become much worse creatures when they swarm.

From the [Guardian](#):

*How does a single locust become a swarm?*

*In normal times, locusts are not usually a threat. Desert locusts are a type of grasshopper that feed off vegetation but are usually solitary.*

*But when conditions bring them together, their behaviour completely changes. As few as two locusts touching each other can create a connection that starts them forming into groups. This unlocks their destructive “gregarious” state that changes their behaviour and even colour.*

*Rains help the swarms to form. The moisture turns deserts into ideal habitats for breeding and the locusts feed off the growing vegetation. In two generations, the number of locusts can increase 400-fold.*

*They easily devour fields of crops and when the food dries up, they move on. “Bands” of wingless, gregarious locusts move in the same direction, while adult winged “swarms” migrate by air in search of greenery.*

*Dry weather usually kills them off naturally but when things change, plagues begin. A combination of ideal breeding conditions and a lack of control operations can allow unchecked breeding, which is what happened in Yemen in 2018. Two cyclones within months of each other created long breeding periods that allowed the numbers to grow 8,000-fold and the war in the region meant the locusts were not detected and destroyed.*

What the Egyptians faced was of such a magnitude that Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron in almost immediately. The locusts were so devastating that God needed to remove them. Life had become impossible in Egypt.

We tend to think of things chronologically, and this is not necessarily how this narrative is presented. That is, God did not necessarily begin speaking to Moses again, soon after he is thrown out of the palace. That is, there is no reason to think that, after being thrown out of the palace, Moses throws his hands in the air and exclaims, *what to do now, God?* Moses likely knew what to do already. The order of events is probably this:

### **Exodus 10:1–15: The Order of Events**

1. God spoke to Moses, and told him what the next plague was and what he was to do. We have this partially preserved in vv. 1–2, 12.
2. What Moses said to Pharaoh in vv. 3–6 is also a part of what God told Moses to say. Moses does not walk in before Pharaoh and just start talking and making things up. When he expresses God’s demands, it is because God made those demands clear to Moses first.
3. Then Moses and Aaron went in before Pharaoh, and Moses laid out what God was going to do in vv. 3–6. Then, they walked out (v. 6).
4. There was a quick cabinet meeting, and Pharaoh discussed this with his servants (his cabinet), and it was clear, they believed that God would bring down on them another plague and, they did not want to face it. Exodus 10:7

## Exodus 10:1–15: The Order of Events

5. Pharaoh calls Moses and Aaron back into the palace before they do anything, and he tells them that the men may worship their God; but not the children. Exodus 10:8–11a
6. Insofar as Pharaoh is concerned, that is the final word on the matter, and he drives them both out of the palace when his offer is rejected. V. 11b
7. Moses is outside with Aaron, and he begins the actions which will initiate the next plague (that is, Moses already knows what to do next). Exodus 10:13–15

There is nothing really out of chronological order, apart from v. 12.

On the other hand, there is no real problem with understanding Moses going to God and saying, “What now?” after being dismissed by Pharaoh. It appears that Moses had almost a direct line to God (there appears to have been a tent where Moses went to speak to God).

## Lesson 127: Exodus 10:16–17

## The Plague of the Locusts X

Moses has warned Pharaoh that God would bring locusts into the land and Pharaoh. At first, appeared that he would acquiesce to God’s requirements, but he changed his mind. His heart was too hard.

As a result, the locusts have invaded Egypt, and they are worse than anyone could have imagined.

Exodus 10:16a *Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste,...*

The locusts have come in and just covered the land, eating everything that they can. They are in all of the houses; they virtually cover the land. Pharaoh calls Moses and Aaron back to make a deal, so that Egypt might be rid of the locusts.

The phrase *in haste* is actually the Piel imperfect of the verb *mâhar* (מָהַר) [pronounced *maw-HAHR*], which means, *to hasten, to hurry, to hustle, to make haste, to rush*; its transitive use is *to prepare quickly, to bring quickly, to do quickly*. Strong’s #4116 BDB #554. Pharaoh is the subject of the verb and the Piel is the intensive stem. Pharaoh wanted to deal with this problem immediately.

One of the details that seems to be missing from most of these plague narratives is, *who went to find Moses and Aaron and how did they do that?* Pharaoh sent one or a few men to Goshen, apparently knowing where Moses and Aaron would be. Walking across the border into the town of Goshen was probably like walking through an invisible force shield. On the Egypt side, there are locusts all around the messengers, clinging to their garb; and with each step, they would hear the crunching of locust bodies beneath their feet. But, when they stepped into Goshen city limits, it was as if they were in a new world, and there were no more locusts—not clinging to their clothing and not beneath their sandals.

They found Moses and Aaron and brought them forthwith to the palace.

What I have described is likely what took place between v. 16a and 16b.

Exodus 10:16b ...and said, “I have sinned against the Lord your [pl.] God and against you [pl.]”

Again, as Pharaoh did in the previous chapter, he admits to sinning with regards to Y<sup>e</sup>howah; and to sinning with regards to Moses and Aaron. “I gave you my word; I wanted to work things out. I have sinned against you. Let’s come to a meeting of the minds.” may have been Pharaoh’s words.

Exodus 10:16 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste, and said, “I have sinned against the Lord your [pl.] God and against you [pl.]”

Pharaoh brings back Moses and Aaron and apologizes to them, admitting that he sinned against their Lord and against them.

Pharaoh admits his sin regarding Moses and Aaron; and against their God. The 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix would refer to Moses and Aaron; and possibly to all Israel.

I do not doubt that the Pharaoh is very sincere with this plea. A criminal, when faced with a great deal of time in jail or with the death sentence can become very sincerely sorry that they have done what they've done. I heard a news show where a drug dealer found that he was going into jail for a mandatory 15 years and he said he learned his lesson and really thought that he could have learned it in 5 years. This was prior to going into jail. You could tell by his voice that he was very sorry that he did what he did. He did not feel that what he did was all that wrong, but he was certainly unhappy about the consequences, and he was very sorry about that. People who are wrong, when faced with the consequences are suddenly very sorry for what has happened; but they are mostly sorry about the consequences.

Pharaoh recognizing that he has sinned is, more or less, the first step. What it takes for him to be saved is to go from there to faith in the Revealed God, the God of Moses and Aaron, the God Who could forgive him. Pharaoh needs to have trust in that God.

What I believed happened here was, not only did Pharaoh realize what he had done had serious consequences to his country; but, based upon the previous plague, those in his cabinet were probably complaining as well. “We told you to capitulate!” one may have said to him.

Exodus 10:17a Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once,...

We have the noun *sin* used for the first time in the book of Exodus here. The verb was found earlier in this chapter and in Exodus 9 as well. Pharaoh is saying, “You saw past my

sin previously; please forgive me this one more time.” The idea that he is trying to convey is, “This will be the last time.”

The word often translated "forgive" in this verse is *nâsâ'* (נָסָא) [pronounced *naw-SAW*], in the Qal imperative. The root meaning is "to lift up." and it means *to lift up, to bear, to take away guilt*.

Pharaoh asks for his sin to be forgiven (that is, that it be *lifted up and taken away*) and that the locusts be lifted up taken away as well.

His sin was negative volition toward the God of Moses; his sin was him promising to allow Moses and the sons of Israel to leave Egypt to worship their God; and then going back on that promise.

Pharaoh is not as concerned with the guilt or the wrongness of what he has done, as he is with the result—the punishment which God inflicted upon Egypt. Often, this is the only way to control criminals. They may be beyond the point at which they realize (or are concerned that) their crime is morally wrong; but they do understand negative consequences applied to their life. If you know any criminals, no doubt you have heard them say, “I don’t ever want to return to jail.” In some cases, they will change their behavior in order to make that happen (I have personally known people to say something like that and to change things around so that they never went back to jail). Pharaoh understands not so much that he is wrong, but that there are some very unpleasant results.

**Application:** This is why we discipline children. They do not come to us with a blank slate, as some maintain, but they have genetic predispositions, they have learned behavior and they have an old sin nature which is full blown at birth. Discipline connects pain and discomfort with incorrect behavior. This helps to develop a conscience. Actually, so there is no misunderstanding, the discipline coupled with an explanation as to why they are being disciplined helps to develop a conscience in the child. A child needs to know what is right and wrong and needs to have this taught to him, even if it requires spanking (which is different from physical and emotional abuse).

**Application:** It is a parent's duty to discipline a child and if you are unable to discipline a child or would want to spank them for every infraction that they commit, then you have no business having children. A child will develop true self esteem and have the best possible peer interaction if he is brought up to be polite, considerate, well-behaved and lawful. A child needs to learn respect for his elders, his peers, for the property of others; a child needs to know the value of hard work and achievement. Self-esteem for its own sake is worthless and does nothing but spoil the child.

Back to our narrative:

Exodus 10:17a *Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once,...*



I have no doubt that, throughout these judgments, Pharaoh was sincere in his request. At the attack of the locusts, Pharaoh no doubt regretted what he had done, and, in the moment, he appears to be willing to agree to virtually anything.

Exodus 10:17b “...and entreat the Lord your God,...

In the moment, Pharaoh understands that this is all about the God of Moses and Aaron; and not about either man individually. He also understands that Moses and Aaron are mediaries between God and himself. He does not quite understand yet that it is Moses who is the true intermediary between God and him.

Quite obviously, he would not understand that Moses is a type. I don't believe that any of the Old Testament saints (and sinners) understood even the most fundamental facts about typology.

Exodus 10:17c “...that He may take away from me this death only.”

"Take" is the Hiphil future (causative future) of *ṣûwr* (סור) (pronounced *soor*), and it means *to depart, turn aside or away*. The causative means that Pharaoh wants God to cause his sin to depart from him. This would be the logical word for Pharaoh to use, as he clearly wants the locusts lifted up and taken away as well.

The word for death is a very common one: *mâveth* (מָוֶת) [pronounced MAW-veth], which means, *death [as opposed to life], death by violence*. Strong has its figurative meaning as *pestilence, ruin*. Pharaoh looks out onto the landscape and he sees no life of any sort out there. Strong's #4194 BDB #560. The land of Egypt is in ruin from this and all of the previous judgments.

Although there were not necessarily any deaths which resulted directly from the locusts, Pharaoh recognizes that they will have no food to feed their animals.

Exodus 10:17 Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once, and entreat the Lord your God, that He may take away from me this death only.”

Pharaoh wants God to lift away his sin or remove the guilt (or in this case, the judgement) for his sin, and then God is to cause to depart from Pharaoh, *this death*, referring to the wholesale destruction of the land. This is a metonymy where the word *death* stands for *plague*; *death* is the result of the plague/judgment of the locust. This is not the result of the pangs of conscience but it is the result of the discipline under which the Pharaoh finds himself.

This appears to be the salvation message. Pharaoh requests Moses and Aaron to intercede between God and him; to mediate between God and him. He has sinned and he asked to be forgiven that sin. He knows that only the proper mediator (that is, Jesus Christ) can make a request like this. And what is Pharaoh asking to have removed? *This death!* And how many times does this need to take place? *Just this one time!*



The locusts have stripped the fields of all vegetation, so Pharaoh looks out on the horizon, and sees nothing but bare ground, wherever there might be an opening between these swarms of locusts.

Dr. Peter Pett suggests<sup>14</sup> that, when there were so many locusts that this blocked the sun, thus bringing about the temporary death of the sun god, Re; that this is the death to which Pharaoh refers. I believe that it is much simpler than that; the death from starvation is anticipated.

I have no doubts about the sincerity of Pharaoh at this point. As long as the pressure is being applied—the locusts covering the land of Egypt—he is willing to agree to anything. Even in his own mind, I do not doubt that he is willing to capitulate to any requirement of God.

Exodus 10:16–17 Pharaoh quickly called for Moses and Aaron and said, “I have sinned against Jehovah your God and against Israel. Please bear my sin just this one time; and also make supplication for me to Jehovah your God to take away from Egypt this death.”

What Pharaoh asks for parallels our salvation experience. The NIV is used below, unless otherwise noted.

Parallels to Salvation	
Pharaoh's Actions	Our Salvation Experience
Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron to come quickly.	For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation. (2Cor. 6:2 Psalm 69:13 Isa. 49:8)
Pharaoh has sinned against God. All men are fallen and have sinned against God.	There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. (Rom. 3:22b–24)
Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron to mediate between him and God.	For there is one God, and there is one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself as a ransom for all,... (1Tim. 2:5–6a; ESV; capitalized)

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<sup>14</sup> Dr. Peter Pett; *Commentary Series on the Bible*; from e-sword, Exodus 10:17.

Parallels to Salvation	
Pharaoh's Actions	Our Salvation Experience
Pharaoh asks that his sin be forgiven this one time.	The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins. It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. (Heb. 10:1–4)
Forgiveness of sin will take away this death.	Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On Him we have set our hope that He will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers. (2Cor. 1:9–11a) Although Paul is speaking of temporal forgiveness here; this parallels eternal forgiveness, which is had by faith in Christ.

It is certainly reasonable to ask, *is Pharaoh saved?* When the pressure is on, he regrets his sins; but, as soon as the pressure is removed, he strengthens his negative volition against God. I would say that he has never really exercised faith in the Revealed God, based upon what he does (what Pharaoh does reveals what is in his soul). He is the man who calls for it to stop hurting— “I will do anything; I will promise to start going to church on Sundays!” But when the pressure is removed, whatever promises he has made are set aside.

Lesson 128: Exodus 10:13–20

The Plague of the Locusts XI

Moses has warned Pharaoh about the plague to come. At first, it appeared that Pharaoh would give in, but he was not willing to do all that God required.

Exodus 10:13–15 So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day and all that night. When it was morning, the east wind had brought the locusts. The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and settled on the whole country of Egypt, such a dense swarm of locusts as had never been before, nor ever will be again. They covered the face of the whole land, so that the land was darkened, and they ate all the plants in the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Not a green thing remained, neither tree nor plant of the field, through all the land of Egypt.

The actual judgment appears to be quite natural. The locusts are actually alive somewhere else, and God uses a strong wind to pick them up and move them to Egypt.

The locusts eat anything which is green.

Exo 10:16–17 Then Pharaoh hastily called Moses and Aaron and said, "I have sinned against the LORD your God, and against you. Now therefore, forgive my sin, please, only this once, and plead with the LORD your God only to remove this death from me." (ESV)

Pharaoh, once again, gives in to the plague. Again, he *seems* to be truly repentant.

Exodus 10:18a *So he went out from Pharaoh...*

There were locusts everywhere throughout Egypt. They had eaten all that the hail had not destroyed and they were everywhere. Pharaoh had again relented and agreed—at least he appeared to agree—to what Moses—speaking for God—had demanded.

Only Moses is mentioned when it comes to leaving Pharaoh and making supplication to God, but certainly Aaron was there. Finally, even though he was devastated because God just economically destroyed Egypt for many more decades, God will give Pharaoh the strength to express the contents of his soul.

I am speculating here, but I believe that Pharaoh is not the kind of man who truly recognizes his sin; I don't think that he desires for God forgive him. However, he clearly recognizes the consequences or the discipline of his wrongdoing and that is the only thing which really bothers him. Having sinned once or twice myself in the past and then getting tremendous deserved discipline for it, I can assure you that I also have been very interested in the removal of the discipline. In some areas, it is the discipline which has helped me to recognize the depravity of my actions. However, Pharaoh only sees the discipline and has not moved from there to the correction of his behavior. God has given him enough strength to express that which is in his soul, and that is what he will do.

Only Moses is mentioned as going out from Pharaoh because this is the type which God wants to establish—one intermediary (Moses) between God and man (Pharaoh).

Why is it that Moses must leave the palace? There has to be a separation between Pharaoh and God. Pharaoh is unclean; Pharaoh is not regenerate; so only Moses can make intercession for him. Pharaoh cannot present his case to God personally. Therefore, there must be this set-apart place (a place where Moses can meet with God, where Moses is not defiled by Pharaoh).

Exodus 10:18b *...and entreated the Lord.*

Moses went to God and asked for relief from the locusts.

Moses acts as an intercessor between Pharaoh and God (between man and God). In this way, Moses represents the ministry that Jesus has as our Mediator.

Exodus 10:18 [So he went out from Pharaoh and entreated the Lord.](#)

Before God would remove the locusts, Moses had to go out and speak to God, making this request on behalf of Pharaoh. Moses must first act as an intermediary. This is exactly the picture which God wants to paint with Moses—a singular intermediary between man and God. By Moses' request on behalf of the undeserving, God will remove the plague. This parallels our salvation, with Jesus acting as our intermediary. We are undeserving, yet God will remove the judgment which is against us.

Exodus 10:19a [And the Lord turned a very strong west wind,...](#)

There was a wind coming out from the west. God takes that wind and he maneuvers it to suit His Own purposes.

A wind from the east brought the locusts into Egypt; and wind from the west will remove them.

Exodus 10:19b [...which took the locusts away...](#)

God uses the wind to lift up all of the locusts which are in the land of Egypt. This occurs so suddenly, that possibly hurricane force winds (or very nearly so) are employed, God picks all of the locusts off of the ground and from all cracks and crevices, and He moves them out of Egypt.

Exodus 10:19c [...and blew them into the Red Sea.](#)

God then drives all of the locusts toward the Sea of Reeds, where, presumably, they were deposited and drowned.

God directed the movement of millions upon millions of locusts as if they were one. The text continues to use the singular when referring to the locusts. This is an unusual result; usually when God removed a plague, there were some residual effects. Here, although all of the greenery had been eaten, there are no dead locusts to deal with. God picked them up with the wind, the same way that He brought them, and deposited them this time into the Red Sea.

For what is coming up, there will be nothing residual remaining of the previous plagues (apart from the damage that they caused). That is, there are no piles of rotting frogs or locusts at this point.

Exodus 10:19a-c [And the Lord turned a very strong west wind, which took the locusts away and blew them into the Red Sea.](#)

It fascinates me how God uses such natural means to remove such an unnatural element.

God brought a wind from the west and blew all of the locusts into the Red Sea. God does not simply blow them into another land, or scatter these locusts, but He disposes of them completely. They are not going to be inflicted upon another country.

This also makes me wonder—is God foreshadowing what will happen to Pharaoh’s army? There are a number of parallels here. The Egyptian army will, in the not-too-distant future, pursue Israel to the Red Sea. God will use the wind to push the waters back, and then He will use the winds to let the waters go back to their normal places. When the waters are pushed back, Israel will walk across the Red Sea unharmed; but when the waters are cut loose, they will drown all the Egyptian soldiers.

Exodus 10:19d *There remained not one locust in all the territory of Egypt.*

God used the wind to dispose of the locusts (just as He had used the wind to bring them into Egypt); and not a single locust remained within the borders of Egypt.

Exodus 10:19 *And the Lord turned a very strong west wind, which took the locusts away and blew them into the Red Sea. There remained not one locust in all the territory of Egypt.*

Pharaoh appealed to Moses to speak to his God; and Moses did. God removed all of the locusts from Egypt. At this point, it was up to Pharaoh to keep up his end of the bargain (which he did not).

Exodus 10:20a *But the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart,...*

The word used here that is translated *harden* is *châzaq* (חָזַק) [pronounced *khaw-ZAHK*], which means, *to bind someone with a girdle; to make strong, to strengthen; to fortify [a city]; to heal; to harden, to make obstinate*. Strong’s #2388 BDB #304. This word is translated *harden* only in the book of Exodus. It is a very common word in the Hebrew and it is translated *to strengthen, to make strong* almost everywhere else. For instance, it is found 8 or so times in the book of Joshua, and translated *strong* 7 of those times. The KJV, for the 309 occurrences of this word, translates it to some form of *harden* only in the book of Exodus and once in the book of Joshua and Jeremiah (Joshua 11:20 and Jer. 5:3, where this verb is used in a similar way).

Therefore, this is better translated, *but the LORD strengthened Pharaoh’s heart; or, but the LORD gave strength to Pharaoh’s resolve*.

The volitional aspect of Pharaoh’s soul remains under the control of Pharaoh. God may give Pharaoh the strength to respond, but the choice of how to respond comes from Pharaoh himself.

Pharaoh has been beaten down and God gives him strength. If you have been in a fight or have seen a fight, and one of them is beaten down to where he can no longer fight—the problem is not his volition, the problem is, he is too beaten down to stand up and continue the fight. If he were given the strength, then he would stand up and carry on. This is what God has done for Pharaoh; God gave him the strength to stand back up and fight. He was a beaten man but his volition was still negative towards God. God did not turn Pharaoh against him; God gave him the strength to act as his volition wanted to act.

Exodus 10:20b ...and he did not let the children of Israel go.

As a result of a new-found resolve, Pharaoh did not send out the sons of Israel as he had promised to do.

Exodus 10:20 But the Lord strengthened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go. (This is still the NKJV, but with one word changed.)

Throughout this section of Exodus, there has been a shorthand approach, so that every single logical step in each plague is not given in the narration. That is, we do not have God calling Moses and Aaron in, giving them the full explanation of what they needed to tell Pharaoh; and then Moses and Aaron running down Pharaoh, followed by them repeating everything that God told them to say to Pharaoh. And then, this is not followed by a full and complete description of the judgment itself. Some of the information of each judgment might be found in a truncated conversation between God and Moses; followed by a truncated conversation between Moses and Pharaoh. After which, we find a verse or two describing the plague. This is often done in such a way that, there is little or no repetition, which moves the action along.

There has also been a shorthand approach in how these events are recounted. In Scripture, these are recounted as 10 disjoint events (so far, we have covered 8 of them). That is, from the very beginning, there appears to be no overlap. God speaks to Moses about judgment X; Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and give the demands of God, threatening judgment X; Pharaoh refuses God's demands; Moses and Aaron begin each plague with some theatrics; the plague devastates Egypt; Pharaoh calls Moses and Aaron back in to remove judgment X, giving many assurances of obedience; Moses leaves in order to speak to God to call for the removal of the judgment; God removes it. Then we begin the same process for the next judgment.

There are several reality television shows which are edited in a similar fashion to this, like *Zombie House Flipping* and *Flipping Vegas*. In both of those shows, we see the purchase of the home, the initial viewing of the home, the home remodeling and the sale of the home. In *Flipping Vegas*, during that same week, they might purchase 5 or 10 other homes, some of which may be featured in their show, but those purchases are not discussed or profiled. So, *Flipping Vegas* may purchase a home on Main Street and another on Elm Street, and these homes maybe purchased on the same day, and renovated over roughly the same period of time; but on television, all of one program will be about the house on Main Street; and a different show will be all about the house on Elm



Street. There will be nothing in either show to indicate that these are concurrent events. They are kept separate or discrete.

This is exactly how these plagues are presented in the text of Exodus, which suggests that each plague is completely separate from every other plague, even though, that may not be the case.

The slight flaw in this approach is, it appears as if Moses and Aaron then return to Pharaoh, once the judgment has been removed, in hopes that Pharaoh will perform his part of the bargain (to allow Israel to leave and worship God in the desert-wilderness). But, for the first 9 judgments, Pharaoh goes back on what he promises. Do we begin the cycle again, with Moses going to God and saying, "Pharaoh took his promises back"? Probably not. I think that, when Moses and Aaron go back to speak to Pharaoh, they already know that Pharaoh will go back on his word and they already have the next plague locked and loaded. That is, when Pharaoh changes his mind, Moses and Aaron do not have to leave in a huff and go to speak to God about their next move, and then return a few hours later.

What appears to happen instead, is, Pharaoh says, "No, I have changed my mind;" and Moses then says, "This is the next plague that you will face." However, in terms of presenting these judgments in literary form, it makes sense to make them seem completely disjoint (I am actually setting you up for the narrative which takes place between plagues 9 and 10).

Exodus 10:20 [But the Lord strengthened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go.](#) (This is still the NKJV, but with one word changed.)

Again, we have the strengthening of Pharaoh's heart, with the interesting fact that he is said to strengthen his own heart in Gen. 9:34; yet, God says that He strengthened Pharaoh's heart (same incident) in Gen. 10:1. So, perhaps we could understand that to have been occurring all along. Pharaoh hardens/strengthens his own heart and God makes that a part of His plan. God uses Pharaoh's obstinance to further His Own plan. God simply gives Pharaoh enough strength to exercise his own volition. This is so that Pharaoh is not laying on the palace floor, in the fetal position. In order for God's plan to be fulfilled, God needs a strong leader who is able to, time after time, stand up against Him. The negative volition is already there in Pharaoh's soul; the strength to exercise that negative volition is not always there.

This abbreviated narrative does not give us any details about what Pharaoh did. Did he talk to Moses and Aaron? Were they brought in? Did they discuss who could go and who would not be allowed to go? These sorts of things already happened before and, therefore, we pretty much know what goes down. The pertinent information is, Pharaoh would not allow the people (lit., *sons*) of Israel to go.

I should point out one more thing that was left out of this narrative (did you notice it?). Israel, living in the land of Goshen, was not mentioned in the plague of the locusts.

However, I believe that we may reasonably assume that no locust set foot in their section of Egypt.

## Lesson 129: Exodus 10:21–22

## The Plague of Darkness

### The Ninth Plague: Darkness

We go directly from Pharaoh's refusal to let God's people go, to God speaking to Moses about the 9<sup>th</sup> plague.

Pharaoh is not mentioned in this 9<sup>th</sup> plague at the first. What seems to be the case is, God brought darkness over the land without Moses coming to Pharaoh first and warning him—which has happened before. Or, it is possible that Pharaoh was left out of the first part of this narrative simply to move the narrative along.

If I were to speculate, I would guess that right after Pharaoh said *no* regarding his part of the bargain after the locusts were removed, that Moses immediately to him, "My God will turn Egypt dark; darker than it has ever been before." This is only speculation, as such a conversation is not recorded.

Exodus 10:21a *Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven,..."*

As we come down to the end of the plagues, Aaron is mentioned less and less often, even though he is, no doubt, still going with Moses to appear before Pharaoh. It appears that Moses specifically is being spoken of, as this is how God wants it.

God has Moses stretch out his hand towards the heavens. Now, whether Moses is stretching out his hand over the land (as he did in the last plague) or towards heaven, it pretty much looks exactly the same—so, what is the difference? The difference is in what you are concentrating on. The difference is in the focus. Remember, some of the audience here is angelic. When God says, "Stretch out your hand towards the heavens" the focus is then upon the heavens (that is, the skies). The casual observer may not notice a difference between Moses' hand and arm movement, but let me suggest that, after 4 or 5 plagues, there were no casual observers.

Have you ever seen a magic show where there is the attractive blonde assistant, who really does not do very much, but holds her arms in such a way as to present what we need to look at regarding the magician's next trick. Often, she is not really doing anything or performing any of the magic, but she helps to direct the attention of the audience on the right things. Pretty much, this is what Moses is doing. God is doing the great work; Moses is just indicating, by lifting up his hand and tilting it this way or that, that God is about to do something—*just look in this direction*. Those observing Moses will then turn in whatever direction he seems to indicate.

Exodus 10:21b *...that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt,...*

The people will observe the movement of Moses' hand, then God will bring darkness upon the land. This does not mean that Moses is doing anything himself to cause the darkness. It simply means that Moses indicates the focal point, and then God does whatever He is going to do at that point of focus. In this case, the point of focus is the skies (the heavens), and God makes them dark.

Exodus 10:21a-b Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt,..."

God speaks to Moses, and tells him to stretch out his hand toward heaven, and that a darkness would fall over the land. God exerts total control over the land and people of Egypt.

In some areas of the world, you may have experienced a sudden darkness. It might be 3 in the afternoon, and suddenly, by 3:15 pm, the skies are dark and overcast, as if it is evening. Something similar is happening in Egypt, except that, the sky does not simply become darker; the darkness that descends upon Egypt cannot be penetrated by light.

Pharaoh is not mentioned until v. 24. What appears to be the case is, Pharaoh had agreed to let the people go, he changed his mind; and therefore, God brings on the darkness. There is no need to have another meeting at this point.

Exodus 10:21c ...darkness which may even be felt."

There are only 3 words in the Hebrew, one of which is not even translated above. Literally, this would be translated, *and a darkness may touch* (or, *feel*). The subject of the verb is the word *darkness*. Here is the kicker: the verb here is often used of a man groping about in the darkness (see Deut. 28:29 Job. 5:14 12:25). Here, it is as if the darkness is touching him. The verb is apocopated, which is an indication that the verb is a jussive, which is where the word *may* comes from. The translation above is not bad; it just does not convey the whole picture.

Have you ever been in a very dark place and you did not want to touch anything around you (or you did not want it to touch you)—whether in reality or in a dream? That is the darkness that these people will experience.

This darkness will be so intense that it can be felt. It is a darkness unlike any that the people of Egypt have ever experienced before. This is more than a *dead-of-night* darkness.

Exodus 10:21 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness which may even be felt."

Egypt was under severe judgement for their attitude toward the Hebrews. Darkness is often associated with judgement. When our Lord Jesus Christ bore our sins in His body

on the tree, a thick darkness covered the land so that no one could see Him bearing our sins.

The darkness which we are about to witness here is a darkness to match the darkness of their souls. Our point of contact throughout most of these plagues has been pharaoh; but, bear in mind, Pharaoh is representative of the people over whom he rules. His negative volition is a reflection of the negative volition of most of Egypt.

Exodus 10:21 **Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness which may even be felt.”**

These are the orders that God gives to Moses. Pharaoh’s heart was hardened and God moves Moses to the next plague.

This darkness would be a direct attack against their sun God, Ra (or Re).



**Ra — The Sun God** (a graphic); from [Pinterest](#); accessed August 11, 2020. It looks like he is driving a bus (or pretending to) and some goddess babe is playing *bongos* on his back on the trip—is that a red light up ahead? Perhaps I am misinterpreting the picture.

Exodus 10:22a **So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven,...**

Moses did as God has ordered him, moving forward into the next plague. He stretches out his hand towards the heavens.

We are not told whether Moses has gone in to warn Pharaoh about this plague or not. I think that it is most likely that God has removed the locusts, Moses and Aaron went in to receive permission to take the people out, Pharaoh hardened his heart, and so, Moses warns him, and then goes outside and stretches his hand towards the heavens.

As I have suggested before, God had this plague ready to go. Moses was loaded and loaded; so to speak. Pharaoh’s negative volition brought on an immediate response from God.

In any case, this ninth judgment came about within an hour of Pharaoh expressing his negative volition.

It is my opinion that Moses was observed doing this. That would explain the theatrics of it. God has Moses act as his intercessor—so the people of Egypt have to recognize that God is using Moses. They must associate Moses with these plagues of God.

In the eyes of Pharaoh and the people of Egypt, Hebrews and Egyptians alike, Moses was a man sent from God, and that the things which he did were not done in his own power, but done as a representative of God. By this time, when Moses made a public appearance, the people who saw him recognized that God was going to act.

We are not told where Moses does this or who is observing him, but let me suggest that there is a crowd of people who see him and look on when he begins to motion towards the heavens. God continues to use Moses in a very theatrical fashion.

It seems very logical to me that, Cecil B. DeMille, the director of the film, [The Ten Commandments](#), recognized God's extremely theatric approach from this era, and made an honest attempt to reproduce that on the big screen.

There was another tv series in perhaps the 2010's which attempted to portray these events. I watched about an hour of it and stopped. Moses was presented as such a nutcase, that I could not bear to watch it. The actor and director's view of who Moses was, was so goofy and inaccurate, that it made me angry.

Exodus 10:22b ...and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.

There was a darkness of darkness in the land of Egypt; an impenetrable darkness. This thick darkness lasted for three days.

I believe that this judgment, unlike the other plagues, was completely supernatural. I have heard the theory that it was a sandstorm which caused the darkness—but that certainly could have been clearly stated (we were told exactly how the locusts were brought to Egypt and how exactly they were disposed of). Whatever the Egyptians used for light, apparently, did not work for them. We don't have them wandering around their homes holding lamps.

This occurred sometime after the judgment of locusts; probably a day or two after Pharaoh's heart was strengthened against God. The implication is that Moses, when he stretched his hand out over the land, the darkness covered the land. Was it immediate, did it come on slowly? Did they go to bed one night, and the light just did not return for a few days? Those are minor details not really discussed. The most logical explanation for me is, Moses raised up his hand towards the heavens in the daylight—many people witnessed this—and then the darkness came over the land—within that hour. There needs to be a clear observable cause and effect between Moses raising up his hand and the darkness coming down over the land (or why raise his hand at all?).

Exodus 10:22 So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.

Moses stretches out his hand towards the heavens, and suddenly (or gradually?), there is this great darkness, unlike anything experienced by the Egyptians before. Unlike anything that we have ever experienced.

I do not see this as a natural event on earth, the result of a cloud covering or a sandstorm, for two reasons: (1) had there been a physical reason for this darkness, then that would have logically been stated (it is possible that God used something in space to do this). It is just as likely that God brought on this darkness in a completely supernatural way. Even though the judgments prior to this all have fairly naturalistic backstories (for instance, the locusts were not made out of nothing; but they were at some other location, and God used a wind to bring them onto Egypt); we are not given any similar sort of explanation for the darkness. It just is.

This darkness continues for 3 days. This appears to be a darkness which cannot even be pierced by light (such as a lamp). That sort of darkness certainly suggests that it is supernatural.

The notion of being in darkness for three days must have some kind of significance. Jonah was inside the whale (actually, the great fish) for three days and nights; our Lord was in the heart of the earth for three days and nights, and here Egypt is plunged into darkness for the same amount of time. I don't know what the connection is exactly yet, other than all of them involve God's judgment.

I believe that this looks forward to the cross and the thick darkness which will be over Jerusalem for 3 hours when Jesus is paying for our sins. The plague which follows this darkness, the death of the firstborn, continues to look forward to the redemption of the lost by means of Jesus Christ.

### **Lesson 130: Exodus 10:21–24b**

### **The Plague of Darkness Continues**

Exodus 10:21 [Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness to be felt."](#) (ESV)

Although this is possibly the most interesting of the judgments, we are given very little information about it. We launch into this plague without a mention of Pharaoh or a warning delivered to Pharaoh.

Exodus 10:22 [So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was pitch darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.](#) (ESV)

We know that Moses acted as directed by God, very demonstrably as he had in the previous plagues.

Exodus 10:23a [They did not see one another;...](#)

Literally, it reads, [They could not see a man his brother.](#) This testifies as to how impenetrable this darkness was. A man could not see his brother is to be understood to mean that one could not see the members of his own household. No one could see anyone from outside the household.



Exodus 10:23b ...nor did anyone rise from his place for three days.

The was so dark that men did not even go outside of their homes for three days. This was a crippling, debilitating darkness.

The verb used here is Qal perfect of qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced *koom*]. It means, *to stand, to rise up, to get up; to establish, to establish a vow*. Strong's #6965 BDB #877. With the negative, it sounds as if people did not even get up. The darkness immobilized the people. Apparently, no one had the nerve to get up and walk outside and go next door. In fact, the verb seems to indicate that people laid down and then they just stayed there. They did not move.

Exodus 10:23a-b They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days.

This darkness is a thick darkness which you can feel; a darkness which cannot be penetrated by light; just like the darkness which hung over the cross when Jesus paid for our sins. These Egyptians were living in a land which has been economically ruined, having suffered pain and misery due to the plagues brought on by Jesus Christ by the hand of Moses, This gave each and every Egyptian the time to reflect upon their lives. The darkness was thick and eerie, not allowing them any kind of normal function in life. Most Egyptians just cowered in their homes, steeped in their negative volition, refusing to rise above it.

Therefore, this is not simply a Hebrew phrase saying that they did not leave their homes nor do we have the simple phrase saying that they did not arise from their beds (the Hebrew words are very different). This is idiomatic; it can refer to not getting up from the under part, but it really means that they had all this time to contemplate in the darkness just where they stood, what their values were, Who and What God is and they would not arise from this lowly place where their negative volition had put them. Even though the verb is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine plural, indicating that the population of Egypt in general did not arise. The phrase *his place* (or, *place in which he stood*) has a 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular suffix, indicates individual volition. Each man chose to remain where he was.

Although we do not know how long these plagues lasted overall, it appears that each plague was about 2–4 days in length; so all of this took place in a month or two. At this point, it is time for the people to reflect upon what has been taking place in their lives.

Exodus 10:23a-b They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days.

God here is giving the entire population of Egypt time to reconsider the thoughts of their hearts, the prejudices that they might carry; and, particularly, their negative volition towards God. Some already had made a choice to stand with the sons of Israel and this allowed them to firm up this decision; others could go in either direction and this gave them time

to make their choice. This is their last chance before God places on Egypt the most terrible of all the plagues.

Exodus 10:23c **But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.**

Although all of Egypt was enshrouded in darkness, there was light in the homes where the Israelites lived in Goshen. The sons of Israel had light in their dwellings.

Notice exactly how this is stated—there was light *in the homes* of the sons of Israel. What this suggests is, they had darkness all around them, just as everyone else did; but, their lamps could pierce the darkness. They were able to lead relatively normal lives, although it was night for 3 days.

The Egyptians did have a god; their sun-god, Ra, who appears to be their most important god. However, he was not able to do much on their behalf. He did not appear to even have a working flashlight to his name.

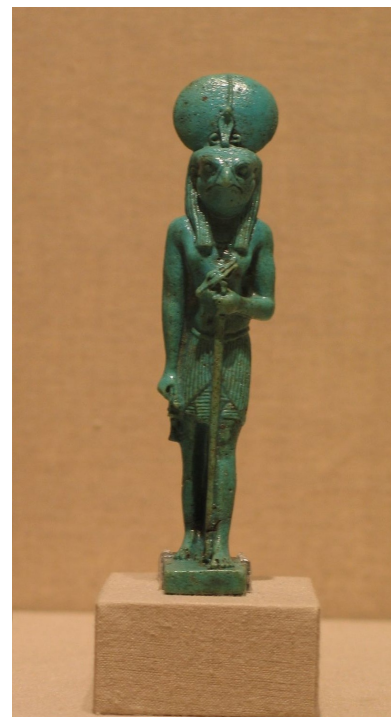
**Ra — the Egyptian Sun God** (a photograph of a statue) from [Wikipedia](#); accessed April 25, 2018. *All life was created by him...Ra was head of a group of nine gods, known as the Great Ennead. Ra was also the supreme judge of the dead.*<sup>15</sup> I was unable to determine the origin of this statue; given its condition, it may have been made recently.

It is likely that the final two judgments are aimed squarely at Ra. The God of Moses has control over light and darkness; the God of Moses actually did create all life; and the God of Moses will judge men when they die. Ra, obviously, is not real; he is merely a figment of Egyptian imagination.

Exodus 10:23 **Men could not see their brothers; no man was able to stand up outside his place for three days. However, all the sons of Israel had light in their homes.**

The people of Egypt remained within their homes because of the darkness. It was dark in and out of their homes, which is indicated by the notion that no man could see his brother. Furthermore, what was there for them outside of their homes, given the previous plagues?

Because this is the 9<sup>th</sup> plague, all Egypt is fully aware of what is going on. Every person had been affected by every plague; and it certainly appears as if everyone knew exactly



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<sup>15</sup> From <http://www.quantumgaze.com/ancient-history/egyptian-gods-just-record/> accessed April 25, 2018.

who Moses was. Moses is a spokesman for the God of Israel; the God of Israel has brought plagues upon the land; and Israel was not subject to most of these plagues.

How many Egyptians cowered in fear within their homes? It appears that almost all of them did.

On the other hand, there was light within the homes of the Israelites. This is such a specific statement as to suggest, there was darkness over the land of Goshen, but the lamps of the Israelites could pierce that darkness. So they functioned more or less normally within the confines of their own homes.

Exodus 10:22–23 [So Moses stretched out his hand toward the heavens and there came to be a thick darkness over all the land of Egypt for three days. Men could not see their brothers; no man was able to stand up outside his place for three days. However, all the sons of Israel had light in their homes.](#)

This passage yields two analogies. The unbelievers, the Egyptians, are walking about and living in darkness. Believers, the sons of Israel, are walking in light. The Israelites have light in their dwellings. The Egyptians cannot penetrate this darkness with light. They simply do not have any light which works against the darkness. They should go to the light, to the Israelites, and ultimately to God, Who is judging them. They have three days to reconsider their position. A few did, which we will see later. However, most did not.

Man sometimes comes close to apprehending the truth as an unbeliever. Plato, an unbeliever, gave us the analogy of the cave wall. He pointed out that there is a great unseen world—which is, in fact, the real world that we live in. He deduced this simply because his soul was far greater than his body and he recognized this invisible existence (there are unbelievers today who refuse to admit that the soul exists). Plato deduced that what was invisible was far more important and far more real than the physical plane of the 5 senses in which we live. Plato set up his analogy of the cave in this way: we live on this earth inside of a cave and the real world is outside the cave. All that we see in our common, day-to-day life are the shadows on the cave wall; shadows of reality. Reality is happening outside of the cave; but all we see are the shadows on the cave wall. Our understanding of what is really happening—of what reality really is—is revealed by looking at the shadows on the cave wall. We attempt to deduce from these shadows what reality really is. True reality, according to Plato, is what we cannot see. It is that which takes place outside of the cave.

For the unbeliever living in darkness, this is very close to reality. The unbeliever leads a life in darkness; God must be revealed to him. Then, if he's interested, Jesus Christ must be revealed to him. Until that time, there is no light, no reality for the unbeliever, just the shadows on the cave wall. The shadows are a representation of reality (for instance, a person's father is like God; analogous to God). So Plato comes close in his analogy to the truth and much of his philosophy comes close, considering that he is an unbeliever. However, since he did come so close to the truth, the Catholic church absorbed much of his thinking and it is reflected in some of their early doctrines (it is not unusual for various

Christian movements or organizations to take some of their doctrine from the world around them<sup>16</sup>). How many churches today present themselves as *social justice* churches? Or, how many churches today are so gay-friendly, that they do not mind signs of affection between two members of the same gender? This is not how a church should be run, but that is how many are.

The darkness which the Egyptians are living in gives us two analogies. The second analogy is even more solemn: Jesus Christ, when He was judged for our sins, was given the privacy of darkness as he took upon Himself each and every one of our sins and suffered the pain and discipline for these sins. As God's "first-born," He would die on our behalf, for our deliverance, just as the deaths of the first-born of Egypt would allow for the deliverance of the Hebrews out from the land of Egypt and the hand of Pharaoh (which will be the 10<sup>th</sup> and final plague).

However, I am getting slightly ahead of myself; we are still in the 9<sup>th</sup> judgment of darkness.

Exodus 10:24a [Then Pharaoh called to Moses...](#)

I would assume, based upon the description of the darkness, that Pharaoh called out for Moses after the three days. It is possible that Pharaoh called for Moses at the first sign of light. (He would have no idea whether God would return with more darkness.)

I would assume that Aaron comes along with Moses; but, by this time, it is clear to Pharaoh that Moses is his *go-to guy*.

Exodus 10:24b [...and said, "Go, serve the Lord;..."](#)

Pharaoh orders Moses to take his people out of Egypt to serve his God. This is what Moses has asked for; and Pharaoh appears to be giving in to his demand.

To move the narrative along, we do not have anything about who was sent and how they found Moses and brought him back. Nor is Aaron mentioned, although it is likely that he and Moses were together in every meeting with Pharaoh.

### **Lesson 131: Exodus 10:21–25      Pharaoh Responds to the Plague of Darkness**

Exodus 10:21 [Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness to be felt." \(ESV\)](#)

God prepares Moses for the 9<sup>th</sup> judgment.

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<sup>16</sup> The most common example of this is every generation believes that the historical events that they are witnessing are signs of the end time.

Exodus 10:22–23 So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was pitch darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, but all the people of Israel had light where they lived. (ESV)

Moses is demonstrative in bringing on the darkness. Obviously, Moses does nothing to bring the darkness on; but God does everything.

The Hebrew people could use lamps in their homes and have light that way. But this was not possible throughout the rest of Egypt.

Exodus 10:24a-b Then Pharaoh called to Moses and said, “Go, serve the Lord;...”

There are many different ways that this portion of v. 24 could be interpreted. First of all, is it light or dark right at this moment in the narrative? Although a time frame is given in the narrative (the darkness continued for three days), Moses did not, insofar as we know, go before Pharaoh and say, “There will be a darkness covering your land for 3 days; a darkness so thick that you cannot penetrate it with light.” Based upon the previous judgments, it would seem logical that Moses warned Pharaoh of this. Was there a response; were there promises made? We have no idea.

Exodus 10:24a-b Then Pharaoh called to Moses and said, “Go, serve the Lord;...”

There are two basic possibilities: Pharaoh calls for Moses while it is dark or he calls for Moses as soon as it turns light.

If it is dark, then there are many details left out of this narrative. I would assume that Pharaoh sent messengers to Moses in the dark; but he could have even approached Goshen himself, calling out to Moses, capitulating. Logically, Pharaoh would have said, “You may go out into the desert-wilderness with your people, just take away this darkness.” Then the darkness would be removed, followed by Pharaoh reneging on his promise.

If Pharaoh calls out for Moses just as it begins to turn light (again, he probably sends out servants to fetch Moses), then the conversation recorded in Exodus would be the overall gist of what takes place.

When or how was the darkness lifted in relation to Pharaoh capitulating to God? We are not told. At best, I can fill in the blanks and speculate.

In any case, at some point, Pharaoh calls out to Moses—probably through his servants. Moses, of course, responds. Whether or not the darkness was removed as a result of this contact, is not addressed in this short narrative.

No matter when or how the darkness goes away, then Pharaoh says, “Go, serve the LORD your God, but only under these conditions...”

Much of what I have written is speculation, in hopes of painting a picture for the reader, whether it is dark or light. I have attempt to present a very logical series of events based upon what has taken place previously.

God the Holy Spirit simply is moving this narrative right along. Not even Aaron is named here, even though it is likely that Aaron is right there, standing next to Moses.

Pharaoh appears to be cooperative, but then he says this:

Exodus 10:24c ...only let your flocks and your herds be kept back”

There is the caveat—all of the livestock belonging to the sons of Israel must remain behind in Egypt. Pharaoh cannot seem to allow the demands of Moses be met.

But the sacrifice of these animals is integral to the worship of the Hebrew people, as the offering of these animals as blood sacrifices speaks of Jesus dying for our sins.

Exodus 10:24a-c Then Pharaoh called to Moses and said, “Go, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be kept back”

It does appear that Pharaoh himself called for Moses, and this quotation appears to be something that Pharaoh said directly to Moses. Perhaps he called out into the darkness, “Moses, go serve the Lord; Moses, go serve the Lord!”

At some point, they had to come face to face again. At that point, Pharaoh appears to have added this particular condition. “Let your flocks and herds be kept back.”

I find this to be interesting, because at this point in time, this is all about going off into the desert to worship Y<sup>e</sup>howah; there is no talk of them remaining there in the desert-wilderness or of moving from the desert-wilderness further away from Egypt. God has given no such order to Moses; nor is there an implication that is what they will do next. However, this is apparently what Pharaoh fears. He is worried that the people will leave, get a 3 days trip outside of Egypt, and then just keep going. So, he wanted their livestock to remain behind to insure the return of the Israelites.

We know that Pharaoh was worried that Moses would lead the people of Israel out of Egypt, get far enough away, and then do a runner. All of this livestock represents the wealth of the Israelites (and it is particularly valuable, given that virtually all of Egypt’s livestock has been destroyed).

Pharaoh may have had one or two particular things on his mind, given this requirement. If the wealth of the people remained in Egypt, it is likely that they would return to it, not matter what schemes Moses had planned (Moses was not planning to take the people out of Egypt permanently, but I believe that this was the thinking of Pharaoh).



The second thing on Pharaoh's mind may have been a plot. Let's say the people of Israel went off and had a week long festival to their God—and they left all their valuable livestock behind. Remember, in all these plagues, Egypt's livestock have just been wiped out. Do you see where I am going with this? Who's to say that, when Moses leaves with Israel and then returns, whether or not their cattle and flocks will still be there?

In fact, is it even possible that Pharaoh was going to allow Israel to leave for precisely this reason. He gets Moses out of his hair for a week, the plagues stop, **and** his people get to raid the substance of the sons of Israel. A three-fer solution/plot by Pharaoh (I am speculating, but this seems logical).

Exodus 10:24d **Let your little ones also go with you."**

One of the previous sticking points in these negotiations has been the children. Pharaoh said that they could not go; now he is saying that they may go with Moses for their worship.

Pharaoh has not changed his tact nor is he concerned that he has sinned against the living God. He still expects to keep these Hebrews as slaves. You must realize that his country is in terrific economic chaos and Egypt will suffer for many decades after this. Pharaoh realizes that he will require labor to clean up the mess and to begin anew. That work would require the Hebrew slaves. Therefore, he is not going to let them go entirely. He must hold something for ransom. And if they do go, then he will need food stuffs for his own people.

Pharaoh does not yet recognize that there is only one way that this will be done; it will be done in God's way in God's time. He can fight Y<sup>e</sup>howah as much as he wants, but God will prevail in the end. **Greater is He Who is in us and he who is in the world.**

Exodus 10:24 **Then Pharaoh called to Moses and said, "Go, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be kept back. Let your little ones also go with you."**

Pharaoh, again, tries to swing a deal with Moses. Logically, this suggests to me that, at this time, the darkness has already been removed. The minor details of Pharaoh locating Moses, the darkness being removed, and Moses standing before Pharaoh—those details are left out of this narrative.

This time, he will allow them to take their children, but he asks that they leave their flocks and herds behind. For whatever reason, Pharaoh still believes that he has room to bargain here. He quickly adds, "But you can take your children with you." So Pharaoh has given in a little bit.

Again, I believe the idea is, the food supply for the Egyptians has been destroyed. It is even possible that some people have already died of starvation. My guess is, the Egyptians would seize the livestock of the Hebrew people in their absence, for their own sustenance. In fact, Pharaoh may not have been able to stop them.

Exodus 10:24 Then Pharaoh called to Moses and said, “Go, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be kept back. Let your little ones also go with you.”

Pharaoh seems to think that what God has demanded through Moses is up for negotiation. However, God does not state a position and then argue from the position strategically to get something less (as a President Trump might do). God told Moses to tell Pharaoh exactly what was acceptable...no less would be accepted.

On the other hand, do not understand this to be a limitation of God. There is at least one time when God appears to be bargaining from one position, but He accepts something less. Recall that Abraham bargained with God about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, because he was concerned about his nephew Lot. Abraham asks God if He would destroy Sodom if there were 50 righteous men there, and God said, “No.” “Well then,” Abraham retorted, “What if there were 10 less than that? What if there were 40 righteous men?” And God said He would not destroy Sodom if there were that many. Abraham finally got God down to 10 men, and he stopped there, thinking that Lot and his family had enough believers to prevent their city from being destroyed.

Moses will, at a later time, be told by God that God was ready to destroy all of the sons of Israel and start over with only Moses and his sons. Moses then acts as an advocate for Israel and a mediator between God and Israel, to get God to back off from this threat. However, in both of those examples, there was no actual bargaining that was taking place. God was teaching specific principles of doctrine in both of those instances.

Exodus 10:25a But Moses said, “You must also give us sacrifices and burnt offerings,...

Moses clearly states the divine requirements. Moses tells Pharaoh, “You will let us take these sacrifices and burnt offerings with us,” referring to their flocks and herds. They cannot be left behind.

Exodus 10:25b ...that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.

These animals will be used for making supplications to God.

The Hebrews will require animals to sacrifice to God and the Egyptians must give these animals to them. There is no alternative agreement that is acceptable.

Exodus 10:25 But Moses said, “You must also give us sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.

Moses tells Pharaoh *no*. This is not a place where they can bargain. There is no meeting half way; there is no meeting 90% of the way. No doubt, by this point in time, what God has demanded is clear in Pharaoh’s mind.

Remember earlier that God, through Moses, has already attempted to reason with Pharaoh. “Listen,” Moses told Pharaoh, “If God wanted to send a disease and wipe all of

you out, He could have done that.” Therefore, there are no negotiations to be had. “God told you that this would be the way it would be; and what God said is your only option,” Moses explains to Pharaoh.

## Lesson 132: Exodus 10:25–29

## The Demands of God

Pharaoh has been attempting to bargain with Moses. “You may leave,” Pharaoh told Moses, “and you may take your children [a previous sticking point], but I want you to leave your livestock behind.”

What Pharaoh offered did not line up with God’s requirements. Moses’s response is:

Exodus 10:25 But Moses said, “You must also give us sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.

God’s basic requirements are that everyone must go and they also must take their livestock with them.

Exodus 10:26a Our livestock also shall go with us;...

What Pharaoh has offered is unacceptable. Moses tells him that the livestock must go with them.

Exodus 10:26b ...not a hoof shall be left behind.”

All of their livestock would go with them. There will not be a single animal left behind.

This particular detail makes me think that, the people of Egypt would have come in and taken anything which the Israelites left behind.

Exodus 10:26a-b Our livestock also shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind.”

Moses insists that all of their livestock would go with them; nothing would be left behind.

There may be two things at work here. On the one hand, Moses knows that some of their animals will be sacrificed to God (and also, of course, be used for food). In addition to this, it is likely that Pharaoh may want Moses to leave his livestock behind so that his own people might snatch them in Moses’ absence. This is never actually stated in the text, but given the devastation endured by the Egyptians, this is very likely what would have happened, if any animals were left behind.

What has been happening in Goshen has been, no doubt, a curiosity to the Egyptians. If the Israelites vacated this area, even if only of a couple of weeks, curious and/or hungry Egyptians would have come into Goshen and into their homes. Whatever the Hebrew

people left behind—whether an animal or a scrap of food—it would have been snatched up.

Because of the devastation of Egypt, the Egyptian people would have been desperate at this point.

Take a moment here and remember back, when Moses and Aaron first went and spoke with Pharaoh; and how, as a result, Pharaoh increased his requirements of the Hebrew slaves. “You apparently have far too much time on your hands,” was Pharaoh’s attitude.

I want you to consider that and realize just how far we are from that circumstance which took place perhaps a month and a half or two months ago. What Pharaoh required at that time seemed like an incredible burden, and the elders of Israel were just about to sell Moses out. However, what has taken place since then changed everything. Do you see how a little faith in God would have made all of this a lot easier?

**Application:** Have you ever faced a difficulty that seemed insurmountable, and now, here it is, a few months or few years later, and that is so far back in your past that it does not matter to you anymore? Problems and difficulties in this life come and go; but key in your life is your daily walk with God. Your relationship with God should be what stands out; and that can only be improved by two things: your time spent in fellowship and your time spent in the Word.

Back to Moses. He will explain to Pharaoh why the animals must go with them.

Exodus 10:26c [For we must take some of them to serve the Lord our God,...](#)

“We need these animals to make animal sacrifices, so they are going to go with us,” Moses explains. From the cattle and flocks that the people of Israel will take, sacrifices will be chosen and offered up.

Exodus 10:26d [...and even we do not know with what we must serve the Lord until we arrive there.”](#)

At this point, Moses tells Pharaoh that they do not know how many animals that they need to sacrifice; so they will take them all.

All of what is occurring here makes it very clear that, the people cannot worship God within the boundaries of Egypt. There is just too much interference offered up by Pharaoh. We have no idea what the people of Egypt might do as well. There will need to be a complete break between those who worship God and those who do not. Moses’ interactions with Pharaoh are making this clear.

Exodus 10:26 [Our livestock also shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind. For we must take some of them to serve the Lord our God, and even we do not know with what we must serve the Lord until we arrive there.”](#)

Moses must take the cattle because there will be animal sacrifices to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. At that point in time, there were no set sacrifices delineated as they will be in the Law. The Hebrews have not sacrificed to God for perhaps a couple or more centuries (presumably), so Moses knows that they must take a lot of cattle and a lot of animals to sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah when it is necessary; he just does not know how many cattle will be sacrificed.

God has guided Moses up to a certain point. So far, God has told Moses to demand to be allowed to worship their God, and so far, Pharaoh has not allowed that. But, exactly what God expects of them during this time of worship, He has not yet made that clear to Moses. Moses is not exactly flying blind; but God has only given him limited information. God knows the end before the beginning; but Moses knows only the few things that God has revealed to him.

Two things that Moses does not know: (1) how many animals that God will require to be sacrificed and (2) that God is going to take them all out of Egypt.

Exodus 10:27a *But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart,...*

Again, this is better translated, *and the LORD strengthened Pharaoh's heart,...*

We had these exact words back in v. 20. God does not change Pharaoh's volition; but He gave him the strength to resist God. People in life sometimes reach a point where they are unable to go any further or to do anything else. God gives Pharaoh this boost of strength, like a shot of adrenalin, so that he can proceed to oppose God and thereby glorify God.

Exodus 10:27b *...and he would not let them go.*

Pharaoh is unwilling to send out the people of Israel with all of their cattle and herds.

Exodus 10:27 *But the Lord strengthened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.* (NKJV with one word changed)

There is not a lot of detail concerning the darkness. The original confrontation between Pharaoh and Moses is not recorded; the promise to remove the darkness is not recorded. If there was a prayer from Moses to God to remove this darkness, that was not recorded. All of these things probably occurred as they had previously; but the inclusion of such details really does not further this narrative along.

Once the darkness had lifted, Pharaoh went back on his promise, as God gave him enough strength to express his negative soul. God did not cause Pharaoh to be negative; God gave Pharaoh enough strength to take his stand against God. This is not unusual.

Madelyn Murray O'Hair, the one-time famous atheist, fought God all of her life. Nevertheless, God still gave her the ability to breath, to walk, and to take a stand against Him. Her very existence required that God provide for her needs and He did. God allows for those who oppose Him the very strength of their being to do so—He does not strike

them down. In the case of Ms. O'Hair, her son came to the Lord out of darkness. We will see that some, not many, of these Egyptians will come to God out from this thick darkness.

Exodus 10:28a **Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me!"**

Pharaoh now speaks sternly to Moses, not even using the preposition of respect here. "Get out," is what he is saying.

Pharaoh has offered what he believed to be a reasonable compromise; and he may have even suggested what he did in order to steal the livestock belonging to the Hebrew people when they are gone. But, when Moses rejects that offer, Pharaoh seems to blow a gasket.

Exodus 10:28b **Take heed to yourself...**

This was not a friendly warning; it was an ominous one. Pharaoh explains what he means.

Exodus 10:28c **...and see my face no more!**

The idea is, it is best not to see Pharaoh again; he is warning Moses not to come to him again. Remember these words, as they will come into play in the next chapter.

Exodus 10:28d **For in the day you see my face you shall die!"**

Pharaoh tells Moses, "The day that you come to me, that will be the day you die."

At this point, Pharaoh is at the end of his rope. The solution that makes sense to him is removing Moses from this life. Pharaoh threatens Moses with his life. Pharaoh seems to believe that this would be the solution to his own problems.

Exodus 10:28 **Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Take heed to yourself and see my face no more! For in the day you see my face you shall die!" (NKJV)**

Pharaoh issues a stern warning to Moses.

Exodus 10:28 **So Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me; and listen to this warning: do not appear before my face anymore because the day that you see my face, [in that day] you will die." (Kukis paraphrase)**

I have given v. 28 a freer translation here to clarify its meaning. Threats do not translate well, particularly if they involve the use of idiom or convoluted sentence structure (after being translated). This verse is a threat against Moses. However, a more literal translation would be less understandable. That is, a strong threat such as this can get lost in the translation. Word-for-word, this might be translated then **Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me. Take heed to yourself—never again see my face for in the day you see my face, [in that day] you will die."**



Pharaoh is constantly running into Moses and Moses is constantly giving him warnings and promises of plagues. Pharaoh could have attempted to kill Moses right then and there. What he is doing is making a threat which he may or may not intend to keep. It is made in the heat of his discussion with Moses. Pharaoh is looking to make a compromise and does not appear to realize that there is no compromise to be made with the God of Moses. The Pharaoh does not have a choice one way or the other. He either rides the wave of God's plan or he is drown by it. Pharaoh only feigns positive volition, but that is, at best, a weak moment in his life.

Exodus 10:29 *So Moses said, "You have spoken well. I will never see your face again."*

Somehow, Moses seems to know that this is the end of it. There will only be one more judgment. I would assume that this is based upon information from God.

Exodus 10:29 *So Moses said, "You have spoken well. I will never see your face again."*

Instead of saying, *you have spoken well*, today we might say *what you said is true*.

This is a rather cryptic saying; and perhaps, Moses just said it out of anger, in the heat of the moment. He is clearly responding to what Pharaoh said to him. Pharaoh threatened him, saying, "If I see your face again, I will kill you." Not exactly that, but close to that. This was Moses' response. "You're right; I will never see your face again!"

What appears to be the case is, Moses does not just say this and walk out. It appears that Moses had more to say to Pharaoh, which conversation is found in Exodus 11:4–8. At that time, Moses will warn Pharaoh of the 10<sup>th</sup> and final plague. After that, it appears that they had an angry exchange (anger from Pharaoh, at least).

At some point in time—likely before this conversation that we are studying—God spoke to Moses and told him what was going to happen and what he would say to announce the final plague. God knew that Pharaoh would go negative; and Moses was prepared for that. We may reasonably come to this conclusion, based upon what we read in Exodus 11:8b: *And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.* (ESV) In fact, it is possible that what is said in Exodus 10:28–29 is said after Moses pronounces the final plague (Exodus 11:4–8). In both passages, Moses is clearly walking out in hot anger, so this is probably the same *walking out in hot anger*.

Also, Pharaoh's final threat how, "I had better not see you again..." fits in very well with 3 days of darkness which just took place. Moses responds by saying, "You're right about that." This exchange of words makes it less likely that an additional meeting between these men takes place (which means that a portion of Exodus 11 takes place before Moses exits).

If my understanding of this conversation is accurate—that it takes place both here and near the beginning of Exodus 11—then why would God the Holy Spirit do this to the organization of this passage? Or, Moses is the human author; why did he do this?

Our western minds tend to think in terms of chronology. The Hebrew mind tends to focus upon specific events or specific topics, favoring that approach over a chronological approach.

Many movies and television shows have been written in such a way that, the first few minutes of the show look forward to an incident that takes place actually at the end or near the end of the show. Many times, this incident portrayed at the beginning grabs the viewer's attention. *Hmmm, this looks interesting*, the viewer might say. Then, there is a sudden change of scenery with the words, *48 hours earlier* at the bottom of the screen.

The Divine Author of Scripture is not confined to time as we are; so He may be presenting the plagues against Egypt in such a way that they appear to be like completely separate events. However, it is very likely that, as each plague ended and Pharaoh expressed his negative volition, then the warning for the next plague was given. Furthermore, everything was already in place for the next plague, even before Pharaoh reveals his negative volition. So, for instance, the plague of darkness is over, Pharaoh's heart is strengthened against God. Moses does not run out of the room, contact God, and then come racing back, saying, "Listen up, new plague." God has the new plague locked and loaded. As soon as Pharaoh's negative volition is expressed, Moses announces (or he warns about) the next plague and *then* he storms out.

So, we are here, in the narrative, at the end of plague #9. Even so, God has already spoken to Moses about plague #10 (which is what we will read in Exodus 11:1–3). Then, Moses speaks to Pharaoh at the end of Plague #9 and then launches right into the warning for Plague #10. However, this narrative is recorded in such a way as to have the plagues seem like completely disjoint events where there is no overlap.

What I will do is, when we get part way through the next chapter, I will set up a possible timeline, so that we can correlate the events of the end of chapter 10 and the beginning of chapter 11 into a chronological narrative.

## **Lesson 133: Exodus 11:1**

## **Introduction to Exodus 11**

### **Death of the Firstborn Announced**

Exodus 11 presents the warnings for the final and most devastating plague. God will kill the firstborn of all the Egyptians who ignore that instructions of God. These instructions will be very straightforward and easy to follow.

Exodus 11 is a very short chapter; and what God has planned for Egypt is simply introduced here. There appear to be several overlapping events in Exodus 10 and 11, but they are presented in such a way as to make the plagues (darkness and death of the firstborn) appear completely disjoint. However, there is some overlap. At the end of Exodus 10, Moses and Pharaoh have a heated discussion (following the 9<sup>th</sup> plague), but Moses then, apparently, warns Pharaoh of the plague to come.

One of the fascinating things about this chapter is, it appears that, at the very end, before the Hebrew people leave Egypt, that they go out and evangelize the people of Egypt. If you read the text for yourself, you may not get this; but it is a very logical result of a careful exegesis of the text of this chapter.

This chapter is all about the warning of the death of the firstborn, which is the final judgment. However, the *when and where* of this chapter is somewhat confusing. A superficial reading may not reveal this; however, as we study this carefully, it will be clear that these events might be easily misinterpreted.

In vv. 1–2, God speaks to Moses—God tells Moses to speak to the people and have them ask for gold or silver jewelry from the Egyptian citizens.

Then Moses begins speaking, in vv. 4–8, and it is not clear to whom he is speaking, until we come to the end of v. 8, where we read, *And he [Moses] went out from Pharaoh in hot anger*. So, he apparently spoke to the people of Israel but he also spoke to Pharaoh. This is going to require more of an explanation. Furthermore, for you may remember that Moses stormed out from Pharaoh at the end of Exodus 10, and it sounded as if he would never see Pharaoh again. Yet, here he is, in Exodus 11, talking to Pharaoh again and, it appears, storming out again (compare Exodus 10:28–29 to 11:8).

Regarding v. 1: God, by taking the lives of the firstborn, actually provides a large number of Egyptian infants with the equivalence of eternal salvation in heaven. These are children who would otherwise be raised as heathen, anti-God and anti-Hebrew, and then spend eternity burning in hell. God will be saving those of this group who are very young, because when a child is unable to make a choice for or against God in the angelic conflict due to age, and dies, there is no issue here to be resolved. Therefore, God gives the child eternal life. When an unbelieving couple loses a child, we generally see this as a devastating tragedy—however, that child will spend eternity with God because the child's volition is not an issue. This is not to say that Christians should have to do to anything to harm the children of unbelievers. Some unbelievers have children who grow up to be phenomenal Christians. Paul's parents were very possibly unbelievers.

Exodus 11:1a *And the Lord said to Moses,...*

God has brought 9 devastating plagues upon Egypt, and still, Pharaoh will not let the people of Israel go. God laid out the requirements for Moses to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt to worship Him; and Pharaoh would not agree to God's terms.

God speaks to Moses one more time.

Exodus 11:1b *...“I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt.*

God tells Moses that He will bring one more *wound* or *plague* upon Egypt. A different word is used here—not the word for *plague* which has been used many times previously. The word found here is *nega'* (נֶגַע) [pronounced *NEH-gahg'*], and it is found nowhere else in the

book of Exodus except here (it is found many times in Leviticus and handful of times in other books). It means, *bruise, injury, wound; swelling, eruption [on the skin]; mark [from a plague]; stripes [from beating]*. Strong's #5061 BDB #619. I believe the idea here is to distinguish this plague from all the previous plagues, despite the devastation that those plagues wrought.

Exodus 11:1a-b **And the Lord said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt.**

This will be the 10<sup>th</sup> and final plague, which plague will sever the bonds between Israel and Egypt. At the end of this plague, Moses will not have to ask Pharaoh for permission to temporarily leave, Pharaoh and all of Egypt will demand that Israel leave Egypt forever.

Exodus 11:1c **Afterward he will let you go from here.**

God guarantees Moses that after this plague is put on Egypt and on Pharaoh, Pharaoh will finally relent; he will let the Hebrew people go. In fact, Pharaoh will not simply allow them to go; he will demand that they all leave Egypt permanently.

Exodus 11:1d **When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether.**

God is emphasizing that this is a done deal; guaranteed that, after this next plague, Pharaoh would send the people out for real. There would be no more negotiations; Pharaoh would not try to modify anything that God has demanded.

Furthermore, the people of God are not simply being allowed to leave for a couple of weeks to worship Him; they will be completely driven out of Egypt. This will sever all ties between the two peoples.

The doubling of the verb indicates that Pharaoh is not simply sending Moses and his people out of Egypt to enjoy a week long festival to celebrate their God; but he will forcefully drive them out of Egypt forever. Despite God's initial requests, there is nothing temporary about this expulsion.

The firstborn of the Egyptians were dedicated to their gods. This plague, like the previous plagues, will be directed against Pharaoh and against the gods (demons) of Egypt (Exodus 12:12)

What is different here is, Pharaoh will not simply grant Moses and the people of Israel the permission to take all of their people and livestock out of Egypt to worship God, but they will be driven out of Egypt, forever. That will be the choice of Pharaoh and the people of Egypt.

Exodus 11:1 **And the Lord said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether. (NKJV)**

Although this is a reasonably simple translation, I have had to examine it in the light of many different sources because of the word *you [all]*. This word (actually a suffix) only occurs twice in this verse, not 3 times as you see above in the NKJV. This does not really affect the meaning overall, but it did cause me to check my literal translation, my Hebrew exegesis, Owens, the KJV, the BHSeK, the HSB, as well as two other translations to confirm that I had originally translated this verse correctly (which is something that I do separate from this weekly emailed study),

When it comes to producing these weekly studies in Exodus, I actually begin the process in a completely separate document, sometimes many years previous to writing the actual lessons. In that separate document, I exegete the text, word-by-word, in the Hebrew. I also do 3 translations of every verse—a very literal translation, a moderately literal translation, and then a paraphrase (over the years, I have developed a great appreciation for paraphrases). Afterwards, I write commentary as well, and publish all of this online). See **Exodus Links** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). I use this as background and reference point for the weekly lessons. I do take my original commentary as a start as my basic text for the weekly lessons. However, I review, examine and rewrite this text many times before it is sent out by email (and, eventually, I reintegrate that commentary back into the original document).

So, essentially, I produce two separate documents. The weekly lesson which I send out; and a more thorough, word-by-word, verse-by-verse study, which I publish online. The weekly lesson is designed for anyone; the online document is more designed for a reference for pastors and Sunday School (or prep school) teachers.

Exodus 11:1 *And the Lord said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether. (NKJV)*

The translation above is the NKJV (which I use throughout this particular study). My moderately literal translation is: *Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "I will bring one more wound upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt. After this, he will send [all of] you from here. When [there is] a complete sending from this place, expelling, he will expel you [all] from this [place].*

Although I am generally somewhat less exacting in this emailed study, when it comes to the translation, in my final exegesis (a separate study posted online), I want to be certain that I have translated this verse correctly. An accurate translation is the first consideration, which is then followed (ideally speaking) by an accurate interpretation.

The Bible is potentially much different from how many people expect it to be. The doctrines which we learn from the Bible are not as straightforward as one might think. Let me give an example of this: I explained to an unbeliever that the term *soul* in the Bible is a person's mentality, frame of reference, memory, emotion, norms and standards, conscious, self-consciousness and volition. He demanded proof, expected me to quote a verse which states precisely that, *a man's soul is his mentality, his frame of reference, his memory,...* etc. Well, of course, there is no such verse. We deduce what the soul is

from a dozen or two verses, where it is clear that these individual aspects of a soul are actually presented as a part of the soul, according to the Bible. So, we find a verse where the soul experiences emotion; somewhere else, we find a verse where the soul is associated with memory; and somewhere else, we find the soul choosing to do something, which indicates volition. We put these different references together, and draw conclusions as to what the soul is.

Let me give a specific example: [The soul that sins will die](#). This verse suggests that the soul has volition (the soul is making a choice to sin) and that the soul is capable of committing sins (suggesting a sin nature). By studying a dozen or so verse like this, we can then categorically state what the Bible tells us a soul is.

And so that there is no misunderstanding, you are your soul and body. The soul is not separate from you making decisions and doing oddball things that you might think are wrong to do. You are your soul; you are what you think. So, when I speak of your soul making a decision, that is *you* making that decision. However, all of this takes place on an immaterial plane. Your soul generally makes a decision which involves your physical body (such as, you think, *I am going to lift my hand up*; and then you lift your hand up).

Today, we have dozens of books entitled *systematic theology*; where a theologian organizes a set of principles, and then shows where these principles are found in the Bible. The writer establishes fundamental Biblical principles and then builds upon those. Some of these books are quite excellent (like L. S. Chafer's book, *Systematic Theology*). In his book, we might find a quotation like, *man's soul is his mentality, his frame of reference, his memory...* etc.

My original point in all of this is, we first must establish an accurate translation and then build upon that. Sometimes spotting these slight inaccuracies is helpful; and other times, the addition of a single word here and there by a translator is helpful and not misleading. In this case, the additional word (*you*) is not a problem.

Exodus 11:1 [And the Lord said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether. \(NKJV\)](#)

We do not know exactly how or when God spoke to Moses. The fact that there is direct communication between God and Moses is pretty much accepted by this point in Exodus as a fairly routine thing. Today, in our own experience, living in the Church Age, direct interactive contact with God, apart from with His Word, is indicative of a mental issue than a spiritual breakthrough.

On the other hand, you or I are not going to lead nation Israel out of Egypt and begin a brand new increment in our current dispensation. For about 99.999% of Christians (and believers from previous dispensations), our contact with God is through His Word. God *never* comes to me when I am writing and says, "I think you need to emphasize this aspect



rather than that one.” If I thought that He did, that would be more indicative of a psychotic episode than divine guidance and enlightenment.

In fact, let me make a general statement here: if any teacher—no matter where you hear or see him—suggests that God is contacting him in some supernatural way, apart from the careful study of Scripture, then that is time for you to turn off the radio, turn off the tv station, or to quietly walk out of the building where he is speaking. There is *no* direct contact today from God to any person. This is not just a *most of the time* maxim; it is an *all of the time* maxim. When the canon of Scripture was completed (somewhere between A.D. 90–100, then there is no reason for direct contact from God again. No voices, no visions.

Moses talked to God and God spoke directly to Moses. Throughout our study of Scripture, we are going to encounter men who have direct contact with God. But, today, in this dispensation in which we live, there is no one who has direct contact with God. *No one!* This is because God’s Word is complete. The Bible is finished. No one is going to be adding a new chapter or a new book. Since God’s Word is complete, there is no reason for God to contact anyone directly. God does not suddenly remember, in 2020, “Oh, crap! I forgot to tell them about this new doctrine. Let Me contact My man Bruce and fill him in so that he can tell his congregation.” This does not take place. Not ever.

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On this day, October 6, 1536, William Tyndale was burned alive at the stake for the crime of translating the Bible into English. Remember that as you read your English Bible today.



One of the greatest periods of spiritual correction was the Reformation. This was a major game-changer. However, God did not contact any of these men audibly or with a vision. God never told any of them, “Listen, the Catholic church has gone insane and I need for you to fix it.” God spoke to these men through His Word (the Bible), which the Catholic Church made very difficult to obtain. The men of the Reformation responded to God’s Word, not to visions or to someone calling from them in the clouds. Every one of those great men read the Bible, compared it to the teaching of the Catholic Church, and decided, *this is not right; the Catholic Church has got it completely wrong!* There was no need for God to speak audibly to any of the men of the Reformation in order for it to take place. It

simply happened because they read and studied the Word and that guided them and their principles (or, *doctrines*).

**William Tyndale, burned alive for translating the Bible into English** (graphic); from [Pinterest](#); accessed October 7, 2020.

Back to the narrative of Exodus 11:

### Lesson 134: Exodus 11:1–2

### Israel in Egypt

With v. 1, we begin the warning for the final plague which is put upon Egypt.

Exodus 11:1 *And the Lord said to Moses, “I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether.* (NKJV)

Moses will be leading the people of God out of Israel; and so, he will enjoy direct, interactive contact with God. Throughout this narrative that we have been studying, God has been quite specific with Moses in telling him what to say and do, and then what to do afterwards, when Pharaoh says, “No.” God audibly spoke to Moses and Moses heard, and did exactly what God said.

God is *not* going to come to you and audibly tell you, “You were thinking of getting your oil changed on Wednesday? Let’s put that off until Thursday.” God is not even going to come to you and audibly tell you, “Establish a Christian camp in some South or Central American country.” We do not live in an era where there is direct interaction between man and God by way of visions or voices.

Perspective is also important: even though God spoke directly to some people prior to 400 B.C. and between 5 B.C. and A.D. 90, this was a very *small* percentage. The number of people spoken to by God prior to A.D. 90 was far less than one-tenth of one-tenth of 1% (in fact, it was probably not even 1 in 10 million). And when God closed out the canon of Scripture, that ended direct contact from Him. When the Old Testament was completed in 400 B.C., there was no more direct contact from God whatsoever for 400 years. We know this from the Bible’s recorded history of man’s very limited interaction with God. Even in past eras, man’s primary interaction with God was through His Word.

In the present era, God speaks to us through His Word, through the methods found in Scripture (which is almost always the teaching of a well-qualified, local pastor-teacher). This information becomes real to us by means of the God Holy Spirit (which is *not* an experience; that is, you will not experience ecstasies or emotional breakthroughs).

As an aside, if you go to church to have some emotional catharsis, then you are doing it wrong (as is your church). As human beings, we have emotions, and, from time to time, we will respond emotionally to some spiritual principles. It is not the job of the church or

of the local pastor-teacher to try to figure out how to grab you emotionally and titillate you in some way. It is not the Christian life to be emotionally stirred and then to go out into the world and do great things for God.

During the period of time that we are studying, when the canon of Scripture was not yet complete, God spoke to Moses and told him what to do. This included warnings for 10 plagues which would come to the land of Egypt. We have studied 9 of them and are about to embark on the 10<sup>th</sup> one.

Exodus 11:1 And the Lord said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether. (NKJV)

We therefore know that there will be a final wound which God brings upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt; and then, Pharaoh and the people of Egypt will expel Israel from Egypt.

Exodus 11:2a Speak now in the hearing of the people,...

Before the plague was to be announced, Moses was to speak to the people of the covenant—the Hebrew people.

The Hebrew people, after a few judgments on Egypt, believed God. So, in general, Moses did not have to warn them of plagues to come (this 10<sup>th</sup> judgment would be an exception).

At this point, the people of Israel would be given a very specific and necessary responsibility.

Exodus 11:2b ...and let every man ask from his neighbor...

Each person is to ask of his neighbor. The word *neighbor* is rêa' (רֵעַ) [pronounced RAY-ahg]; and it means, *associate, neighbor, colleague; companion, friend; beloved; fellow, acquaintance; fellow citizen*. Strong's #7453 BDB #945.

The Hebrew families are *not* next door neighbors with the Egyptians. The Hebrew people live in Goshen, which is a separate area from the rest of Egypt. They were segregated in Goshen, which appears to be a mutually agreed upon situation.

The text suggests that the Hebrew people are to go to their *Egyptian neighbors*; so there were neighboring Egyptian communities to which the Hebrew people were to go. How far away were they? 5 miles? 10 miles? We really do not know exactly.

Although we are not given an exact sense of time, when Pharaoh needed to call for Moses, this seemed to take place within a reasonable amount of time. There is no indication that many days would pass between Pharaoh calling for Moses and Moses showing up. Given that, I would suggest that the palace and many Egyptian neighborhoods are within 10 miles of Goshen.

Exodus 11:2c ...and every woman from her neighbor,...

The men were to go out and ask from their *neighbor* and the women were supposed to do the same.

This, in context, is a polite way of saying, they will make a request of the Egyptians for whom they worked or with whom they were associated in any way. The Hebrew people were isolated from the Egyptians, but there appears to have been some association between the communities.

Therefore, the Egyptians that the people would go to were not their next door or across-the-street neighbors. They were neighbors, insofar as living in the same country and, apparently, close enough to travel to.

I have previously suggested that many of the Hebrew women were probably slaves in some of the Egyptian households; they lived in Goshen, but they worked as slaves for Egyptians as their personal maids—cooks, nannies, etc. Another thing which occurs to me—it is possible that some women (and maybe men) worked in their homes, doing things for the Egyptians (manufacturing jewelry or pottery or other things).

I should point out that this is logical conjecture on my part. We know that Hebrew males are slaves who work on some of the big building projects under the direction of the Pharaoh. We also know that the people of Israel lived separate from the Egyptians, going back to the time of Joseph. But that the Hebrew women work as slaves outside of their own home, working for Egyptian families at their homes—that is a logical conjecture on my part. Here, the order is for men and women to *ask from their neighbors*. This implies some sort of relationship between the Hebrew people and the Egyptians. To me, implies that many of the women were household slaves to the Egyptians; but that they continued to live in Goshen, nevertheless (an interesting relationship, to be sure).

Based upon my sense of the text that we have studied (going all the way back to Joseph bringing his family into Egypt), the palace seems to be relatively close to Goshen (Joseph would not have put his family in an area that was far away). So, let me further postulate that, there were many Egyptian neighborhoods in the vicinity of the palace and, therefore, in the vicinity of Goshen. I would further propose that these are going to be the more well-to-do Egyptians, who had both wealth and servants.

Exodus 11:2a-c *Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor,...*

Women were also to ask of their neighbor. The men would have done the slave work in building the cities and the women would have done work in the houses (cooking, cleaning, organizing). Perhaps some Hebrew folks manufactured things in their homes. Perhaps some men had other responsibilities separate from the Pharaoh's building projects.

We do not know exactly how the slavery situation was organized. Was every Israelite a slave, and did the Egyptians purchase them from the state? This would seem to be the most logical explanation to me.

But, despite their position as slaves, the Hebrew people continued to live in an isolated area, called Goshen, separate from Egypt and the Egyptians. The Hebrew people apparently having their own residences which they maintained separately (we have no idea as to the nature of these residences, but they were possibly similar to Egyptian dwellings, given that the Hebrews lived there are free men for perhaps 100 years). This clear separation between the two peoples is key in many of the passages that we have studied.

You may recall that, when Joseph (son of Jacob) was prime minister over Egypt, the state took possession of all the livestock and land. This happened as a result of Joseph taxing the people a significant amount of grain so that the Egyptian government had grain stockpiled when the 7-year famine hit Egypt. It is not hard to imagine a situation where the state decides to take possession of all the Israelites as slaves (with the assent of the Egyptian population).

As a result, the state might have chosen the men to do work for nation Egypt; but allow both men and women (and children) to be purchased (or even rented) by the Egyptian population, to come and do various forms of menial labor in the homes of Egyptians (but to return to Goshen at night). Again, we do not know the nuts and bolts of the slavery of the women, so I am simply offering up a reasonable scenario.

How could the entire nation of Egypt be so heartless as to use the Israelites as slaves? Interestingly enough, we do not know exactly how that originally transpired (we are given some sense of it in the Exodus record). Nevertheless, in this particular generation that we are studying, the Israelites had probably been slaves for several centuries. When you are raised with something, you just tend to simply accept it. It was the life that Egyptians and Israelites both grew up with.

When we are born and begin to grow, we simply think of the world as just being what it is while we are alive. We eventually develop some appreciation for the past (meaning, anything which predated our own birth), but we generally accept things just as they are. This is how we can have anarchists/socialists rioting in the streets against capitalism, but organizing their activities on their iphones. To people of my generation, it makes no sense; whereas, there kids were almost born with a cellphone in their hands, so they have no appreciation whatsoever as to how that cellphone got into their hands in the first place. It is an accepted and unappreciated part of their personal reality. They just accept it as *what is*.

The Egyptians in Exodus 11 were simply born into a time where they had very inexpensive labor, and who does not need help with labor when it comes to running a farm (and/or a ranch)? We do not know the exact ways that the Israelite women were employed; I have suggested that they were somehow purchased from the state. Bear in mind, this is speculation on my part (but it is logical, based upon the state previously owning all of the

livestock and land). Whatever was the situation, the Hebrew people were still allowed their own land and houses.

The men and women descended from Jacob were supposed to go to their Egyptian *neighbors* and this is what they were supposed to ask for:

Exodus 11:2d ...[articles of silver and articles of gold.](#)”

We have the word *articles* here, which refers to anything which was manufactured, constructed or designed. The Hebrew word is *kēlîy* (כֶּלִי) [pronounced *kēlee*], and it means, *manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables*. Strong’s #3627 BDB #479. This is a very common word in the Hebrew and has many applications. It usually refers to something which has been manufactured (not in a factory, of course, but generally, by hand by an artisan). Given that we are speaking of silver and gold, what they will be asking for is jewelry. Therefore, some translations rendered this as *silver and gold jewelry* (AFV, ARV2005, AOB, ESV, MLV2020, Webster, WEB, and many others).

This is a short lesson in translation. There is no one-to-one correspondence between the Hebrew words and their English translations. In one place, a translation may translate this word as *jewelry*; and in another, they might translate it *vessels, pottery, weapons* or *furniture*. Context determines exactly to what this word refers.

Exodus 11:2d ...[articles of silver and articles of gold.](#)”

What the Israelites were to ask for are manufactured items of gold and silver. For possibly several hundred years, the Hebrews had been slaves to the Egyptians. Egypt’s wealth would have depended upon, in part, Israel’s forced labor.

The Egyptian people would not have had bars of gold and bars of silver, but their silver and gold would have been made into jewelry (for the most part); and by this, the woman could carry a great deal of cash on her person, in the form of jewelry. This was, in essence, the ancient world bank account (more accurately, their savings account). Gold and silver have nearly always had intrinsic value, so it would be made into various items of jewelry for relatively easy transport and storage.

I even suggested that some of these items could have been manufactured by Hebrew people in their own households. Later in the book of Exodus, there will be Hebrew artisans whose craftsmanship will be called upon to work with the gold and silver which they will collect from the Egyptians. You become skilled in a particular craft by doing it for much of your life. These particular facts suggest to me that some Hebrew people did these things as slaves in some capacity.

**Lesson 135: Exodus 11:1–3a The Israelites Are to Ask for Gold and Silver Jewelry**



Exodus 11:1 And the Lord said to Moses, “I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether. (NKJV)

This is the final judgment which God will bring upon Egypt. It will be recounted in Exodus 11–12, and the Passover—still observed today, 3500 years later—will be instituted.

Exodus 11:2 Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold.”

*Neighbor* here refers to Egyptians. The people of Israel have worked for the Egyptians all of these years; and they are to ask from them gold and silver (which is going to be reasonably easy to transport, as it is mostly in the form of jewelry).

There is certainly no one-to-one correspondence between the people of Egypt and their Israelite slaves. That is, Eliezer and his wife do not both work for their next door neighbor, who are Egyptians. Most male Hebrews apparently worked in large group slavery building projects (Exodus 1:11 2:11 5:4–9). However, we know much less about what the women did. I have suggested that they may have been personal servants in the homes of Egyptians or for the royalty—this information is not really given to us. Based upon the skill sets of some Israelites (which we will find out about in future chapters), it is apparent that not all Hebrew slaves built buildings. Some were workers of gold and silver. Exactly how that evolved and where they worked, we can only speculate.

In any case, we do know that the people of Israel are isolated from the Egyptians, living separately in Goshen, so they do not live next door to one another. Furthermore, God knows that the individual Hebrew slaves will be able to figure out who to go to in order to ask for silver and gold.

It is not uncommon for transient peoples to carry their wealth in the form of jewelry. This jewelry might be worn by children, just in case they are separated from the adults. The modern-day equivalent is a debit card; or one might view the jewelry as an individual savings account.

Exodus 11:2 Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold.”

The Hebrews have been slaves for 200 years (or more) in the land of Egypt. Although, even under slavery, their original life was good. This may seem incongruent with the life of the slave, but Hebrew families prospered and multiplied and were even allowed their own homes, cattle and places to live (in most instances). However, they were still slaves, which meant that they were not properly recompensed for their work nor did they have any true freedom (quite obviously, they could not all join together and go worship their God in the manner that He required).

Exodus 11:2 *Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold."*

Later, in obedience to these words, the Hebrew people will ask for some recompense for their services, and they will receive such payments from their Egyptian masters (mostly, articles of jewelry). In the opinion of R. B. Thieme, Jr., these Israelites will walk out of Egypt with a huge amount of money. Believe it or not, we might be able to calculate their wealth, once we get to the construction of the Tabernacle (as gold and silver will be required for the articles of furniture). It all depends upon whether the gold and silver is quantified for us.

God again tells Moses exactly what will occur. There have been no surprises in God's plan for Moses, once he has accepted his place in it. Moses will eventually adapt to the fact that God is always right and that he will have to trust Him. This is an important step in Moses' spiritual development because he is going to lead the most whiny, reversionistic group of people for forty years; people who will malign him and rebel against him throughout this entire excursion out of Egypt. In fact, this generation of Hebrews will actually express remorse at a later date that they left Egypt. We have already studied how they are under the tyrannical slavery of Egypt. And yet, at certain points in the future, they will wistfully look back to the good old days when they were slaves. Moses has to keep his bearings under these pressures of dealing with such irrational people. A lesser man (meaning, almost anyone else) would have walked off the job and left the people to die in the desert.

God will, in fact, essentially offer Moses that opportunity. In the future, after Israel has disobeyed God for the umpteenth time, God will tell Moses, "Look, I will kill everyone here and start over with you and your own family." But Moses, as a result of trusting God and His long-term plan, will pray on behalf of the degenerate Hebrews and preserve them (this is clearly a type of Christ paying for our sins, and then acting as an intercessor for us). That is a preview of coming attractions.

In my life, I have dealt with a variety of different personality types (I was a high school teacher for 25 years). The most difficult people for me to interact with are irrational people who make irrational decisions. The Exodus generation was filled with irrational, emotional people. Moses hung with these people for 40 years; I might not have been able to handle them for 40 minutes.

The point is that Moses has found his place in God's plan and he is learning, step by step, to trust God in this decision. As one of the most important Old Testament saints with responsibilities almost unheard of, this is absolutely necessary. Given all of the moving parts in this epic tale of history, Moses' consistent obedience to God's commands is what holds all of this together.

Exodus 11:2 *Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold."*

There is no reason to dance around what is being required here by God: these are reparations, and, under the circumstances, this is a reasonable request. The actual slaves are confronting the actual slave owners and they are asking to be properly remunerated for work which they have done for Egypt (and, presumably, for individual households). There is a clear distinction between slaves and slave owners; and there is a clear responsibility on the part of the slave owners.

**Application:** Asking for reparations and getting them in a timely manner is not always something that works out. In the history of the United States, there were some reparations given to some Black slaves. However, these reparations (known as 40 acres and a mule) were not fairly or universally given out.<sup>17</sup>

**Application:** As an aside, this does not mean that it is valid to ask for reparations today. A variety of peoples came to the United States and did some very menial labor in order to raise their own children up in the United States. These people (Irish, Italians, Pollacks) were discriminated against and treated poorly. However, they seized the American dream through hard work and perseverance. In fact, they did this so well that there are some groups today who accuse them of white privilege, whereas, only one or two generations ago, they were dirt poor (in my own family, my mother was extremely poor throughout her youth, much of which took place during the Great Depression).

**Application:** My point here is, there are far more people who are well-to-do whose parents or grandparents (or even great grandparents) came to this country, having little or nothing. Let me state emphatically, that such people had nothing to do with American slavery nor do they have any relationship at all to the weird idea of *white privilege*. This call for reparations and nonsensical babblings about white privilege is really based in class warfare. Class warfare is a common tool of socialism and should have no place in America, the land of the free.

Exodus 11:3a [And the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians.](#)

God gave favor or grace to the people in the eyes or in the sight of all Egypt. *The people* here refers to sons of Jacob (the Hebrew people). What this means is, the Egyptians noticed how God treated the sons of Jacob, and the Egyptians were willing to help out the Israelites financially. It is because of God that the Hebrew people were recompensed for the many years of slavery that they served.

Exodus 11:3a [And the Lord gave the people favor \[= grace\] in the sight of the Egyptians.](#)

The people of Israel have been associated with the people of Egypt for a very long time—for 400 years (a longer time than we have been a nation). There does not appear to be any time when the Hebrew people revolted, when they attacked the Egyptians out of frustration, etc. This suggests that reasonably good relations existed between the peoples. Now, if that sounds odd to you, throughout our own history, there have been

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<sup>17</sup> Bear in mind, this was a government proposition.

close relationships between servants in households and the people of that household; as well as between some slaves and their slave masters. Even though this is not always the case, to deny that such friendships and mutual respect and even love existed is to deny reality. In the antebellum days, there were families who loved their slaves and slaves who loved their families. A considerable number of confederate soldiers who came from plantations (which would have been a small percentage of the confederate army) left their wives and children with their slaves—is many cases, in the care and protection of their slaves.

We have to bear in mind that people are born into situations. They don't necessarily blame anyone else to whom they were born. You can be born into a slave family; or you can be born into the family which owns the slaves. You do not necessarily resent one side because you are born to the other (there is a great deal of resentment being learned today because that is what is taught in our public school system and in the colleges, accepted by people who were never slaves or slave owners).

An unequal distribution of goods and services is difficult for some young people to understand in the United States, as so many are raised with the concept of being jealous of those who have more than you do. In fact, it is common for this jealousy to be directed towards those who are born into wealth or who acquire considerable wealth. Such teaching/propaganda comes straight out of Beijing or Moscow. This kind of propaganda works because the ultra-wealthy in any nation will always be a much smaller percentage of a population, so that they can be demonized in many ways.

There are some iconic photographs and video of a couple who own a very nice house, who were threatened by Black Lives Matter demonstrators, so the couple stood on their front porch holding weapons. I have no doubt that quite a number of people viewed that and were jealous of their mansion, their weapons, and their station in life. However, the proper attitude is, *do not covet* (that is, do not desire the things which belong to other people).



**Couple Protecting their Home** (a photograph); from [FoxNews](#); accessed October 20, 2020.

I saw that couple as simply protecting their own property. I did not look at their house and think, *that house should be mine*; or, *they are too damn rich!* They were simply protecting what they had, which should be a God-given right in the United States of America.



The false eternal struggle is the generation of children who are raised up and say, “You parents ruined this world and now we must fix it. You ruined it with your greed, your materialism, your consumerism. My generation rejects you and we will do whatever is necessary to fix it.” To the generation coming up, and making such statements, this seems reasonable to them. They might even find some clever meme online, and use their iPhones to post it on their personal Instagram page, not having a smidgeon of appreciation as to how this all came about (that is, their having an iPhone and an Instagram account).

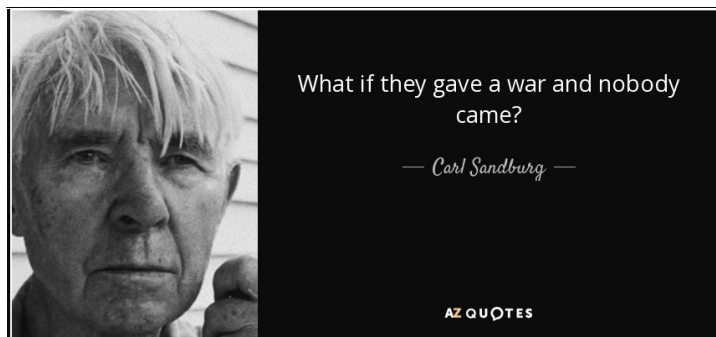
Children so often have these utopian ideas, that if we just fix or change x, y and z, then life will be much more fair and just and blissful. Such children have no concept of the real world. I remember in my generation, for several decades, we grew up thinking that we were the first generation to recognize the war is bad and that we should not go to war. We had slogans, like, *War is not good for people or other living things*; and, *What if they gave a war and nobody showed up?* Most of us had no idea that was all communist propaganda designed to get us out of east Asia, so that the communists could conquer that entire continent. If the United States did nothing, then millions upon millions of Asians would suffer and die, so that communism could be imposed.



**War is not healthy sign** (a photograph); from [LuxEcoLiving](https://www.luxecoliving.com); accessed October 20, 2020.

**Carl Sagan quote** (a graphic); from [AZ Quotes](https://www.azquotes.com); accessed October 20, 2020.

During my life, we suddenly withdrew from Vietnam, partially as a result of the so-called peace movement. Now, do you think that the end result was peace and happiness when the United States armed forces left the Vietnam area? No, the communists overran South Vietnam and at least one neighboring country (Cambodia), and they killed far more people over the period of 3 or 4 years than had been killed in the decades-long Vietnam war. This year's-long massacre was then followed by a communist invasion of Cambodia, immortalized by the term [\*killing fields\*](#). Millions upon millions of people were killed in this communist offensive, now unopposed by the American military.



My point is, young people rarely have a real appreciation for reality. And the Exodus generation had little appreciation for the redemption offered them by their God.

## Lesson 136: Exodus 11:1–3

## Moses Being Great in the Land

Let's now take a look at what we have studied so far:

Exodus 11:1–2 And the Lord said to Moses, “I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether. Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold.” (NKJV)

What is important here is, there is one more plague to go; and the people will be told to go out among the Egyptians and ask for remuneration. Scripture is not clear on when the actual remuneration takes place. To prepare you for things to come, I believe that the Israelites went out among the people of Egypt to (1) warn them of the plague to come and (2) ask for reparations. I do not think that they necessarily received all of their reparations when they went out at this time. I believe that many Egyptians will bring their gold and silver jewelry to the people of Goshen (the Israelites) and give it to them *after* the final plague. It makes logical sense to me that, any Egyptian wavering on the Israel situation after the 9<sup>th</sup> judgment will have no doubts after the 10<sup>th</sup>. Egyptians will show up to Goshen and demand that the Israelites leave Egypt; and it seems logical that some might bring them gold and silver as well at that time.

Exodus 11:3a And the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians.

Most of the plagues did not affect the Hebrew people. The Egyptians had been pelted by hail or invaded by insect hordes, and yet, not too far away in Goshen, the Hebrew people did not suffer the same indignities. When there was no light for 3 days—a thick darkness which could not be penetrated by light—the people of God had light in their dwellings. This did not go unnoticed by the Egyptians.

It would seem logical to me that, a reasonably well-informed Egyptian would survey the situation, and, after the second plague which affected him, but not the Hebrew people, that he might wander over there to ask why. At the very least, it should be on his mind, that this very natural-like phenomena, which should have affected both Goshen and Egypt, only affected Egypt.

What appears to be the case is, God is explaining in this passage how the Hebrew people can boldly ask for things made of silver and gold and be given these things. The Egyptians have seen what is going on, and they will willingly give these items to the Hebrew people. Their motivations were probably mixed. Some may have had close ties to their Hebrew servants (again, assuming that some Egyptian households had personal servants from the Hebrews); some may have given the Hebrew people jewelry out of fear; some may have



been trying to placate the angry God of the Hebrews; some may have viewed their gifts to the Hebrew individuals as bribes to leave. One must also take into account that the people of Egypt have just been under 3 days of thick darkness. That would have given them a lot of time to think about what has been happening all around them. Whatever their motivations may have been, individual Egyptians and households were willing to give the Hebrew people what appears to be a considerable payment in gold and silver (particularly based upon future chapters in this book of Exodus).

I want you to realize just how well-placed this 9<sup>th</sup> judgment was. In the previous plagues, there was always a flurry of activity occurring; but, in the 9<sup>th</sup> plague, suddenly, everything stopped. As we are told, people did not even get up to go outside because it was so pitch dark. 3 days of darkness leaves a lot of time for thinking. This primed the Egyptian people for these requests of silver and gold jewelry by the Hebrew people.

All of this giving would have been on an individual basis—from a specific Egyptian family to a specific Hebrew man, woman or family. Each Egyptian family had just endured 3 days of complete darkness. If giving the Hebrew people some of their wealth was a pathway to ending this ordeal, many Egyptians were onboard with that.

The rest of v. 3 offers us some of the motivation for these gifts.

Exodus 11:3b **Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt,...**

Moses was known throughout the land of Egypt. I suspect that his backstory was known as well. No doubt he was talked about; and, no doubt, people did a lot of talking. I have been in a number of disasters (floods, hurricanes), and during that time, I spoke with a number of neighbors who I had never spoken to before (or since). So, there was probably a great deal of communication between Egyptian neighbors, and Moses would have been the central figure in their communication.

Now, did they have correct information? That is unclear; but Moses was still respected or considered to be very great by the Egyptians. When it says that he was great in the land of Egypt, that would imply that he was respected by Egyptians and Hebrews alike.

The word describing Moses in v. 3 is the adjective gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced *gaw-DOHL*] and it means *great*. It is used for *great in number, great in wealth or magnitude*, those definitions obviously not applicable, here. This word is used of particular men, such as David, Mordecai and Moses, to indicate their greatness in the eyes of the people. This means that the people recognized their greatness, their power, their achievements, and/or their position. A modern equivalent would be *esteemed*. Strong's #1419 BDB #152. Although respect and admiration is implied here, that is not necessarily the universal feeling in Egypt. It is reasonable to suppose that there was some fear/respect for Moses among the Egyptian people as well.

The adverb m'ôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced *meh-ODE*] acts as an intensifier; in the old English, we would use the word *exceedingly* and today we might simply use the word *very*. The two

together in modern English are best rendered *highly esteemed* or *highly respected*. Strong's #3966 BDB #547.

Exodus 11:3c ...in the sight of Pharaoh's servants...

There is a single word in v. 3c which may be a bit tricky: <sup>ע</sup>bâdîym (עֲבָדִים) [pronounced *ge<sup>b</sup>-vaw-DEEM*], which means, *slaves, servants; workers; underlings; subjects*; this can mean *military men, soldiers, or citizens* in the plural. Strong's #5650 BDB #713. When speaking of the servants of Pharaoh, are we talking about the Hebrew people or about the Egyptians? Given the various translations of this word, there is the possibility that this could refer to the *subjects* or *citizens of Pharaoh*. Furthermore, the Hebrew people are clearly designated *the people*, and are so named in the next phrase. So, it seems less likely that God would say the exact same thing twice here.

Exodus 11:3b-c Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants [that is, *the citizens of Egypt*]...

We should not understand this to mean that God placed thoughts into the heads of people thoughts that they did not already have. God did not take people who hated Moses and, presto-chango, they now love and respect him. I do not believe that God changes man's volition like that. Otherwise, the very important aspect of our lives—volition, found throughout Scripture as fundamental to the human existence—no longer means anything. If God arbitrarily changes our volition, then we become simply chessboard pieces that God moves around on the board for His Own entertainment. I do not believe that is the teaching of Scripture.

**Illustration:** Let me see if I can better explain the actual thoughts and feelings of the people of Egypt. In 2020, easily the most well-known figure in the United States is Donald Trump. Although half of the country loves him and half of the country hates him, he is *very great* in the United States. This is most clearly revealed in the focus of the left and of Democrats in this year's election. What the Democrats plan to do if they win the presidency is *not* the emphasis of this election. Trump-hatred is the emphasis. If a Democrat politician is being interviewed on television, he is less likely to be touting specific new plans of the Democratic party and more likely to be complaining about whatever President Trump just said or did. That is because Donald Trump is *very great* in America.

Being *very great* does not mean that there is universal admiration and respect for Moses. But, who is the most talked about man in Egypt? Moses.

We live in a much different era, so we may not fully appreciate this but, the political leadership of Egypt—particularly Pharaoh—was absolute and he was the center of the attention of the country. It is normal for the pharaoh to be the #1 celebrity in Egypt. So, for someone like Moses to come along and supplant that—that was quite a remarkable feat. No doubt, this would engender some anger in Pharaoh.

Note also that this is Moses that we are talking about and not Aaron.

Exodus 11:3b-c **Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants** [that is, *the citizens of Egypt*]...

God made it clear that He was working through Moses; and that Moses gave fair warnings; and that he gave people a chance to protect their family and livestock throughout these ordeals.

It appears that many people in Egypt—not everyone—understood that their slavery which they had imposed upon the Hebrew people, had come to an end. This is not a difficult thing to grasp. At some point in the history of the United States, enough people recognized that slavery was a corrupt institution and a corrupting influence on our country, and it was ended. It is even possible that many among the Egyptians may have begun to feel the same way—particularly after facing the heavy judgments of the God of the Hebrews.

Again, they had 3 days to think about their lives and the Hebrew people who lived among them, when darkness enshrouded their land.

Exodus 11:3d **...and in the sight of the people.**

Moses also had respect in the eyes of the people, which is a reference to the Hebrew people. The Hebrew people respected him.

It is apparent that both Egyptians and Hebrews knew about Moses, and they either experienced or saw the devastation of the great plagues. They would have been aware of the relationship between God and Moses. They would have been aware that, when Moses lifted up his staff, a great plague would follow.

Exodus 11:3 **And the Lord gave the [Hebrew] people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants** [that is, *citizens of Egypt*] **and in the sight of the [Hebrew] people.**

The citizens of Egypt have experienced firsthand all of the judgments of God (9 of them so far). They knew who Moses was; they knew that he led the Hebrew people and that he acted on the orders of the God of the Hebrew people.

The Hebrew people endured the first few plagues and they were close to the rest of Egypt, so they knew and could actually see what took place outside of Goshen. The Hebrew people developed a fear/respect for Moses.

Therefore, when Moses told the people of Jacob to go out among the Egyptians and to ask for jewelry, the people obeyed Moses and did this; and the Egyptians when faced with the requests of individual Hebrews agreed to give them a great deal of wealth in the form of gold and silver jewelry. Given all that had happened, do the Egyptians want to continue to be on the wrong side of the God of the Hebrews?

For those who have been reading ahead, or know the story of the Exodus, you realize that Pharaoh will pursue Moses with his army at the very end. There were certainly Egyptians who respected Moses and were gracious to the Hebrews. There were also those who despised and even feared the Hebrews as Pharaoh did. God had already told Moses that the Hebrews would ask for various necessities and provisions and they would be provided for them by the Egyptians.

Exodus 11:3 And the Lord gave the [Hebrew] people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants [that is, *citizens of Egypt*] and in the sight of the [Hebrew] people.

God gave the Hebrew people grace in the sight of the Egyptians. During these plagues, it will be obvious that the judgments of the God of the Hebrews fell upon the Egyptians, but not upon the Hebrews.

God's man, Moses, was both recognizable and respected (and/or feared) in the land of Egypt. Despite the weird thing with Aaron temporarily being Moses' spokesman, it became clear that Moses was the leader and the one who had the close relationship with God.

We are about to hear God talk about the final plague and there are going to be two issues which do not appear to be directly addressed in Scripture: (1) What about all this that Pharaoh and Moses would never see one another again (Exodus 10:28–29)—was that all testosterone (male)-driven bravado? (2) How will the people of Egypt be told about this final plague? The way that this plague is presented, there are actions which could be taken by the Hebrew people and by the Egyptian people which would exempt their own household from this heavy judgment. Logically, for this to be meaningful, the Egyptians must know what is expected of them.

As we continue in this study, I will address both of these issues.

## Lessons 137–138: Exodus 11:1–6

## Order of Events

Let's now take a look at what we have studied so far:

Exodus 11:1–2 And the Lord said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether. Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold." (NKJV)

Exodus 11:3 And the Lord gave the [Hebrew] people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants [that is, *citizens of Egypt*] and in the sight of the [Hebrew] people. (NKJV with some inserted words)

With v. 4, we make a sudden change. God is speaking to Moses in vv.1–2; then God gives Moses and the Hebrew people grace before the Egyptians (v. 3); but in v. 4, suddenly Moses is speaking. As we have seen, the intermediary step of *all* that God says to Moses is skipped over, and we go directly to Moses announcing what the LORD has said to him.

That is, the record of these events does not repeat conversations. We will find out at the end of v. 8 that God is speaking to Pharaoh, but it is likely that this warning to Pharaoh was not restricted to Pharaoh only.

Exodus 11:4a *Then Moses said, “Thus says the Lord:...*

The narrative here (and elsewhere) could really drag—except that Moses, as the author, skips over sections which would have been repetitive. What happened was, God spoke to Moses (vv. 1–3), and He had more to say. However, Moses here, in recording this narrative, jumps to the place where he is speaking, now repeating God’s words to Pharaoh. Moses will also say these same words to the elders of Israel in Exodus 12.

If Exodus 10–11 were in chronological order, then Moses speaking to Pharaoh right here would be in conflict with what Pharaoh said to him in their previous meeting. Previously, Pharaoh warned him, “You come around me again, and you will die.” Pharaoh’s restraining order against Moses included the punishment of death. Then Moses shot back, “You’re right; you will not see me again!”

If we completely separate chapters 10 & 11 in Exodus, and assume that they are in chronological order, then, at some point, Moses returns to the palace of Pharaoh, and Pharaoh appears to let him back into his court to speak. The other approach—and we have seen this occur previously in the book of Exodus—is that there is some overlap in these two chapters. That is, some of the events found in chapters 10 & 11 are the same event, but presented in a different context (which has happened previously in this book’s narrative).

These overlapping or parallel events have both the context of plague #9 along with the announcement of plague #10 (which includes with it a warning of how to avoid it altogether). This is very much in keeping with the organization of the plagues into written form. They are presented as very disjoint events, which means, everything to do with plague #9 is covered; and then everything to do with plague #10 is covered. So contextual unity is preserved, but the chronology is not.

Exodus 11:4a *Then Moses said, “Thus says the Lord:...*

So, who exactly is Moses speaking to? Perhaps Moses is speaking to the elders of Israel—and, who knows?—perhaps also to a delegation of people of Egypt. However, at the end of v. 8, Moses is going to storm from the presence of Pharaoh, which is much more in keeping with the end of Exodus 10. A similar conversation will be had between Moses and the elders of Israel in Exodus 12.

This information had to be given to the elders of Israel, because they will pass along this information to the people of Israel. The people of Israel need to know what to do for this final plague. Also, when they go to ask for gold and silver, they will need to warn the Egyptians from whom they ask gold and silver. It seems very likely to me that the people of Israel not only went out and asked for gold and silver, but I believe that they did some evangelization as well. "Here is what you must do in order for you to preserve your firstborn from our God," is what they may have said.

Bear in mind that, this may seem like a lot for the Israelites to put upon Egypt, but Egypt has watched Moses and she has been afflicted by God's judgments, therefore, a warning from the people of the covenant is not going to come completely out of the blue. There is an immediate historical context for it.

Exodus 11:4a [Then Moses said, "Thus says the Lord:...](#)

To whom is Moses speaking? In the past, he has spoken before Pharaoh and his officials when announcing a plague. However, right here in v. 4, his audience is not specified. When we come to v. 8, we find that Moses is speaking to Pharaoh and to his court. Also Moses will exit from being before Pharaoh in a hot anger.

So, Moses is now speaking to Pharaoh. He is warning Pharaoh and his court of the final plague. Already, God has brought 9 severe judgments upon the people of Egypt. This will be the 10<sup>th</sup> and final judgment.

Exodus 11:4b [...'About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt;...](#)

Originally, God told Moses to say these words to Pharaoh, describing what God would do.

God says that He would go out in the middle of the night into the midst of Egypt.

The timing is curious. It sounds, by the warning, as if God would go out that very night into the midst of Egypt. However, in Exodus 12, we are going to find out about the Passover process (which would override the Angel of Death), which takes two weeks. This would suggest that all or a portion of Exodus 12 takes place before this warning to Pharaoh is given.

This warning would have included Goshen for any disobedient Israelite (however, there are none mentioned in the narrative).

I believe that this warning was also given by the people of Israel to the people of Egypt when the Israelites went out asking for gold and silver.

Exodus 11:4 [Then Moses said, "Thus says the Lord: 'About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt;...](#)



In this context, Moses is speaking to Pharaoh, but let me suggest that Moses said these things to the elders of Israel, who then told the Israelites. Bear in mind, the sons of Israel could not obey God's directions without being told what to do. So, at some point, Moses told them what must be done.

Vv. 4 and 5 should not have been separated; v. 5 continues the thought of v. 4.

Exodus 11:5a ...and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die,...

God has pronounced this sentence: *every firstborn in Egypt will die*. There is no one left out here.

Exodus 11:5b ...from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne,...

God's warning about the firstborn goes all the way to the top—to the Pharaoh sitting on his throne. His firstborn will die—but it will be because of his disobedience to God. The firstborn will not die if living in an obedient home.

The way to exempt a home from this judgment is not covered in this chapter, but in the next one.

Exodus 11:5c ...even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the handmill,...

This edict reaches all the way down to the maidens doing the most repetitive of tasks, such as grinding flour meal using two hand mills.

Exodus 11:5d ...and all the firstborn of the animals.

Those under the curse include even the beasts of the field—those who still remain.

This is a serious judgement to an unbeliever; however, God will give every family a way out. It will be a simple, nonmeritorious way for them to save their children. All they have to do is to believe Y<sup>e</sup>howah and then act upon that faith.

Exodus 11:5 ...and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals.

This is a warning not just to Pharaoh but to all the people of Egypt. Every firstborn, man or animal, was about to die. A similar warning would also be delivered to Israel.

Now let's put these two verses together:

Exodus 11:4–5 Then Moses said, "Thus says the Lord: 'About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt; and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of

Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals.

It is reasonable to suppose that Moses said these things to the elders of Israel and that they told the people. It is logical that, if the people went out and asked for gold and silver and received it, that they would have warned their Egyptian benefactors as well.

The narrative in Exodus is presented very topically. It is not presented as a day-by-day, hour-by-hour recording of events. You may recall that, at the beginning of Moses being in Egypt, we twice viewed his first meeting with Pharaoh in the narrative. The first time we studied it, it was seen from the perspective of human viewpoint. The Pharaoh's response to Moses and Aaron showing up and making demands was emphasized. The Hebrew elders' response was emphasized. The elders were very unhappy with Moses and Aaron, who the elders believed had screwed up their lives.

But then, we go back and view that same meeting, but from God's point of view. We are no longer interested what Pharaoh says or does as a reaction—that is immaterial, because God's plan marches on, regardless of what Pharaoh does or says.

**Application:** This is important for us to keep in mind, no matter what is happening in the world. Right now, on the very day I send this lesson out, there is an undecided election which has taken place in the United States, and it could have far-reaching effects. However, no matter which candidate wins—and America is sharply divided in preference—God's plan marches forward.

From chapter 7 forward, we see Moses and Aaron standing before Pharaoh from the divine perspective. However, each judgment is kept separate from the previous judgment. Most of the time, that has little affect on the chronology. It has some, but not much. This time, it may seem to play havoc with chronology, but it is nothing to be overly concerned about.

It is certainly possible to read these chapters, and not worry about exactly what happens when. Almost every commentator approaches the book of Exodus in that way. But, as you may recall, that first meeting with Pharaoh, was presented twice, and that was somewhat confusing. We have a similar problem at this point, because Moses storms off from Pharaoh on two occasions (it appears), vowing never to see him again. And Pharaoh makes a similar threat twice.

It is possible that what happened between Moses and Pharaoh was akin to these lines from the song, *Carol Brown*:

Jen said she'd never ever see me again  
When I saw her again, she said it again

Or, in the alternative, Moses stormed off from Pharaoh one time only, but we see it from two perspectives (as being affixed to two separate plagues). It only happened once, but is presented twice because of the nature of the meeting and the two plagues.

There is some confusion as to the order of events; so, here is how I believe that this went down:

Throughout the book of Exodus, each plague is presented separately from the plague before and after it. However, this is not actually the case. That is, when plague  $n$  ( $n$  is a variable) takes place, the dust will settle, after which, Pharaoh will strengthen his heart and refuse to do what God asked of him. Moses will not get flustered and say, "Well, well, I am going out to speak to God and come right back here with a new plague to tell you about!" When Pharaoh went on negative signals, Moses was already prepared for that and he would then announce plague  $n+1$ .

In other words, Moses was locked and loaded, ready for Pharaoh's negative volition. He was ready to go with the new plague the moment that Pharaoh said, "No, you are not leaving Egypt with your families and flocks!" Without any hesitation, Moses would immediately say, "Then this will be the next judgment from God on you and on your people."

*Exactly what happens when* is somewhat difficult to determine; so here is how I believe that these final events went down. The key is, Exodus 11 is not separate from Exodus 10; that is, Exodus 11 does *not* introduce some additional set of actions which follow Exodus 10 in time. When it comes to the order of events, these chapters need to be re-ordered in order for them to be chronological.

The ISV is used below. I left out most of the translation notes that the ISV integrates into its text.

### The Order of Events: Moses Warns Pharaoh of the Last Plague

1. First, we have the plague of darkness:
  - 1) Exodus 10:22–23 *So Moses stretched his hand toward the sky, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. No one could see anyone else, nor could anyone get up from his place for three days. But there was light for all the Israelis in their dwellings.*
2. Pharaoh calls Moses in for his last face to face with Moses. This occurs right after the plague of darkness.
  - 1) Exodus 10:24a *Pharaoh called Moses and said, "Go serve [Or worship] the Lord,...*
3. At first, this appears to be what Moses has been waiting for—Pharaoh is going to let Moses and the people go out of Egypt. However, there would be restrictions: the flocks and herds of the Hebrew people must be left behind. Exodus 10:24b
  - 1) Exodus 10:24 *Pharaoh called Moses and said, "Go serve [Or worship] the Lord, but your flocks and your cattle are to remain. Even your little ones can go with you!"*
  - 2) Previously, Pharaoh disallowed Moses to take the children as well.
4. Moses tells Pharaoh that is unacceptable; the animals would be needed for their sacrifices. Exodus 10:25–26
  - 1) Exodus 10:25–26 *Moses said, "You must let us have sacrifices and burnt*

## The Order of Events: Moses Warns Pharaoh of the Last Plague

offerings to offer to the Lord our God. And even our livestock must go with us. Not a hoof will be left behind because we will use some of them to serve the Lord our God, and until we get there we won't know what we need to serve the Lord."

5. Pharaoh's heart is strengthened and he says *no*. Actually, he puts restrictions upon Moses and the people to leave their animals behind in Egypt. This is not what God requires. The animals must go with the Hebrew people.
  - 1) Exodus 10:27 **The Lord made Pharaoh's heart stubborn, [Lit. strong] and he did not want to let them go.**
6. Previously, Moses had been warned by God that this is what Pharaoh would do. God may not have told Moses exactly how Pharaoh would resist his demands, but Moses was always prepared for Pharaoh to renege on whatever promise he made. Therefore, even though their meeting was heated, Moses knew in advance that this was going to happen.
  - 1) Exodus 11:9–10 describes a meeting which God already had with Moses. We might see these verses as parenthetical. **The Lord told Moses, "Pharaoh won't listen to you. As a result, My wonders will increase throughout the land of Egypt. Then Moses and Aaron did all these wonders in front of Pharaoh, but the Lord made Pharaoh's heart stubborn, [Lit. strong] and he would not let the Israelis go out from his land.**
  - 2) God speaking to Moses occurred previously, but these words came to Moses' mind when Pharaoh expressed his negative volition.
7. Moses will now warn Pharaoh of the 10<sup>th</sup> and final plague.
  - 1) Pharaoh expresses negative volition towards God's demands. Therefore, Moses gives Pharaoh a final warning:
  - 2) Exodus 11:4–8a **So Moses announced to Pharaoh, "This is what the Lord says: 'About midnight I'm going throughout Egypt, and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne to the firstborn of the slave girl who operates the hand mill, along with the firstborn of the animals. There will be a great cry throughout the land of Egypt, like there has never been and never will be again. But among the Israelis, from people to animals, not even a dog will bark, so you may know that the Lord is distinguishing between the Egyptians and the Israelis.' All these officials of yours will come down to me, prostrate themselves to me, and say, 'Get out, you and all the people following you!' "**
8. After this warning of the final judgment, Moses and Pharaoh will exchange angry words and Moses will storm out. The context is, the hardening of Pharaoh's heart *after the 9<sup>th</sup> judgment*; when Moses warns Pharaoh of the 10<sup>th</sup> judgment. This makes sense, if we understand that Exodus 10:28–29 = Exodus 11:8b.
  - 1) Exodus 11:8 Moses is speaking directly to Pharaoh: **"All these officials of yours will come down to me, prostrate themselves to me, and say, 'Get out, you and all the people following you!' After that I'll go out." Then Moses angrily left Pharaoh.**

## The Order of Events: Moses Warns Pharaoh of the Last Plague

- 2) Exodus 10:28 Then Pharaoh told him, "Get away from me! Watch out that you never see my face again, because on the day you see my face, you will die!"
- 3) Exodus 10:29 Moses said, "Just as you have said, I won't see your face again!"

Moses does not call the 10<sup>th</sup> plague *the final plague*.

I will later present the more chronological version of this after integrating portions of Exodus 12 into the mix.

We stopped for a moment to understand the chronology. We are now back studying this verse-by-verse.

Exodus 11:4–5 Then Moses said, "Thus says the Lord: 'About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt; and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals.'

I believe that Moses addressed several groups of people with this information. In this context, he is speaking directly to Pharaoh (Exodus 11:8). However, this information must also be shared with the Hebrew people and, I believe that the Hebrew people will share it with the Egyptian people.

Since Exodus 11 is such a short chapter, I should mention one more thing as it relates to chronological order. Exodus 11 deals with the judgment *only*; the way to escape judgment is not found in this chapter. It will be placed in the next chapter. This is a method of organization sometimes found in Hebrew writings. Chronology is not always the fundamental consideration. So, just as there is some overlap between Exodus 10 and 11; there is also some overlap with Exodus 12. Generally speaking, when the people go out among the Egyptians to ask for reparations (Exodus 11:2), they will give both the warning of the judgment to come (Exodus 11:4–6) as well as the way out (Exodus 12:3–12). So, the Hebrew people going out and asking for reparations—this must occur in time *after* Exodus 12:3–12. That way, they could give their benefactors an explanation as to how to avoid the judgment.

Let me suggest further that the laws of positive volition and evangelization apply here. That is, God owes the gospel to those who will respond positively to it. So, if there were Egyptians who would believe in Y<sup>e</sup>howah—and I think that there were—those Egyptians *must* hear the warning of the final judgment to come and then they must be told of their way of escape. For those who will respond negatively—some of them will hear the entire warning and some will not. God is not required to present the gospel (or, the way out) to those who will respond negatively to it.

All I am doing here is taking chapters which are arranged topically and discussing the events in terms of chronology. So, Exodus 10C is the 9<sup>th</sup> plague; Exodus 11 is a warning of the 10<sup>th</sup> judgment; and Exodus 12 tells how to avoid the 10<sup>th</sup> judgment. This is not the order in which these things occurred in time. However, Moses, in his recording of these events, presents them topically.

Exodus 11:6a *Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt,...*

The word used for *cry*, *outcry* is found earlier in Exodus, when the sons of Israel were so worn down with their slave tasks, that they cried out and were heard in heaven (Exodus 3:7, 9).

God is warning here that there would be a great cry throughout Egypt; a great cry of grief over the thousands of deaths that would occur. All of these deaths are preventable.

Exodus 11:6b *...such as was not like it before,...*

There has never been an outcry like this before in Egypt's history. This is greater than the cry given by the Hebrew people over their slave work.

The greatest tragedy for any parent is the loss of a son or daughter. This loss would occur in every Egyptian home, unless that home were covered by the blood (which will be discussed in the near future).

This is analogous to our salvation. We have many protections in place because we are saved; but the unbeliever does not enjoy these same protections. This is because we are covered by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 11:6c *...nor shall be like it again.*

There will never be a crying out like this in Egypt ever again. Even some of the most deadly wars that Egypt has been in have not resulted with this great a percentage of deaths as would occur among the Egyptian people. Virtually every home would have a death occur—and sometimes more than one.<sup>18</sup>

## **Lesson 139: Exodus 11:1–6**

## **The Severity of God**

Exodus 11 is a warning of the final judgment of God to be placed upon Egypt. We move from God speaking to Moses to Moses speaking to Pharaoh (and possibly to the people of Israel).

Exodus 11:1–2 *The LORD said to Moses, "Yet one plague more I will bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will drive*

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<sup>18</sup> Both the father and son could be firstborn.



you away completely. Speak now in the hearing of the people, that they ask, every man of his neighbor and every woman of her neighbor, for silver and gold jewelry."

God sends the sons of Jacob out to speak to the Egyptians, to ask for silver and gold jewelry.

Exodus 11:3 And the LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover, the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.

The people of Egypt are willing to give money to the children of Israel. This verse tells us that they did, but it does not say exactly when this happened.

My thinking is, the children of Israel went out to ask for this jewelry immediately after the 3 days of darkness, and I suspect that many Egyptians were willing to give up their wealth at that time. Those who held onto their wealth probably brought it to the Hebrew people after the final plague, when they asked them to leave.

Exodus 11:4–5 So Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt, and every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle. (ESV)

Although later, in the context of what Moses is saying, it is clear that he is speaking to Pharaoh. However, prior to this, he probably told these things to the people of Israel. He may have even told them about the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> judgments at the same time. We do not know when the people went out to ask for jewelry, but I would guess after the 9<sup>th</sup> plague (the plague of darkness); and that jewelry was given to them at the same time or after the 10<sup>th</sup> plague (which will be the death of the firstborn).

I have already addressed the warning that this is going to take place at midnight. Let me suggest that Moses gave a complete rundown of what was going to happen to the elders of Israel, and that they told the people after that. It is my guess that the people went out immediately to ask for reparations and to warn what to do for the final judgment. However, we do not know the exact time frame of these events.

Exodus 11:6 Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as was not like it before, nor shall be like it again.

The deaths of the firstborn—which has not yet happened—is what Moses is warning about. The warning to the sons of Israel is going to require them to have some time to prepare for final judgment (the exact amount of time that they will need is debatable). They were probably told about the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> plagues at the same time.

People have such great hopes for their children and do what they can to prepare them for the world. There is nothing a parent likes more than to have raised a moral, self-sufficient, hard-working, successful child. To lose that child is the greatest loss a person can have.

For believers and unbelievers alike, regardless of doctrinal truth, the loss of a child is one of the most tragic things which could ever occur on a personal level—perhaps, the greatest tragedy a person can experience in this life.

We might feel that, considering all that has been done to Egypt thus far, that this final judgment might be too harsh. Therefore, we should cover this in points:

### **Was God's Treatment of Egypt too Harsh?**

1. The final judgment on Egypt was to be the death of the firstborn for every family, human and animal.
2. Pharaoh has been given many chances to allow the Hebrews to go into the desert for a feast to Yahweh and he still refuses to allow them to go. Exodus 10:27
3. Both Pharaoh and the people of Egypt have been subject to many plagues, the last being three days of darkness during which they could contemplate all that has happened to them. To steal an expression, *they were forced to face themselves and think*. Exodus 10:21–23
4. There were some of Pharaoh's cabinet who were strongly in favor of letting the Hebrew people go. Exodus 10:7
5. There were Egyptians who respected/feared Moses. This does not mean that they liked him; but they recognized his power as coming from the Hebrew God. Exodus 11:3
6. It became virtually impossible for any person in Egypt to deny the tremendous power of the God of the Hebrews, as represented by Moses. They were all subject to these judgments; they knew who Moses was, and they understood that these were judgments of Israel's God upon Egypt.
7. There were Egyptians who feared the Word of the Lord and there were those who did not; and each group conducted their lives accordingly. Unbelievers, in spite of the mighty signs that they had witnessed, did not heed the warnings of Moses. Exodus 9:20–21
8. In the future, when Moses is leading the people of Israel out of Egypt, Pharaoh will be able to muster an entire army to attack the defenseless Hebrew people. This army will be made up of his servants, the armed forces and angry Egyptians. So, in the end, the Egyptians were not of the mindset, *Goodbye and good riddance*. In the end, Pharaoh was able to muster a large enough army to pursue Israel with the sole purpose of killing every Israeli. This had to be a massive army, given the size of the Israelite population. The hatred and overall negative volition of Pharaoh's army and much of the Egyptian population continued even after Israel had left. Exodus 14:5–9
9. Apart from an emotional fury, one should be able to distinguish between the people of Israel and those who do not believe. When given specific directions to protect their home and loved ones, the people of Israel followed them; the

## Was God's Treatment of Egypt too Harsh?

- Egyptians, for the most part, did not.
10. These judgments that came upon Egypt did not originate from a large group of Hebrews; the judgments came from their God. Many of the remaining Egyptians were filled with hatred, but they chose to direct their hatred against the Hebrew people, who were not active participants in any of the judgments made against Egypt.
    - 1) To use a very crude analogy: there was a period of great prejudice in our history where, if a Black man had committed a crime, there were some who were more than willing to punish any Black man in his place. This sort of lynching committed by mobs is a stain on American history.
    - 2) The attempted Egyptian attack on the Hebrew people is the same thing. They want revenge, and they do not particularly care from whose hide it is exacted.
  11. A simple ritual was all that was required to cause the Lord to pass over a home and not kill the firstborn inside. This protection was available to every family; and this comes after a series of 9 plagues (the 9<sup>th</sup> being 3 days of darkness, allowing all Egyptians a time for great contemplation). So, the Egyptians have no excuse. Exodus 12:22–23 Rom. 1:20
  12. Those who were so negative, despite seeing all of these plagues and signs close up and personal, do not take the steps necessary to protect their firstborn. The parents are the ones at fault. In most cases, had their firstborn lived, they would have been unbelievers all of their lives. Their Egyptian fathers would have caused them to be embittered towards the Hebrew people, resulting in their eternal damnation. In this way, those who are killed prior to reaching the age of accountability will spend eternity with God. 2Sam. 12:23
  13. This is very simile to salvation—all you have to do is to believe in Jesus Christ. Those who don't will spend eternity apart from God; those who believe, will spend eternity with God.

God temporally and eternally makes a distinction between peoples.

On the one hand, we might present the argument, *was God too harsh?* However, the flip side of that argument is, *why didn't God just destroy all of the Egyptians and be done with them?* The answer is quite simple (there are actually 3 explanations). (1) There were some hearts and minds among the Egyptians who could be swayed—a *mixed multitude* will go out of Egypt with the Hebrews. This *mixed multitude* are non-Hebrews out from the land of Egypt who believed in the God of the Hebrews (these would have been Egyptians and non-Hebrew slaves of Egyptians). (2) Furthermore, the Egyptians had not reached a point of degeneracy to where God called for them to be destroyed in total (unlike some of the peoples of Canaan). How do we know this? God will later call upon the Hebrews to destroy the degenerates in the land of Canaan because they would, among other things, offer up their own children to be sacrificed. My understanding is, there was this statue of Molech with its arms stretched out. These arms would be heated by fire, and then a baby would be placed upon these arms to die by scorching heat—this is the degeneracy that we

know about. There is no telling what the extent was of their degeneracy. On the other hand, here we have the Egyptians, and when their firstborn die, it is the worst tragedy which could befall them; so there is some remaining humanity within them. (3) It is not out of the realm of possibility that some Egyptians believed in the God of the Hebrews *after* the Hebrews were gone.

Any Egyptian with positive volition could have aligned themselves with the people of Israel. Those with terminal negative volition would attack Israel after they had left and were outside of Egypt.

Every Egyptian knew the power of the God of Israel. Every Egyptian had experienced that power 10x prior to them demanding Israel to leave. How much sense does this make for them to defy the God Who has made their lives miserable? This reveals just how strong negative volition towards the Creator can be.

**Child Sacrifice to the Statue of Molech (also, Moloch)** (an illustration); from [Wikimedia](#); accessed October 20, 2020.



Charles Foster: *This is an idol named Molech. A great many people used to pray to this idol. It had the head of a calf, and was made of brass, and it was hollow inside. There was a place in the side to make a fire in it. When it got very hot the wicked people used to put their little children in its arms. The little children were burned to death there. This man in the picture is just going to put a little child in the idol's arms. Other men are blowing on trumpets and beating on drums, and making a great noise, so that no one can hear the poor little child cry.*<sup>19</sup>

Interestingly enough, I found pictures of a great many statues and illustrations of Molech which looked almost the same except, the arms are distanced apart.

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<sup>19</sup> From [Wikimedia](#); accessed October 20, 2020.



As we proceed further into the books of the Law, we will have quite a number of Scriptures which tell us what sort of degenerate religion that the Canaanites practiced. It will reveal to us why a huge percentage of Canaanites will be destroyed; and why the Egyptian population was reduced, but not completely destroyed.

**Application:** Considering the different treatment that God gives to the Egyptians and the Canaanites leads us to a proper conclusion: God knows just exactly what to do and how much pressure to apply. God does not condemn every degenerate group of people to immediate death. Therefore, when we see tragedy play out in the world, regardless of its depth, we need to realize that God knows exactly what He is doing and that He applies the perfect amount of pressure.

As an aside, world tragedies are not to be ignored by believers. Samaritan's Purse is based very much upon helping those who are in difficult circumstances or who have faced tragedies. Our faith is not one that automatically condemns people who have suffered harm, tragedy or disaster.

#### **Lesson 140: Exodus 11:4–8d**

#### **The Egyptians will plead with Moses to leave**

Exodus 11:7 is a moderately difficult verse, so we will look at a number of other translations when discussing its interpretation (which I will do as we progress further along in that verse).

So far, Moses is speaking the words of God, certainly to Pharaoh, but probably to the elders of Israel as well (v. 8 tells us that Moses is speaking to Pharaoh)

The information found in this passage along with Exodus 12 indicates that Moses told his fellow Israelites<sup>20</sup> about these things as well.

Exodus 11:4–6 So Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt, and every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle. There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has never been, nor ever will be again. (ESV)

Moses is doing the speaking, but he is speaking the words of God, warning Pharaoh what is about to transpire.

Exodus 11:7a But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast,...

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<sup>20</sup> When I say that Moses spoke to fellow Israelites, I mean that he likely spoke to the elders, and they spoke to all of the people in some sort of a networked fashion.

v. 7 sets up a contrast with v. 6. In v. 6, there is a great cry going throughout the land of Egypt. In contrast, even dogs in the region of the Israelites will be quieted.

The verb used in v. 7 is not an unknown verb; but its exact meaning here is difficult to ascertain. If I wanted to go relatively freeform, I would suggest that no dog would bark or even growl at any Israelite or at any of his animals.

In today's world, we understand dogs to be watchdogs or pet dogs; and when we read something like this, and we think of some Egyptian's pet dog who should bark at the sons of Israel, but does not. But, what we have is a contrast. Regarding the Egyptians who do not follow God's instructions (given later)—they will lose their firstborn; and there would be great crying, wailing or howling (if you will). But, among the sons of Israel, who will follow God's instructions, one would not even hear any crying or wailing (because none of their firstborn died); and it is so quiet that even the tongue of a dog make a sound among the Israelites.

The dogs in that era were wild dogs (I do not know if any had been domesticated in Egypt<sup>21</sup>), but they wandered about looking for scraps of food; and often, when they came upon a person or an animal, they would growl. It would be so quiet among the sons of Israel that not only were growling not be heard; but the movement of the tongue of a dog, preparing to growl or preparing to eat, would not be heard.

Perhaps we can understand this to mean that, even though God killed many people in Egypt, no one in Israel is to be harmed; there won't even be a bite from a wild dog.

Another alternative is, this is a saying from this era, which was perhaps clearly understood by the people then (and may have been equivalent to what I have already suggested).

Now, even though we may not know with 100% certainty exactly what this saying means, I believe that there is enough information here to have a reasonable understanding of what is going on. In the previous verse, there is wailing and howling as has never been heard before in Egypt. But, in Goshen, in the home of the Hebrews, it is quiet. We do not even hear the quiet sounds made by dogs.

In one place, the people of Egypt were greatly disturbed, crying as they had never cried before. In Goshen, the land is quiet. God distinguishes between the two places and between the two peoples.

Exodus 11:7b ...that you may know that the Lord does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.'

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<sup>21</sup> I am unaware of any such evidence for the domestication of dogs anywhere in this era. There are artistic representations of cats, if memory serves, which is from this era in Egypt.



The difference between the two sets of peoples is quite obvious. If you were to walk down some Egyptian street, you would hear wailing and crying; but down some Israelite street, and there would be almost no noise at all.

There is protection for the sons of Israel, but the primary distinction is one of faith. God blesses His Own; He gives grace to His Own. No Egyptian is prevented from getting on board with God's plan. No Egyptian is prevented from trusting the God of Israel and following His instructions. You may recall that, God gave some specific warnings for the plague of hail for all people to bring their animals inside, so that they would not be out in the open. Therefore, there is precedence for God giving a warning and also telling the Egyptians what they ought to do.

Exodus 11:7 *But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the Lord does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.'*

The key to understanding the rather obtuse saying in 7a is partially revealed in 7b, where the overarching principle is clearly stated. God distinguishes between Egypt and Israel. However, that distinction is made on the basis of the faith exhibited in Israel and the actions which will take place as a result of that faith.

I should also point out that, this is God prophesying about what would happen in the future (God told Moses and Moses warned Pharaoh, which is the context of what we are studying).

Since v. 7 was somewhat abstruse, let me offer up...

### **What Other Translations Have Done with Exodus 11:7:**

Easy English	But among the Israelites, not even a wild animal will attack any of them. Then you will know that the Lord makes a difference between Egypt and Israel."
<i>The Message</i>	But against the Israelites—man, woman, or animal—there won't be so much as a dog's bark, so that you'll know that GOD makes a clear distinction between Egypt and Israel.'
Contemporary English V.	But there won't be any need for the Israelites to cry. Things will be so quiet that not even a dog will be heard barking. Then you Egyptians will know that the LORD is good to the Israelites, even while he punishes you.
New Living Translation	But among the Israelites it will be so peaceful that not even a dog will bark. Then you will know that the Lord makes a distinction between the Egyptians and the Israelites.
Common English Bible	But as for the Israelites, not even a dog will growl at them, at the people, or at their animals. By this, you will know that the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.

Unlocked Literal Bible	But not even a dog will bark against any of the people of Israel, against either man or beast. In this way you will know that I am treating the Egyptians and the Israelites differently.'
New RSV	But not a dog shall growl at any of the Israelites—not at people, not at animals—so that you may know that the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	But not even a dog will threaten [Lit <i>move his tongue</i> , that is, bark in a threatening way] any of the Israelites, whether man or animal, so that you may know [without any doubt] and acknowledge how the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.'

As you can see, there is no clear agreement on the meaning of this verse. I do believe that the contrast which I presented between v. 6 and v. 7 is the key to understand what is being said.

Exodus 11:7 *But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the Lord does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.'*

Given all that we have studied so far, let me suggest what this verse means. In Egypt, because the firstborn of their children will all die, there will be great weeping and wailing among the people. Now, what do dogs do when they hear odd sounds or high pitched sounds? They also howl or cry out themselves.

However, the wild dogs of Goshen are quiet. They say nothing; you cannot even hear their tongues moving around in their mouths. Since the people in Goshen are not crying out, neither are the dogs in their general vicinity.

There was another reason that God applied consistent, but restrained pressure on Egypt, apart from the salvation of some of them: God needed to make a statement which would be understood worldwide. He needed all of the nations to know of His power and strength, so that, through this knowledge, some might be saved.

It is like this all over the world. For some people, you can tell them Who Jesus is and what He did (died for our sins), and that by His taking the penalty for our sins, we are free to have a relationship with God. When some people hear the gospel, they respond positively to it, almost immediately. All of a sudden, the world makes sense to them, and they believe in Jesus. However, you tell this to someone else, and they say, "Get out of my face, you religious freak." Positive volition versus negative volition.

Exodus 11:8a *And all these your servants shall come down to me...*

Part of understanding is who is speaking, to whom is he speaking, and where does the quotation start and stop.

*Slaves* were mentioned earlier (in v. 3), and I gave persuasive reasons there why we would understand these to be the *subjects of Pharaoh*. Moses is speaking. I believe that this is something which would happen in the future. We may reasonably assume that Moses is saying exactly what God told him to say.

As suggested earlier, the Hebrew people went out and asked for silver and gold items from their Egyptian neighbors (those for whom they worked, I would guess). At some point, the Egyptian people would come to Moses, and do this:

Exodus 11:8b ...and bow down to me,...

The subjects of Pharaoh bow down before Moses. Again, it is unclear whether he expected this to happen or whether this has already happened. There is no future tense in the Hebrew language.

I believe that, after the final plague, the people of Egypt will come into Goshen, bearing gifts of gold and silver; and they would bow down before the people of Israel and, specifically, before Moses, and ask that they leave. They will beg them to leave Egypt.

Exodus 11:8a-b And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me,...

Moses is setting up a contrast here. The subjects of Pharaoh *should* be coming out to Pharaoh and bowing before him. Moses says, "Your people will come before me and bow."

What Moses is saying is a great insult to Pharaoh. Pharaoh's people would come out and bow before Moses, rather than before Pharaoh. As you might understand, Pharaoh is very displeased with these words of Moses. Essentially, Moses is saying, "I'm the captain now. While I am here, you no longer have the highest authority in the land." When the people come to Goshen and fall on their knees, they will recognize the authority of Moses, and they will beg him and the people of Israel to leave.

Exodus 11:8c ...saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!'

The ones speaking would be those who have come down to Moses and have bowed before him, and they tell him to leave. They don't say *please leave*; they say, *leave*. They ask Moses to take with him all of the people who are following him.

Moses is not speaking of Israelites bowing down before him, but Egyptian citizens. The Egyptians who bow before Moses recognize his power, which is why they demand that he leave Egypt (with all of Israel). Their gods are clearly no match for the God of Israel.

Exodus 11:8d After that I will go out."

The correct interpretation of this is: Moses is literally waiting for a large delegation of Egyptians to come to him, bow down before him, and say, "Leave, you and your people." After this occurs, he would leave Egypt.

Exodus 11:8a-d **And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out."**

Moses predicts that it will not be the orders of Pharaoh, but the orders of the Egyptian people that all Israel leave their land. They will reach a point where they can take no more and they will directly tell the Hebrew people to leave. In doing so, despite using the imperative mood, they will be recognizing Moses' authority.

It is difficult to determine where the quotes start and stop, for the overall quote. Moses is speaking to the people—the elders and leaders of Israel—and he is quoting to them what God said to him. The Niobi Bible ends God's quote at the end of v. 7; but Moses continues to speak until most of the way through v. 8. The Easy-to-Read Version continues God's words spoken by Moses' up to the end of v. 8.

Niobi Bible

#### **Death of the Firstborn Announced**

And Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt; and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sit upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant who is behind the mill, and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast, that you may know how the LORD does put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.'

And all these your servants shall come down unto me and bow down themselves unto me, saying, 'Get you out, and all the people who follow you!' And after that I will go out." And he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger. (Exodus 11:4–8; I went with the color scheme of the Niobi Study Bible in e-sword; the purple represents the words of God)

Easy to Read Bible

Moses said to the king, "The LORD says, 'At midnight tonight, I will go through Egypt, and every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, to the firstborn son of the slave girl grinding grain. Even the firstborn animals will die. The crying in Egypt will be worse than at any time in the past or any time in the future. But none of the Israelites or their animals will be hurt--not even a dog will bark at them.' Then you will know that the LORD has treated Israel differently from Egypt. All these officials of yours will come down and bow to me. They will say, 'Leave and take all your people with you.' Only then will I leave!" Then in anger, Moses left the meeting with Pharaoh. (Exodus 11:4–8)

For some of you who are having this exegeted for you, there is a logistical problem. In the past, Moses has always given Pharaoh fair warning concerning the plagues which God would subject Egypt to. Moses would go to Pharaoh, even if it was to catch him before his morning *bath* and declare "Thus says Yahweh..." However, Moses just told Pharaoh that they would not see each other face to face again, so just exactly what is going on? In Exodus 10:29, Moses makes a pretty stern statement and then nothing is said really about Moses and Pharaoh speaking to one another again. However, in Exodus 11:8, all of a sudden, Moses storms out of Pharaoh's palace in a heat of anger. This likely indicates that chapter 11 continues this same meeting which was *concluded* in both Exodus 10:29 and 11:8. Exodus 11:1–3 are parenthetical to set us up for the rest of the chapter. Both plagues and their results were already given to Moses. However, in Scripture, these events are presented separately—but not necessarily chronologically—as that is easier to comprehend.

Throughout the Exodus narrative, the plagues are presented as disjoint events, with no overlap. In terms of telling a narrative, this is the simplest way to go. But that does not mean that this was exactly how these judgments took place.

So, on the one hand, the 9<sup>th</sup> plague and its aftermath came to an end when Moses storms out of the palace, having had words with Pharaoh. On the other hand, there is the warning given by Moses about the 10<sup>th</sup> plague, and it ends with Moses storming out of the palace, after having words with Pharaoh. These are separated in the narrative, as if completely discrete events, but they are probably the very same event. That is, the aftermath of the 9<sup>th</sup> plague (where Pharaoh exercises his negative volition once again) and the warning of the 10<sup>th</sup> plague—these likely happened at the same time. And afterwards, Moses storms out from Pharaoh, both of them angry at the other.

### **Lesson 141: Exodus 11:8      Moses Storming out from the Presence of Pharaoh**

Verse 8 concludes the things which Moses says to Pharaoh.

Exodus 11:8a-d *And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out."*

What Moses is saying to Pharaoh is quite dramatic.

Exodus 11:8e *Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.*

The imperfect verb in v. 8e is somewhat confusing. The perfect tense generally describes an action from the vantage point of something which was done and completed. It looks at the action as a whole. The imperfect tense often describes the action of the verb as a process. However, what sort of process is meant by Moses *going out from Pharaoh*?

However, there is another way to understand the use of the imperfect verb. When describing a series of consecutive events, the wâw consecutive + imperfect verbs are

used. Here, the wâw consecutive with an imperfect verb simply describes the action as one more thing in a series of events. That is, *after* these words, Moses *then* walked out from Pharaoh. Therefore, the translation given by the NKJV (which is what I use throughout the study of Exodus) is correct.

Exodus 11:8 And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out." Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

If you will reread v. 8, you will also notice that there is the change from the 1<sup>st</sup> person to the 3<sup>rd</sup> person (v. 8a-d has many 1<sup>st</sup> person references; v. 8e speaks of Moses in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person). When Moses is speaking to Pharaoh, he uses the 1<sup>st</sup> person when speaking of himself. However, when he storms out of the palace from Pharaoh, it is proper to use the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, because he is no longer speaking to Pharaoh. This is how we know where the quotation ends in v. 8.

Exodus 11:8 And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out." Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

Moses says what is required is, the people of Egypt will come before him and bow down (in fear and respect), and ask that Moses take all of the people (the sons of Israel) out of Egypt. At this point, it will be out of Pharaoh's hands. The Egyptians will make the decision that Pharaoh appears to be unable to make. For that period of time, their fear and respect will be directed towards Moses rather than Pharaoh. In fact, the people themselves make this executive decision (to expel Israel for good).

Now, did Moses speak these words before Pharaoh, and now he is walking out in a huff? In all of the previous confrontations, it is clear—100%—that Moses is confronting Pharaoh. However, in this chapter, this is not made clear at all and, this is the only phrase which suggests that Moses is with Pharaoh; and it is the only verse which suggests that this was a big confrontation between Moses and Pharaoh.

Now, it appears as if Moses has previously walked out from being with Pharaoh, where Pharaoh was quite angry and threatened Moses. I believe that this refers back to that incident (both incidents appear to be rather final, which is why I believe these two passages refer back to the same incident).

Moses is quite upset that Pharaoh has threatened his life and he is reacting to that threat with no little emotion. I don't believe that Moses is out of fellowship, however. What he points out is true and would certainly upset Pharaoh; after the next plague, Pharaoh's own men will bow down to Moses and request that he leave with Israel and there will be no conditions upon their departure.



Exodus 11:8 And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out." Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

It is very possible that this Pharaoh was raised up with Moses; a man who possibly was intensely jealous of Moses when they were growing up together. As siblings, they could have had a relationship which was good or not; however, Pharaoh would have observed that Moses is a genius in many fields, and he was possibly jealous of Moses and his abilities. From the very beginning, Pharaoh was quite negative toward Moses and it is possible that this in part came out of a relationship that was strained and competitive at best. After all, being raised at the same time in the royal family would give them equal opportunity of ascension to the throne. Moses, with all of his natural abilities and drive would have been the odds-on favorite and this would have caused an incredible amount of jealousy in the soul of Pharaoh, the natural son and biological heir to the throne. He would consider it his birthright and be quite upset with an adopted son, a Jew.<sup>22</sup>

When Moses returned to the land and confront Pharaoh, this possibly opened up some old wounds (however, I need to point out that I am speculating here).

There can be great competition within a royal family, even when succession to the throne is clear. What would further upset him, is that he would recognize that Moses was better in all respects and deserved to rule Egypt; that would cause a deep bitterness and resentment. Moses was clearly in line, at one time, to be Pharaoh over Egypt (Heb. 11:24). This remark of Moses—that Egypt would come before him and bow—was not very well received. This had to be the ultimate in insulting things that Moses could say to Pharaoh.

On the one hand, I think that it is possible that Moses and this Pharaoh were contemporaries. On the other hand, bear in mind that Moses is 80 and very strong; and it is likely that this Pharaoh is younger by at least 20 years. It is still likely that they knew each other; but if there is that 20 year difference, then this pharaoh would have been thinking about ruling over Egypt about the same time that Moses exited Egypt. Even though it is always interesting for me to take the information give us in Scripture and speculate, with the Scripture providing the base line of truth, I don't think that there is enough information to speak with any certainty about the prior relationship between Moses and Pharaoh.

On the other hand, I think that there is enough information about this incident in Exodus 11 to say that it is equivalent to the incident recorded at the end of Exodus 10, where Moses also stormed out of Pharaoh's palace.

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<sup>22</sup> We do not know whether Moses heritage was known early on or whether Moses found it out for the first time prior to his first departure from Egypt at age 40. However, we do know from the book of Hebrews that Moses was potentially the pharaoh of Egypt.

Let's take this in points. The ESV (capitalized) will be used below, unless otherwise indicated.

### Did Moses Storm Out from Pharaoh Once or Twice?

1. We are going to look at Exodus 11:8 and then the end of Exodus 10, and try to make sense of what is recorded in both passages.
2. Exodus 10 is about the 9<sup>th</sup> plague of darkness; and, at the end, Moses storms out from Pharaoh, Pharaoh threatening Moses not to ever come before him again, or he is a dead man.
3. Let's look at the entire end of Exodus 10.
  - 1) First, there was the 9<sup>th</sup> plague, the plague of darkness, where the Egyptians could not see anything for 3 days. This plague appears to have just come on. We do not know if it was preceded by a warning (although previous plagues were). Pharaoh first promised that Moses and Aaron could lead the people out of Egypt, but then he changed his mind at the end of Exodus 10:20. Then the darkness comes upon the land of Egypt (Vv. 21–23). Therefore, if there was a warning by Moses, it was not recorded. Exodus 10 leaves out any interaction between Moses and Pharaoh which took place between Pharaoh's hardening and the plague of darkness. This does not mean that Moses did not warn him; it just was not recorded.
  - 2) *After* the plague of darkness, we read this: Exodus 10:24 **Then Pharaoh called Moses and said, "Go, serve the LORD; your little ones also may go with you; only let your flocks and your herds remain behind."** Despite all that has happened, Pharaoh continues to put his own limitations on the worship of Y<sup>e</sup>howah by Moses and the Israelites.
  - 3) Exodus 10:25–26 **But Moses said, "You must also let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. Our livestock also must go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for we must take of them to serve the LORD our God, and we do not know with what we must serve the LORD until we arrive there."**
  - 4) Exodus 10:27 **But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.**
  - 5) Exodus 10:28 **Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me; take care never to see my face again, for on the day you see my face you shall die."**
  - 6) Exodus 10:29 **Moses said, "As you say! I will not see your face again."**
4. Then we come to Exodus 11, and it sounds as if Moses does the same thing again—he leaves the presence of Pharaoh, and both men are angry.
5. Exodus 11 is about the final plague *warning* (preparations for the next plague and the plague itself come in the next chapter). Moses speaks about the final plague in vv. 4–8d, and then he storms out from Pharaoh.
6. Exodus 11:8 **And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, you and all the people who follow you.' And after that I will go out." And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.**
7. Now, of course, it is possible that an angry meeting between Moses and Pharaoh

## Did Moses Storm Out from Pharaoh Once or Twice?

- occurs twice and that Pharaoh decided not to kill Moses at the end of Exodus 11:8 as he had promised at the end of Exodus 10—but I don't believe that is the correct understanding of these two passages.
8. Moses, in writing about the plagues, is very careful to keep each plague separate from the other. That is simply the way he wrote, guided by God the Holy Spirit.
  9. You may remember that we had a time discrepancy previously regarding the first meeting between Moses and Pharaoh.
    - 1) In Exodus 5, we have Moses' first meeting with Pharaoh. After this, Pharaoh increased the workload of the Hebrew people.
    - 2) Then, in Exodus 7, it appears as if we have another meeting with Pharaoh. You may recall that I asserted that these were the same meeting.
    - 3) In the first meeting (in Exodus 5), we viewed this meeting from the perspective of Pharaoh and what he did to the people of God.
    - 4) However, in Exodus 7, we have a meeting where Moses shows the signs of God to Pharaoh (vv. 10–13) and then a meeting where God has Moses turn the waters of Egypt to blood (vv. 14–22).
    - 5) It is my opinion that the first meeting in Exodus 7 was the same meeting as is described in Exodus 5. However, beginning with Exodus 7, we see each plague from the divine point of view. Also, from that point forward, each plague is presented as completely separate from the other plagues. Each plague is given its due, one after the other. There is no intermingling of the plagues in any way in the narrative.
    - 6) So, beginning with Exodus 7, every plague has some of the following elements: God tells Moses what to say to Pharaoh (and warns Moses that Pharaoh will not give in to him). Moses goes to Pharaoh, taking Aaron with him, and delivers the warning of God (at the beginning, it was Aaron who delivered these warnings). Moses and Aaron would exit from the company of Pharaoh and the plague would occur. Pharaoh would call Moses and Aaron back into his presence and ask for the plague to be ended, making promises that he will let the people go and worship God. However, once the plague is over with, Pharaoh goes back on his promises.
    - 7) Every judgment does not contain all of those elements, it contains most of them. However, in the recording of these plagues, there is no overlap between plague "n" and plague "n+1". So, we go all the way to Pharaoh's broken promises for plague "n" before we read about Moses speaking with God about the plague "n+1".
  10. That is what we have here. Plagues 9 and 10 are recorded as if they are very separate events (as are the rest of the plagues), but when Pharaoh calls Moses in before him at the end of Exodus 10—after the plague of darkness (plague #9)—Moses also delivers this warning that we are reading in Exodus 11. The way that this is recorded in the book of Exodus, makes it sound as if these are two separate meetings.
  11. Here is how it goes down:

## Did Moses Storm Out from Pharaoh Once or Twice?

- 1) God brings on the thick darkness for 3 days (possibly without a warning).
- 2) At first, Pharaoh said, "You may go and worship your God;" but then he adds, "but there are conditions." Moses said, "Those modifications do not work for us." Afterwards, came the darkness.
- 3) Pharaoh calls Moses into his presence once again, and again, agrees to let the people go and worship their God—but says, "You may not take your livestock."
- 4) Moses says, "No, this won't work! We have no idea how many animals that we will sacrifice to God. We must take them all."
- 5) Pharaoh says, "No, you are not going to do that."
- 6) Then, before Moses storms out from Pharaoh's presence, he warns Pharaoh about the final plague. "The firstborn of all Egypt will die, from Pharaoh on down to the least of his slaves."
- 7) There is a portion of this warning which we will need to discuss further when we come to Exodus 12, and that is this: *So Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt,..."* (Exodus 11:4) There are two possibilities:
  - (1) Moses is speaking about midnight on that day or,...
  - (2) ...Moses is speaking about some midnight in the future.
  - (3) More about that when we come to Exodus 12.
- 8) Then Moses leaves the presence of Pharaoh, with Pharaoh threatening him. So, what we read in Exodus 10:28–29 and 11:8e describes the exact same incident.
  - (1) It appears from a superficial read that this incident occurs twice.
  - (2) However, that is simply the organizational style of Moses, to separate the two plagues completely, even though the warning for plague 10 comes on the heels of plague 9.
  - (3) Moses gives that warning of plague 10 immediately after Pharaoh demonstrates negative volition towards the requirements of God.
  - (4) Then Moses walks out after a very heated exchange between the two men.
12. There is one more incident that we will need to consider, and that is the actual warning made to the people of Israel and (I believe) the people of Egypt. However, this takes place in Exodus 12, so we will wait until then to integrate that into a chronological narrative.

Moses style of writing and organization may have been affected by his life in the desert with the people of Egypt. He either wrote or dictated his words to Joshua, and there were things which happened in between this periods of dictation. My guess is, when we come to the end of Exodus 5—let's assume that Moses is dictating his words to Joshua, who is writing these things down while they are out in the desert with the sons of Israel—then some incident takes place, and Moses may be dealing with some other state of affairs and is getting things squared away. Well, he comes back to Joshua to continue this narrative, but then he thinks, I need to throw in some introductory material and some explanation, and so, we have Exodus 6, which then leads into Exodus 7. My point being, we do not need for everything in Exodus 5–11 to be strictly chronological.

The further away in time of the recording of these events and the events themselves, the more likely that the recording of these events lends itself to a topical approach (meaning that each judgment is viewed separately).

None of this calls into question the inspiration of the text itself. This simply provides us a way to read and understand the text.

## Lesson 142: Exodus 11:8–10

## A Summary Statement

We have been studying Exodus 11:8, and noting how it is another view of the final meeting between Moses and Pharaoh.

Exodus 11:8 *And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out."* Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

However, just in case this is still confusing, let me give this to you in points, chronologically:

### The Events of the Plague of Darkness Presented Chronologically

1. God speaks to Moses concerning the plague of darkness. Exodus 10:21
2. *Then* God speaks to Moses concerning the last plague. God very likely briefed Moses about both plagues at the same time. Exodus 11:1
3. Moses probably speaks to Pharaoh of the darkness plague, which interaction is not recorded.
4. Moses stretches out his hand toward the heavens and darkness falls upon the land of Egypt (Exodus 10:22), possibly in the sight of Pharaoh, the Egyptians and/or the Israelites (Exodus 10:22).
5. There are 3 days of darkness for Egypt (however, the Israelites had light in their tents).
6. Pharaoh calls for Moses to tell him to go and serve God; only they are to leave their livestock behind. Exodus 10:24
7. Moses tells him that is a no-go with his God. Exodus 10:25

## The Events of the Plague of Darkness Presented Chronologically

8. Pharaoh is given the strength to say *no* one more time. Exodus 10:27
9. Moses pronounces the judgement of the last plague upon Pharaoh and all of Egypt. Exodus 11:4–7
10. Pharaoh angrily tells Moses to get out of the palace. Remember, the warning of the final plague would have been seen by Pharaoh as a threat on the life of his eldest son. Exodus 10:28
11. Moses responds (Exodus 10:29 11:8a) and then storms out of the palace (Exodus 11:8b).
12. After the firstborn have died, Pharaoh sends his servants to Moses and tells him through his servants to leave Egypt unconditionally. Pharaoh's servants probably bowed down before Moses. Exodus 11:8 12:31–32
13. The people of Egypt would have also come to Moses, bowing down, asking him to leave and take his people with him (we know about this prophetically, but the fulfillment is not actually recorded in Exodus). Exodus 11:8a

Regarding points 12 & 13 above, I am guessing that both the staff of Pharaoh and many of the Egyptian people came to Moses and asked him to leave. There is the possibility that this was only the personal staff of Pharaoh.

I am simply giving my educated guess as to how this particular plague went down. I believe that to be an accurate chronological recording of the facts. There is one more chapter to integrate into these events, and that is Exodus 12.

We close out this very short chapter with two more verses.

We do not know when God says these next things to Moses:

Exodus 11:9a *But the Lord said to Moses,...*

These are exactly the words beginning v. 1 of this chapter.

The way that this is worded, without a clear pathway from the previous verse to this, this incident is not necessarily be a description of what happened next.

*When* exactly God said these things to Moses is not clear. Did we come down to the time between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> plagues, and God reiterated here what he had already said? Or is Moses thinking about some things which God said at the very beginning? I believe that God said these things much earlier in time, but that the words are placed into the narrative here. These describe what Moses has seen as fulfilled

Exodus 11:9b *...“Pharaoh will not heed you, so that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.”*

There was a reason why Pharaoh would not listen to Moses and his warnings—without monkeying with his volition—there is a reason why this was the right Pharaoh for Moses



to deal with. God warned Moses from the very beginning that Pharaoh would be uncooperative. God had a purpose for this—He wanted all of His signs and wonders to be clearly seen, to be clearly identified with Moses and with Himself, as the God of the Hebrews. The idea is, every Egyptian would have a complete and perspicuous choice to make. Everything that is bad happens to the Egyptians who do not listen to the warnings of each plague. Any Egyptian could change his thinking and his behavior, and, in several cases, avoid the full impact of some judgments. Had Pharaoh chosen to listen to and then obey the requirements of God, the plagues on Egypt would have been stopped. However, what did happen was this: Moses clearly would tell Pharaoh what God required of him, and instead of giving in, Pharaoh resisted.

There is a great Old English word which I would use, if it didn't sound so archaic: *hearken*. Some older translations use this word in v. 9. It conveys more than to just "hear" something (which is the more modern translation). It means to listen, consider and obey. The NKJV (and others) uses the word *heed*. This does mean *to listen, consider and obey*. However, this word borders on being archaic. I say that be who, as a child, has heard the words, *you had better heed to Word of God; or, you had better heed the words of your father?*

There is a false theory of translation that every language can be translated word-for-word into any other language because all language is the product of man; and all men are the same, and therefore will develop the same language concepts and the same vocabulary for the universal experiences of mankind. This is false, and the more you know about two languages, the more you realize that man, even with all his similarities, can still have fundamental differences in language structure, the pronunciation of words, and vocabulary (although there are certainly a lot of similarities). My personal view is that God gave man his first language, which Adam and all of his descendants spoke. But, at the tower of Babel, instantly and miraculously changed the languages which they spoke. Man further took whatever language they were given at that point and organically modified it over time. So, at Babel, God gave man a dozen or so languages; and as men spread out over God's earth, these languages also evolved. In fact, languages changed so much at the hand of man that, two languages could have the same origins, and yet, sound quite different.

Exodus 11:9 But the Lord said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not heed you, so that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt."

Pharaoh has said *no* for the last time. *Saying* and *listen (heed)* are imperfect tenses, meaning continuous action. Here, we would understand this to mean that, God *said* on many occasions that Pharaoh would not *listen* on many occasions.

V. 9 does not refer to something that God just told Moses; but this statement likely goes back to God originally speaking to Moses about the plagues (Exodus 3:19 7:4). It is very likely that God would say, "Now, you will go to Pharaoh and say these words..." and then God would add the warning, "But bear in mind, Pharaoh will harden his heart against Me, nevertheless." Moses is either recalling this at this point in the narrative; or writing it down

as a summary statement. Pharaoh's negative volition has been a constant in this narrative. He may seem to give in a little, but he never fully gives in until the final judgment.

Obviously, the 10<sup>th</sup> plague has not happened yet in our narrative. This just gives us the divine perspective of what has been happening to date. God told Moses what to expect.

Exodus 11:10a *So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh;...*

You will recall that God originally was going to send Moses alone, but Moses claimed that he did not have it in him to speak before Pharaoh. Aaron was sent to speak for Moses.

As a team, they performed these signs before Pharaoh—at this point in the book of Exodus, 9 nationwide signs.

Exodus 11:10b *...and the Lord hardened [lit., strengthened] Pharaoh's heart,...*

Pharaoh provided his own negative volition; but God gave him the strength to continue to exercise this negative volition. We have discussed earlier how Pharaoh, on several occasions, may have been completely beaten down, but God gave him the strength to respond to Moses with what was in his heart.

Exodus 11:10a-b *So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the Lord hardened [lit., strengthened] Pharaoh's heart,...*

There is a point at which a person rejects God, but he loses his strength to follow through. God saw to it that Pharaoh could continue to express his negative volition.

Allow me to provide a parallel, which some of you may or may not be able to relate to. There was a time when spanking children was acceptable (it should still be acceptable); but for some children, their strength of resistance was so intense, that some fathers would literally beat their child into submission. Whatever behavior the father intended to curb, the child may still have the desire to do those things, but he will weigh its commission against getting caught and against the consequences of getting caught. When the child gets far enough away, then he will resume the wrong behavior.

Pharaoh's default setting is against the God of the Hebrew people. No matter what it is, Pharaoh inherently wants to resist the God of Moses. However, the judgments are so oppressive and even coercive to the point where Pharaoh is beat down; to a point where he no longer has the strength to resist. He wants to resist, but he lacks the strength. V. 10b tells us that God gives Pharaoh that strength.

Even though that may seem odd to you, it really isn't. There are people all over this land who deny God and claim that Jesus is a fictional character; yet, they are given breath and substance each day by God. This means, in essence, that God is providing them with the strength to continue to resist Him. They may say horrible things about Jesus and about the Bible but God does not strike them down with lightning. Less dramatically, but also just

as real, God does not withdraw their ability to make money or to purchase food. So, in essence, every person who is against God is given the same strength that God gave to Pharaoh. God gives those negative toward Him the strength to resist Him another day.

We may also understand that God presented a series of miracles, never designed to change Pharaoh's thinking, but to give him new opportunities to say *no* to God. God is separating negative volition from positive volition in Egypt. All of the Hebrew people would believe the signs and obey God, insofar as, they would all willingly follow Moses and leave Egypt when called to do so. Not a single Israelite will have any question at this point about leaving.

Furthermore, some Egyptians will recognize God's power and they will follow the Hebrew people out (they will be called a mixed multitude, as this group will also include slaves from other nations<sup>23</sup>).

In the lives of most people, the first really important act of volition is having an actual interest in God and Who or What He is (known as God consciousness). The second important act of volition is, upon hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ, how we react to it. We may hear the gospel several times before we believe in Jesus. The third very important act of volition on our parts is, when hearing the Word of God being taught, we decide that the authority of the Word of God is greater than our own philosophy, values or views, however they have been acquired.

I remember R. B. Thieme, Jr. in class saying, "If you see something with your own eyes, but the Bible tells you that is incorrect, then the Bible is right and what you see (or think you see) is wrong." (not an exact quote) At the time that I heard Bob say this, it seemed to be a pretty strong thing to say. I had some resistance to this statement, but eventually agreed with it.

Back to the narrative.

Exodus 11:10c ...and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

Pharaoh expressed his negative volition by not sending the sons of Israel out of the land. They were his slaves and he would not allow them to go. Pharaoh may have reasoned that the adults were going to make a run for it, and he wanted to (1) give them a reason to return or (2) keep their children as slaves. Regardless of what Pharaoh was thinking, God had one point of view and Pharaoh had a different one. God said to let the people go; and Pharaoh said, *no*.

This sets us up for the 10<sup>th</sup> plague, the death of the firstborn.

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<sup>23</sup> This is speculation, as the racial mix of the people who go along with the Hebrew people is never specified.

Exodus 11:10 So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the Lord hardened [lit., *strengthened*] Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

This is a summary verse of the plagues which we have studied. Pharaoh does not allow the sons of Israel to leave Egypt in the manner that God requires.

This passage represents a pause in this narrative. Moses is summing up to that point in time what has transpired. From Exodus 5:1 to 11:8, we have had a relatively seamless narrative of the interaction of God, Moses and Pharaoh (along with some involvement of Aaron and the Jewish elders). These two verses indicate that we are at a temporary stopping point. It is a place where we stop and catch our breath before proceeding. What has transpired has been summed up in a couple of sentences. It is all nicely sandwiched between Exodus 4:21–22 and 11:9–10.

The doctrine which follows is apropos to what we have been studying.

The analogy drawn here to the cross is incredible.

### **The Judgment of Egypt is a Shadow of Salvation by Jesus Christ**

<b>Moses, the Hebrews and Egypt</b>	<b>Jesus Christ, Believers and the World</b>
God's people, the Hebrews, are trapped in nation Egypt. Exodus 1:8-14	Mankind is trapped in this world as unbelievers. John 18:36
God called the Hebrews out of Egypt. Exodus 3:15–17	God calls believers out of the world. John 15:19
The Hebrews had an identity separate from the Egyptians, even though they lived in Egypt. Exodus 1:7	Believers have an identity which is separate from the world, even though we live in the world. Acts 13:17 John 15:19 Rom. 12:2
The Egyptians hated the Hebrews. Exodus 1:8–14	The world hates the believer. John 17:14
Moses, a savior, is sent by God to deliver His people. Exodus 3:9–10	Jesus Christ, our Savior, is sent by God to deliver us. Heb. 3:16 John 4:42 1Tim. 1:15
Moses was not a slave and therefore, he was qualified to deliver His people and to lead them out of Egypt. Exodus 7:22–23, 25, 34	Jesus Christ is not a slave to sin, He is not of this world, and He has come to deliver us out of this world. Jesus is uniquely qualified to do this. John 8:23 17:11, 14
Moses performed signs and miracles to show that he was from God. Acts 7:36	Jesus Christ performed signs and miracles to show that He was from God. John 7:36

## The Judgment of Egypt is a Shadow of Salvation by Jesus Christ

Moses, the Hebrews and Egypt	Jesus Christ, Believers and the World
Moses was a servant of God. 2Kings 18:12 2Chron. 24:6 Neh. 9:14	Jesus Christ is a servant of God. Matt. 12:18
The only way that the Hebrews (and the Egyptians who joined them) could be delivered was to trust in Jehovah Elohim. Exodus 1:17–21	The only way that we can be delivered is to trust in Jesus Christ. John 8:24
Moses, because of the notoriety of the exodus, became a light to the world. Exodus 9:16	Jesus Christ, due to His Own notoriety, is a light to the world. John 8:12 9:5
The Hebrews, because of their association with the God of the Universe, are also a light to the world. Exodus 10:23 Isa. 10:17	Because of our association with the God of the Universe, we believers are also a light to the world. John 9:5 Philip. 2:15
Egypt was judged for her sins. Exodus 11:1 12:12	The world is judge for its works. John 12:31 16:8
Egypt was covered with a thick, eerie darkness in one of its judgments. Exodus 10:21–22	Golgotha was covered with a thick, impenetrable darkness when Jesus was on the cross being judged for our sins. Mark 15:33
The Hebrews were called by God out of slavery. Exodus 13:3, 14	We are slaves of sin, called out of that slavery by God. John 8:34, 36 Rom. 6:6
The Hebrews would be delivered from the bondage of slavery after the death of the firstborn. Exodus 11:5 12:12	We are delivered from the bondage of slavery by the death of God's firstborn. Heb. 1:6 Rev. 1:5

For hundreds of years, there will be no cross, no death on our behalf to deliver us from our bondage to sin. In order for man to recognize this and apprehend it, God has directed many events in history to illustrate what would occur. Noah's ark illustrates God's provision and deliverance. The exodus from Egypt illustrates Jesus Christ's suffering on the cross on our behalf. The animal sacrifices illustrate the death of the innocent and unblemished to take away our sins. God allowed certain events in history to occur so that those who lived prior to the cross would be allowed to see the power of God and to believe in the Revealed God for their eternal salvation.

These events which parallel salvation are so numerous as to give us confidence in the Scriptures and in Jesus Christ. When I have doubts, I remember all of these parallels, and it is clear that these are of God. There are too many for this to be just a coincidence.

In the dispensation of Israel, deliverance (salvation) was had by faith in the Revealed God. The person who believes does not have a full and complete understanding of Who he is believing in. In the Church Age, despite the fact that Jesus is an historical figure, when we initially believe in Him, we also do not know everything about Him. Despite living in the United States, I personally did not fully appreciate all that happened *after* the cross, despite celebrating many Easters. I learned about the post-crucifixion events later (and believed them when I heard them taught). But my faith in Christ, small as it was and lacking a full understanding of Christology and soteriology, was enough to save me.

## Lesson 143: Exodus 11:9–10      A List of the Judgments as Organized by Moses

Vv. 9–10 are summary verses to these plagues that we have been studying.

Exodus 11:9 But the Lord said to Moses, “Pharaoh will not heed you, so that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.”

Exodus 11:10 So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the Lord hardened [lit., *strengthened*] Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

Even though we have not completed the judgments yet, this is a good time to review them. After the final judgment, the action of the actual exodus will kick in, and it will be difficult to suddenly stop and review.

Here is a chart listing all of them.

This is a chart which covers the miracles/plagues of God upon Egypt:

This is simply a bird’s-eye view of the Scriptures which we have been studying, keeping with Moses’ organization (which is not necessarily chronological).

The Plagues God Brought Against Egypt					
Scripture	Request or Plague	Moses and Aaron	What happened	Possible Significance	Pharaoh’s Reaction
Exodus 5	No plague but a request for Israel to celebrate a feast to God in the desert-wilderness.	Although it reads <i>they</i> said, what we find in Ex. 4:10–17 6:28–30 seems to indicate that Aaron did all the talking this time.	The Pharaoh asks “Who is Jehovah that I should obey His voice?” After this meeting, Pharaoh does not allow the Hebrews to use straw when making bricks without reducing their work quota.	God gives the Pharaoh a chance to obey without threats of a negative consequence.	The Pharaoh is negative of his own volition.



## The Plagues God Brought Against Egypt

Scripture	Request or Plague	Moses and Aaron	What happened	Possible Significance	Pharaoh's Reaction
Ex. 6:1–7:13	A request for Israel to go out of the land and no plague against Egypt was given.	Aaron did the talking and he threw down the staff which became a snake.	Pharaoh's magicians also came in with staffs and they threw them down and the staffs became serpents as well. Aaron's serpent swallowed theirs.	God's power, as revealed at the hands of Moses and Aaron, is revealed.	Pharaoh's heart is made strong (whether by himself or by God is not clear)

It is likely that these are two views of the same incident. Exodus 5 is this first meeting seen from the human perspective and Exodus 6:1–7:13 sees this even from God's point of view.

The things which Exodus 5 concerned itself would have seemed to be extremely impactful; but this was followed up so quickly by the first plague, that the pressure placed upon the people of God only lasted for a very short time (a few days).

I believe that the response of the people of God to the authority of Moses and Aaron determined whether or not they themselves would be subject to the first plague.

Ex . 7:14–25	Pharaoh is asked to let the Hebrew people go so that they may serve God in the desert-wilderness. The Nile water is turned to blood—the <b>first</b> plague.	Aaron strikes the bank of the Nile with his staff and the water turns to blood. Aaron probably did the talking.	The fish in the Nile die and the water becomes putrid. The water could not be drunk. The Egyptians apparently dug wells in order to fetch water to drink. Whatever was filtered by the ground to these wells was apparently drinkable water.	Judgment comes before blessing. The blood speaks of judgement. Jesus' first public miracle was turning water into wine. That speaks of blessing.	Pharaoh's heart is made strong, but it is not clear by whom.
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The Plagues God Brought Against Egypt					
Scripture	Request or Plague	Moses and Aaron	What happened	Possible Significance	Pharaoh's Reaction
Ex. 8:1–15	Same request; the invasion of frogs—the <b>second</b> plague.	Aaron stretches his hand over the waters of Egypt and frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. Moses speaks directly to Pharaoh.	Moses tells Pharaoh that the timing for the removal of the frogs is up to him. He could choose when he wanted the frogs to be destroyed. According to Pharaoh's timetable, God would act. Moses called upon God, and the frogs all died. The dead frogs were piled into great heaps all over Egypt and became foul.	<i>In ancient Egypt, the frog appears as a symbol of fertility, water, and renewal. The water goddess Heket often appeared as a woman with the head of a frog.</i> <sup>24</sup>	Pharaoh strengthens his heart. He does not listen to Moses and Aaron.
Ex. 8:16–19	The plague of the gnats (or, lice)—the <b>third</b> plague.	God tells Moses to tell Aaron to strike the ground.	The dust of the earth becomes gnats (or, lice); gnats are on every man and beast.	Magicians of Pharaoh admit they cannot duplicate this miracle and say it is from God.	Pharaoh's heart is made strong, nevertheless.
Ex. 8:16–32	Moses requests a 3-day journey into the desert-wilderness; the plague of the insects—the <b>fourth</b> plague.	God tells Moses to tell Pharaoh, <b>"Thus said Jehovah: 'Let My people go...or I will send...swarms of insects.'"</b>	God sent swarms of insects to the Egyptians, but He did not so inflict the Hebrews. Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron and tells them to sacrifice to God within the land; Moses says, "No, we must go a 3-day journey away from Egypt." Pharaoh initially agrees and asks Moses to make supplication for him.	These are possibly the gold scarabs (or beetles) that are often found in Egyptian tombs.	God removed the insects as per Moses' request and Pharaoh makes his heart strong again.

<sup>24</sup> From [Exloratorium.edu](http://Exloratorium.edu); accessed November 18, 2020.

## The Plagues God Brought Against Egypt

Scripture	Request or Plague	Moses and Aaron	What happened	Possible Significance	Pharaoh's Reaction
Note two things about the 4 <sup>th</sup> plague: Moses does the talking this time and God differentiates between the Hebrews and the Egyptians. God made no such differentiation for the first few plagues because the leaders and people had rejected the authority of Moses and Aaron.					
Exodus 9:1–7	The <b>fifth</b> plague: Egyptian livestock die.	God tells Moses to speak to Pharaoh.	All of the Egyptian livestock in the field died; none of Israel's livestock died.	God specifically warned the Egyptians about their livestock in the field.	Pharaoh's heart was made strong.
Ex. 9:8–12	The <b>sixth</b> plague: boils.	God speaks to Moses and Aaron and tells Moses to throw handfuls of soot into the air.	This soot somehow becomes boils which break out on man and beast.	The magicians could not stand before Pharaoh because of the boils. This suggests that they had no power over the God of Israel.	Y <sup>e</sup> howah strengthens Pharaoh's heart this time.
Ex. 9:13–35	The <b>seventh</b> plague: hail.	God tells Moses to speak to pharaoh and warns them to keep all men and cattle inside, or the hail will kill them.	Hail struck down everything in the field—men, animals and plants. No hail fell upon Goshen, the territory assigned to the Hebrews. Moses, at the request of Pharaoh, went out of the city, spread his hands, and the severe weather stopped	Egypt is a land of very little precipitation. A storm as described here is unheard of.	Pharaoh's heart is strengthened and he does not let the Hebrews go, despite giving his word to Moses.

## The Plagues God Brought Against Egypt

Scripture	Request or Plague	Moses and Aaron	What happened	Possible Significance	Pharaoh's Reaction
Ex. 10:1–20	The <b>eighth</b> plague: the locusts.	Jehovah tells Moses to speak to Pharaoh. Moses and Aaron go together.	Pharaoh is warned to let the Hebrews go, or the next day his land would be invaded by locusts, which would eat everything the hail missed. Moses says that all of the Hebrews, children and cattle included, must go to a feast out in the wilderness. Pharaoh refuses to let the children go. Locusts come over the land and eat all of the plants. Pharaoh repents, and the locusts are removed.		Once the locusts are removed, Pharaoh changes his mind again. God gives strength to the heart of Pharaoh so that he can exercise his negative volition.
Ex. 10:21–29	Darkness over the land—the <b>ninth</b> plague.	God tells Moses to stretch his hand toward the sky.	A thick darkness is over the land for three days. However, the Israelites had light in their dwellings.	God is the light of the world. Those who reject Him remain in darkness.	Jehovah gives strength to Pharaoh's heart. Pharaoh warns Moses not to come back

Silver and gold are asked for from the Egyptian people by the Hebrews and they show favor to the Hebrews. Although it is not clear when the Hebrew people ask for this (or when they are given the gold and silver), I believe that this is associated with the warning of the final plague (which warning may have been delivered by the people themselves to the Egyptians).

Ex. 11 :1–12:33	The <b>tenth</b> plague: death of the firstborn.	God tells Moses what to do.	The Passover is instituted and those who observe the Passover are not judged but passed over.	Those who are under the blood of Jesus Christ are not killed.	Pharaoh calls for Aaron and Moses and tells them to take the people out of Egypt.
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So far in our study, we have only covered the warning of the final plague.

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It is very possible that each plague was identical in pattern; God speaks to Moses (and Aaron); then Moses (and/or Aaron) warn Pharaoh of what is to come. Pharaoh's heart is strengthened and he refuses to let Israel go. God brings the plague upon Egypt through the hand of Moses (or Aaron). Pharaoh agrees to let Israel go if God removes the plague. God removes the plague and Pharaoh's heart is strengthened once more against God. Some of these plagues have few details (e.g., the plague of the lice); however, the lack of detail does not mean that historically the pattern of events suggested are those which came to pass.

## Lesson 144: Exodus 12

## Introduction to Exodus 12

### The Passover Instituted

Exodus 12 is the fundamental chapter of the book of Exodus. Three of the most important incidents in all of the book of Exodus take place in this chapter. There is the institution of the Passover and its first observation; there is the execution of the 10<sup>th</sup> (and final) judgment (the death of the firstborn); and finally, the children of Israel leave (or exodus out of) Egypt. This is where the book of Exodus got its title. Finally, this chapter is filled with parallels to Jesus Christ and His death on our behalf to take away our sins.

At this point, we begin Exodus 12. Most readers would agree that Exodus 10–12 are very well divided and distinguished topically. However, they are intermingled with regards to time. That is, they do not occur in a strict chronological order. Exodus 11:4–6 reads: **So Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt, and every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle. There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has never been, nor ever will be again. (ESV)**

So, unless one tries to adjust the meaning of this passage to fit a point of view, this warning by Moses sounds like, that very night, at midnight, all the firstborn of Egypt would die.

However, in Exodus 12:1–13, God is speaking to Moses and Aaron, telling them how to instruct Israel to prepare for this judgment. These instructions include requirements for each home in Goshen to select a lamb on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month for a ritual on the 14<sup>th</sup> which must be completed before midnight, when the Destroyer comes to kill all of the firstborn. In order for these instructions to be obeyed, Moses and Aaron must see to it that all Israel knows what they are to do prior to the 10<sup>th</sup>.

So, in Exodus 11, Moses is warning Pharaoh about a judgment to come that very night; whereas, in Exodus 12, God is telling Moses and Aaron what needs to be done to prepare for that same night of judgment—which preparation will take at least 5 or 6 days after Moses and Aaron hear these words (all of Israel must first be informed of what God has said). So, you see that Exodus 12 *must* occur before Moses' warning in Exodus 11.

There are two interpretations which may allow for us to read chapter 12 as occurring *after* chapter 11. (1) When Moses tells Pharaoh *midnight*, he was not referring to midnight *that night*, but to some other midnight coming up. (2) Option 2 is, the Passover practiced by the Israelites is more slap-dash than what we read in Exodus 12. Exodus specifically deals with how the Passover would be celebrated in the future. The exact instructions for *this* Passover are missing, in order to not cause confusion for future generations.

As far as I am concerned, neither of these options are credible or reasonable. Option #1 seems odd, unless Moses said, “Midnight, this coming Thursday.” Quite frankly, it is hard to read that narrative and think that Moses was referring to some midnight off into the future. Option #2 certainly leaves out all of the extra time spent finding a lamb and watching it, but the problem is still one of time. Even if Moses and Aaron got to Pharaoh bright and early in the morning (giving him the warning for that midnight), and then headed over to Goshen to tell the Israelites what to do, that would have been a lot to organize in a single day’s time. How long, for instance, would it take to inform 2 million people what was going to happen (or somewhat fewer than 1 million, if we are going to simply consider the adult males). My point being is, options 1 & 2 don’t really solve anything, but they introduce a whole other set of problems to solve and explain. Quite frankly, the only reason to suggest either of these two options is to insure that all of Exodus 12 occurs after Exodus 11. Well, there really is no reason to worry about the chronological order of these two chapters match their numeric order. Imposing such a restriction—that every event in Exodus 11 occurred before every event in Exodus 12—is unwarranted.

So far in the book of Exodus, even though the general movement in the chapters seems to be chronological; there are quite a number of specific instances where that is clearly not the case. One of the things that I have been saying over and over again is, on paper, these judgments of God are neatly separated, and that is because, presenting these things in chronological order would just confuse the heck out of us. So how Moses recorded these events makes perfect sense. However, there are times, when we closely examine the text, that allowing for overlapping events simply makes a great deal more sense.

For all of this to make sense, without introducing some extraordinary theories, Exodus 12:1–13 must take place prior to the warning that Moses delivers to Pharaoh in Exodus 11. In fact, what God says to Moses and Aaron in Exodus 12 logically takes place prior to the 9<sup>th</sup> plague, which plague is found in Exodus 10. This would allow enough days for Israel to hear this message that God spoke to Moses and Aaron; and then there would be enough time remaining for them to follow the instructions of God.

In fact, this introduces two possibilities, one of which has a very interesting result. (1) There is an extended period of time between plague #9 and #10, which allows for all of this to take place. Personally, I reject this possibility because it would require nearly a week for these things to take place and it would require Moses to come to Pharaoh *after* they had the explosive meeting where Pharaoh said, “If I see you ever again, I will kill you!” And Moses counters with, “You spoke rightly; you will never see me again!” This option requires a considerable amount of downtime between plagues, it requires another meeting between Moses and Pharaoh (when one is not expected, given the angry things that both



men said), and it would squander the drama of 3 days of darkness. There is another option: (2) all of this takes place in a very short space of time. That is, the darkness judgment comes to an end; Moses speaks to Pharaoh and gives him the dramatic warning, “At midnight...”, and then Moses seemingly storms off in anger once again, both men speaking with great anger and passion.

Here is the interesting result of option 2: prior to the 9<sup>th</sup> judgment (the plague of darkness), Israel is preparing for the final judgment. They know about it and they set the lamb aside for each household and then, after this lamb has been selected, and they are to watch the lamb for 3 or 4 days—darkness falls over the land for 3 days. Although Israel is able to light up lamps in their homes and see in their homes, the darkness on Egypt takes place all over Egypt, which includes Goshen. So, even though God left Israel out of most of the previous plagues, the plague of darkness affects them as well—the chief difference between Israel and Egypt is, there was light in the homes of the sons of Israel. Egyptians were unable to have light anywhere.

I want you to get a picture of this in your mind. There are 3 days of darkness, but the people of Israel have light in their homes and before them is this year old lamb that they have chosen prior to the darkness. So, the people of Israel have light in their homes—the Egyptians around them do not—and they have a lamb that they are observing in their own homes.

Jesus, the Lamb of God, did not go to the entire world. His ministry was specifically to Israel. He provided His light for all Israel to see—to see and accept or to see and reject. But, at that time, the message of Jesus was confined to a very small area of the world (Israel) for a very short amount of time (3–4 years). Do you see all of the resounding parallels between these two periods of time?

To come to a reasonable explanation for the chronology of these chapters, required weeks of time for me (and, quite frankly, I don’t know if I have explained it well enough yet). I considered this option, then that option, and then considered another approach. Almost everything I tried seemed to create more problems than it solved. The way that I have explained these events—setting up the chronology for you—took a relatively short amount of time (1 or 2 pages of explanation). But that belies the amount of time that I spent come to this approach.

But what is remarkable to me is, after determining, *this timing makes sense*, it unearths a marvelous parallel between what took place in Goshen 3500 years ago and what took place in Israel during the public ministry of our Lord. It was like uncovering a gem hidden on an acre of farmland.

We have something else to consider at this point: why are Exodus 10–12 completely out of whack chronologically speaking? Why did not Moses simply write down these events as they occurred? This is because the information contained in these chapters would have been much more difficult to follow if they were presented in strict chronological order. For example, we would read all about these instructions for the 10<sup>th</sup> plague, but prior to the 9<sup>th</sup>

plague occurring (and possibly coterminous with the 8<sup>th</sup> judgment). So, during plague #8, Israel would be preparing for plague #10. We don't know for certain if Moses specifically warned Pharaoh about the plague of darkness, but I daresay that it would have been confusing for us to read about the warning and instructions for the 10<sup>th</sup> judgment, but the 9<sup>th</sup> judgment had not yet occurred; and Moses and Aaron still had to meet with Pharaoh to see if he was ready to let the Hebrew people go at the conclusion of the 8<sup>th</sup> judgment. Is your head swirling yet? A strict chronological treatment of the plagues of Egypt would have been very confusing for the reader. In fact, some of you may have read this narrative on many occasions, and were never confused until now—and that is because I have thrown into the mix the concept of time. *What logically must happen when*, is the question that I have introduced on many occasions during this study, and such a question makes our study of Exodus considerably more difficult.

Let me see if I can offer a parallel from television. I watch some of the renovation television shows, like *Zombie House Flipping*. Each episode has the crew out finding, purchasing and then renovating a single home—which is then presented for sale at an open house. Our view of this show is, all of this takes place over a 4 or 6-week period of time; and once it is completed, the crew then appears to go to find the next house for the next episode. In reality, that is not how it happens. The *team* is always at work finding and purchasing and renovating homes. It would not be unusual for them to have 3 or 4 homes being worked on simultaneously. Two weeks before the open house for house #1, they might be searching for house #5, having already purchased houses #2–4, which are all under contract and in various states of renovation. Yet, if we saw this program presented exactly in chronological order, it would be so confusing, that we would stop watching after episode 1. In order for this show to be successful, the time element has to be confined to a single set of circumstances (the buying, renovation and selling of a single home).

Just as the chronological presentation of the final 11 chapters of Genesis was groundbreaking in the realm of literature (thus establishing the 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient point of view—the most common point of view for literature, movies and television); the chapters 5–12 in Exodus are equally groundbreaking. Exodus 5–12 carefully separates the plagues into 10 separate narratives. Moses takes an historic narrative which would have seemed very confusing, had it been presented chronologically. Instead, he organizes these events into a narrative so carefully presented that, few commentators say anything about the chronologically of these chapters. And those commentators who do, only throw out a few comments here and there.

In fact, only after very careful study supplemented by many, and after many occasions of reviewing this material, do I feel confident about speaking to the chronology of the plagues. However, what I will *not* do is present all of this material again, but chronologically. It would be messy and confusing. More importantly, it would be unhelpful.

Exodus 12 is potentially as tricky as the previous two chapters. There is a yearly celebration which the Israelites were to follow in perpetuity; and there was also a preparation for the 10<sup>th</sup> judgment. These things are related but not necessarily identical (that was my theoretical approach to begin with). Potentially, there will be portions of this

chapter which are specific to the yearly celebration; portions which are specific to the preparations to take place before the 10<sup>th</sup> plague; and there are some things which overlap (that is, they will be done by the people that very month *and* in future years).

Vv. 1–11 lays out a yearly memorial/celebration for the Hebrew people which looks back on what takes place in this chapter of Exodus. This also appears to be what the Israelites will do prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> plague.

Vv. 12–13 tells us exactly what God is going to do that night in Egypt of the Passover. These are events which will shortly take place.

What the Israelites must do prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> plague is laid out. This will both be a celebration and a memorial. What God requires them to do will also save them from the threat of the 10<sup>th</sup> plague.

Vv. 14–20 is all about how this event is to be memorialized in the future. The Feast of the Unleavened Bread is also established, which will occur prior to the Passover (but not prior to *this* Passover).

In vv. 21–23, Moses calls in the elders of Israel and lays it out for them—what they must all do prior to the final plague and what God will do.

In vv. 24–27c, Moses addresses how this will be memorialized in the future.

At the end (v. 27d), the elders of Israel bow and worship (they are worshiping their God, not Moses). In fact, what I believe happens is, Moses lays this out for the elders (vv. 21–27a); the elders go out and lay this out for the people of Israel; and afterward, all the people bow (v. 27b).

In v. 27b, the people will bow down; and then in v. 28, they go out and do what Moses and Aaron have told them to do. So, somewhere before v. 28, the people had to have been instructed as to what to do.

Vv. 29–32 is the actual plague, the death of the firstborn. The shortness of this passage belies the severity and effectiveness of this final judgment.

Vv. 33–36: Egyptian officials ask the Israelites to leave; they will leave with great treasures given to them by the Egyptian people.

Vv. 37–39: The exodus of the people. The children of Israel leave Egypt, taking with them whatever possessions they are able to carry.

Vv. 40–42: the time during which Israel was embedded in Egypt and a summary statement.

Vv. 43–49: Specific instructions for the Passover (they appear to primarily focus upon future celebrations).

Vv. 50–51 is a summary of this chapter. At 51 verses, this chapter is longer than normal.

There is some information left out of this narrative: when exactly did the sons and daughters of Israel actually go to the Egyptians and ask them for remuneration? Did they warn the Egyptians individually of the final judgment? Did they give instructions to the Egyptians for the final judgment? Were those instructions exactly the same as for the Israelites? Did any Egyptians do as they were warned? Finally, when did the Egyptians bring gold and silver to the Israelites? After the 9<sup>th</sup> judgment? After the 10<sup>th</sup>? There are many details—particularly as related to the Egyptians—which are left out. I suspect that this tells us, that, even though the Egyptians gave silver and gold to the Israelites, that most of them did not do what was required of them in order to preserve their firstborn.

I would think that God's very justice would require Him to present to any Egyptian on positive signals the gospel of the sacrifice of the lamb (that is, the Passover gospel).

The Passover gospel is, the God of Israel is coming to kill the firstborn of every family. Their only option for salvation is to kill a lamb for their household and to paint some of its blood on the doorframe. When God sees the blood, He will not bring harm to that household.

What we do not know at this time is, were there any people in Egypt positive towards this gospel? Did the people of Israel tell any of them what to do? Do any Egyptian follow those instructions for his household? I suspect that we will not know the answers to any of these questions until eternity opens up to us.

## Lesson 145: Exodus 12:1–2a

## Introduction to Exodus 12 (part II)

When going into a thorough study of the timing of the events of Exodus 10–12, it became clear that the events overlap (not actually presented as such in the narrative of Exodus); yet they provide a fascinating set of parallel events.

### The Passover Gospel

#### The First Passover

God told Moses about the events which were about to transpire; Moses was to tell these things to the people of Israel.

The sons of Israel were to select a lamb who would be offered up for their household. They would observe their lamb from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month.

#### The Ministry of Christ Jesus

God told His prophets about the events which would transpire for the life of the Messiah. These prophets then revealed this information to the people of Israel.

Jesus is the Lamb of God Who had come to Israel, God's people. He would offer Himself up for the salvation of Israel (and for all mankind). Israel would be able to view the public ministry of Jesus for 3–4 years.

## The Passover Gospel

The First Passover	The Ministry of Christ Jesus
While Israel prepared for the Passover, the 9 <sup>th</sup> judgment took place, where all of Egypt was plunged into darkness. No one could see anything; but the Israelites had light in their dwellings.	Jesus appeared to the people of Israel, giving light to them; whereas, the rest of the world was in spiritual darkness.
Each house of Israel had already selected their lamb; so they would be observing their lamb in their own home, in the light, during these 3 days of darkness.	Israel could observe the Lord during His ministry (if they chose to do so). Jesus presented Himself to them as the light of the world.
At the end of this period of time, all Israel would rise up and slaughter their lamb. Its blood would be painted onto specific parts of their door frame.	At the end of the Lord's public ministry, Israel would rise up against Jesus and call for His execution. When put on the cross, the blood of the Lord would be seen in the same 4 places as seen on the door frames.
The Destroyer passed over the houses of those who had the blood painted on their door frames. The slaughtering of the lamb and the smearing of its lamb were an indication of faith in the Revealed God.	The Lord's death for our sins allows us to avoid eternal death by exercising faith in Him.

Portions of the parallels found here are only discoverable when one considers carefully the actual timeline of these events (which is not clearly laid out in Scripture).

We have been discussing the time frame of Exodus 10–12. What should be clear is, these chapters are arranged topically but not chronologically.

Choosing the lamb for the sacrifice and watching it takes a period of time (Exodus 12:3, 6). Back in Exodus 11:4, Moses tells Pharaoh: *"Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt,...'* (ESV) Although one might argue, "Moses did not say, *midnight tonite;*" but that really appears to be the gist of Moses' warning. He does not appear to be saying, "Well, at some point in time in the very near future—you know, in the next few days or so—at midnight, God will..." Logically, it makes sense that such a warning would have been immediate. Consequences would begin that very night. If that is the case in Exodus 11, we will see that Moses will tell the Israelites that they have a week to prepare for the Passover in Exodus 12. The simplest explanation<sup>25</sup> for this is, these instructions from God to Moses and Aaron (Exodus 12:1–23) predates Moses' last words to Pharaoh (Exodus 11:4–8).

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<sup>25</sup> There are a number of more complex explanations, but they seem to be strained and confusing.

What we will study in this chapter includes instructions for the ceremonies to be observed in the future. Prior to the Passover, there will be the Feast of the Unleavened Bread (this is for the future; it is not for this ritual). Clearly, there are no week-long feasts being held in Goshen at this time. Therefore, my assumption in this chapter will be, the instructions laid out by God are mostly or wholly to be followed by the sons of Israel. There are some things in this chapter that Israel would do in subsequent Passovers, but not during this one (for instance, anything related to the Feast of the Unleavened Bread).

The specific instructions that God gives in vv. 1–11, the people of Israel are expected to obey for the initial Passover and for all Passovers in the future. What we read in vv. 12–13 specifically applies to this particular Passover (God will not, for every future Passover, hold over the heads of Israelites, the threat of killing their firstborn).

In vv. 14–20, God will speak to exactly what Israel must do in future observances of the Passover. When Moses begins to explain to the elders of Israel what is to be required (vv. 21–27), he covers a few details not found in the previous portion of this chapter.

Exodus 12:21–23 tells us very specifically what will happen the afternoon and the evening before the judgment. Whether or not additional preparation was required and when exactly these things were said to the children of Israel is unclear.

As has been discussed in great detail, the Israelites were probably warned about what was necessary for them to do regarding the Passover even before the 9<sup>th</sup> judgment came to pass (the judgment of darkness).

Prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> judgment, there may have been warnings delivered to the Egyptians which included a ritual which was not exactly the same as the Israelite ritual (but it would have involved the slaughter of a lamb and the lamb's blood being put upon the door frame). This is an assumption on my part and not found in the Exodus text. But, exactly what was said and whether the Egyptians went along with the instructions for the warning, is unknown to us. Was Moses' warning to Egypt, "This is happening, and too bad for you!"? In at least one of the previous judgments, there were things that the Egyptians could do to mitigate the harm to themselves. "There is going to be a hail storm which will destroy every animal which is left outside." Certainly, any Egyptian who had begun to believe the Lord could have brought all of his animals under shelter for that plague. So, it is my theory that the Egyptians may have been given a way out (but I do not find any specific verses to support this theory).

Separating out and organizing the events of Exodus 9–12 are best done topically. You can read each individual chapter, and it all makes sense and it fits together well. However, if we placed all of these events onto a linear timeline, they would not be as easy to follow.

Murai reveals that this chapter has a rather unusual organization:

### **Organization of Exodus 12:1–28 (by Hajime Murai)**



A(12:1-11)	Instruction about the lamb in the Passover
B(12:12-13)	The Passover
C(12:14-20)	Regulations about the ritual of Passover
A'(12:21-22)	Instruction about the lamb in the Passover
B'(12:23)	The Passover
C'(12:24-28)	Instruction about teaching regulations about the ritual of Passover
A: The lamb in the Passover. B: The Passover. C: Regulations about the ritual of Passover.	

From [http://www.bible.literarystructure.info/bible/02\\_Exodus\\_pericope\\_e.html](http://www.bible.literarystructure.info/bible/02_Exodus_pericope_e.html) accessed October 18, 2017.

God is going to set up a feast day (or, a holy day/holiday) for the people of Israel to celebrate. It will be related to the 10<sup>th</sup> and final plague.

At the end of the three days of darkness, when Moses (and presumably Aaron) had been summoned by Pharaoh (Exodus 10:24), Moses delivers to Pharaoh a message on the final Plague, the death of all the first-born (Exodus 11:4–6). That had been promised for that very night at midnight (Exodus 11:4). However, here Moses is given instructions concerning Israel four (and possibly fourteen) days in advance. Again, the ceremony has a very specific time frame (Exodus 12:1–11); the first Passover does not appear to have the same lengthy timetable as the observation of the Passover does in future years (Exodus 12:21–23). But, there is still necessary period of time during which all Israel must be told what to do at least 4 days prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> judgment.

Therefore, this was probably told to Moses prior to the plague of the three days of darkness and Moses relays these instructions to the people of Israel prior to these three days. This is how Moses knew that he would never see Pharaoh's face again because he got the instructions concerning Passover (Exodus 12:1–23), the promise to kill the first-born of those who are not protected by the blood (Exodus 11:1–6 12:23) and the warning of the plague of darkness (Exodus 10:21–22) all at the same time. These things were all separated in the text of Exodus because it is easier to mentally organize these events if we consider these things plague by plague and think of the Passover as a separate ordinance altogether, but tied in meaning to the last plague.

In previous chapters, I went to great effort to try to present a logical timeline of the events, as the chapters did not appear to all be in chronological order. I believe that I was able to give a reasonably accurate order, given the text to that point. However, I did not find Exodus 12 as easy to sort out and fit into the previous chapters to give a chronological view of events. It could be done, but to what point? As I have said, a chronological view of events could be very confusing; a topical view, not so much.

For this chapter, I think it would be best to study it verse-by-verse, making an occasional reference to the chronology.

Exodus 12:1a [Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt,...](#)

The chapters 6–10 all begin with, *and Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses*; this chapter begins with, *and Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses and Aaron*.

Vv. 2–20 are precise instructions from God to Moses (and Aaron) of what the sons of Israel needed to do to prepare for the yearly Passover ceremony. Furthermore, even though neither Moses nor Aaron knows this, Aaron will have a very important place in the future of Israel as the father of the priesthood (just as interesting, there appears to be no important future in Israel for the sons of Moses<sup>26</sup>).

Here, at the beginning of Exodus 12, God speaks to both Moses and Aaron, something which He has done before (Exodus 6:13 9:8). Previously, God spoke to Moses, and then Moses was to relay God's words to Aaron (Exodus 4:30 7:1, 19 8:5, 16). The reason for the change is, both Moses and Aaron will go among the elders and people of Israel to make certain that every single household knows what God requires of them.

God will, through Moses and Aaron, set up the Passover memorial, a ceremony which has been observed by Jews every single year since this time (approximately 3500 years ago). For 1500+ years, this ceremony was very carefully followed. Today, there is a ceremony of sorts, but very different from the original (today, it is called the Seder).

One of the important things to note in our study of the Old Testament is how far the Jewish people today have strayed from the customs and celebrations given them by God. As we will find out in the study of this chapter, the Passover meal and Seder are only similar insofar as, they are both meals, and most often, family members are present at the meal. The differences, however, are stark.

We are also told in this passage that God spoke to Moses and Aaron *in the land of Egypt*. So the yearly ceremony was presented right along with the things which the Israelites were expected to do prior to the final plague.

Exodus 12:1b–2a ...saying, “This month shall be your beginning of months;...

The month that they are in, right at this time that God is speaking to them, will be the beginning of the year for the Hebrew people.

Benson: *[This] is, the first and principal month of the year. It was called Abib, (Exodus 13:4; Exodus 23:15,) which signifies an ear of corn, because then the corn was eared. It answers nearly to our March.*<sup>27</sup>

It is a perfect beginning because Israel begins as an independent nation; and seasonally, the land begins anew as well. Winter ends and Spring begins.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> We do not even know if they are with Moses at this time.

<sup>27</sup> Rev. Joseph Benson, *Commentary of the Old and New Testaments*; 1857; from e-Sword, Exodus 12:1–2.

<sup>28</sup> Let me also suggest that the water table in Israel and Egypt was much higher then than it is today, so that the weather was more mild in that era, and crops more easily grew in both countries.

A synonymia [pronounced *syn-o-NYM-i-a*] is the repetition of a synonymous phrase. Twice in this verse we are told that this is the beginning of a new year; that the calendar system of the Hebrews was being changed (or updated or established). We may reasonably assume that the Hebrew people had been previously following the calendar of the Egyptians.

The change of a calendar is a pretty big event, so it is repeated here for emphasis. This is essentially the beginning of Israel as a nation, observing from this point forward, a new calendar, their own calendar, separate from that of the Egyptians. This introduces the Jewish calendar. The first month was called Abib (Exodus 13:4) until the Babylon captivity, after which it was called Nisan (Neh. 2:1 Esther 3:7). This corresponds to the latter portion of March and early April on our calendars.

#### **Lesson 146: Exodus 12:1–3**

#### **God speaks to Moses and Aaron**

The scene right now is God speaking to Moses about the final judgment against Egypt. This time, God would require something from the Israelites to indicate faith in Him. My guess is, God is speaking to Moses prior to the 9<sup>th</sup> plague and maybe around the time of the 8<sup>th</sup> plague.

Israel was not subject to the same plagues as Egypt was, as God did not bring His judgments upon Goshen, the portion of Egypt where the Israelites lived. This is how God could interact with Moses and Aaron in the midst of judgment against Egypt.

Exodus 12:1–2a **Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt saying, “This month shall be your beginning of months;...**

At this point, all Israel was going to begin anew. They would rise up as a new nation. They will begin as a nation unlike any other in human history.

Interestingly enough, God never suggested that the Hebrew people rebel militarily against Egypt.

Exodus 12:2b **...it shall be the first month of the year to you.**

For the Hebrew people, their first month would be their equivalent of Spring. It is called Abib or Nissan. From this day forward, the calendar of months for the Hebrew people would begin with this month.

Exodus 12:1–11 describes the Passover, which would be observed the same time every year. Vv. 12–13 describes the actual 10<sup>th</sup> judgment, which will be the death of the firstborn. Vv. 21–23 tell the Israelites exactly what they are going to do.

I have read this chapter many times, considering it from many perspectives. One perspective from that of time: that is, *when did this take place?* Writing a commentary on

this chapter also causes me to consider, how much of what God says applies to Israel right then and there; and how much of this applies to the yearly celebration of the Passover? Right now, the people of Israel would hear about the Passover as a new celebration—this is about to happen in the next week or so. These Israelites are contemporaries to the first Passover. However, most of Israel would read these words years later; and much later, believers from the Church Age would read this chapter (although few study it in any depth).

Apart from the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, there does not appear to be any difference between what is required of the Israelites prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> plague and their descendants, celebrating the Passover years hence. Even though the Unleavened Bread Feast is described in this chapter, it only takes place only in subsequent years.

The thing with the unleavened bread is this. In that night of the Passover, at midnight, God will go throughout the land and He will kill all of the firstborn, of man and animal—unless He sees the blood. Egypt will be so much in an uproar that they will demand that the sons of Israel leave their land immediately. Bread is usually made over a period of several hours, because there is a leavening process taking place. However, this time, no such process will be allowed to take place. There will not be enough time. Israel must grab their stuff and move out immediately. So, the bread that they bake to take with them will be without leaven (without yeast). There is no time to prepare it properly. Therefore, in the future, they would celebrate this experience by eating only unleavened bread, as did this generation of Israelites. This would help them to look back and remember what had taken place.

Because of Exodus 11:4–5 and 12:23 (the prophecy and its fulfillment), I believe that these instructions—or the bulk of these instructions—were given early that particular month; the ninth day of the month or earlier. The beginning of this month, when God said these words to Moses, was likely when He spoke to Moses about the plague of the locusts (Exodus 10:1–2). My point being, when Pharaoh reacts to the ending of a plague with negative volition, I don't believe that Moses has to run frantically to God that very day and say, "Pharaoh's not cooperating again! What can we do?"

The reason that I believe these instructions came a week or so earlier than the judgment itself is based upon a practical consideration: Moses and Aaron will require enough time to speak to the people of God and give them instructions. Then, these instructions require at least 4 days to do what God is requiring the Hebrew people to do.

In the alternative to this chapter beginning around the time of the 8<sup>th</sup> plague would require that there be a more abbreviated process of the sacrifice of the young lamb for each house. However, that is *not* recorded in the Scriptures. Furthermore, a shorter time line does not eliminate every problem having to do with time. Remember, soon after the 3 days of darkness, Moses is in the palace speaking to Pharaoh. He tells Pharaoh, "At midnight, the destroyer is going throughout Egypt." Now, how exactly does Moses also have the time to warn all Israel—a population of two million?

In retrospect, after all of this has taken place, Moses organizes and records the plagues as ten separate events, each preceded by instructions concerning the plague from God. For instance, Moses presents the Passover and the instructions for Passover as one event. However, the information given by God to Moses was not necessarily separated in exactly this way into 11 sets of conversations (right before announcing the plague and then right after). It was actually nine conversations (or fewer) wherein Moses received the information concerning the plagues and the Passover (more if God spoke to Moses twice on the same day). However, it is much easier for us to understand and to learn these events topically. Therefore, Moses writes down these events topically as opposed to recording these events in a completely chronological manner.

Remember what happened earlier in our study. Exodus 10:28 *Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me; take care never to see my face again, for on the day you see my face you shall die."* Exodus 10:29 *Moses said, "As you say! I will not see your face again."* (ESV) This is what is said right after the 3 days of darkness take place. It does not appear as though Moses went back to Pharaoh again to say, "Oh, I almost forgot—there is one more plague. If you don't mind hearing me out, I can tell you about it." I believe that Moses already presented that final plague to Pharaoh. If not, then Moses would have to return and show his face again, after saying that he wouldn't.

Exodus 12:1–2 *Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you."*

The first of the month will be related to the timing of the celebration which the people of Jacob will observe. At mid-month, they would observe the Passover.

This first month marks Israel's commencement as a nation (although they will be a nation without a country for 40+ years).

Exodus 12:3a *Speak to all the congregation of Israel,...*

*Speak* is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperative. This is what God is saying to Moses and Aaron. Both men will do the speaking. There will be a lot of people to tell. These directions will go out to every man in Israel.

Earlier, when announcing plagues and such to Pharaoh, God preferred that Moses be the only man speaking on behalf of God, thus preserving the concept of mediatorship (Moses, ideally speaking, was to act as the mediator between God and man, thus being a type of Christ). However, these particular instructions involve both Moses and Aaron, as this is something which all Israel must participate in. The word must be gotten out to all Israel as quickly as possible.

There was both a practical and a spiritual reason for God speaking to both men. Practically speaking, every family of Israel needed to be protected by their Passover lamb (this is what this chapter is all about). In the previous chapter, Moses warned about the impending death of the firstborn of Egypt. Well, this thing was going to strike all of Egypt,

including Goshen, where the sons of Jacob lived. Therefore, the Israelites were to be given a way out from the coming judgment. These instructions needed to be given to the head of every single household; and this needed to happen quickly, so that the instructions might be followed precisely. Therefore, both Moses and Aaron could fan out and speak to more people as two men as opposed to just one. That is the practical reason for Moses and Aaron both being involved here.

God is instructing Moses and Aaron as to what they will do. This particular tradition, the Passover, will be done once for the upcoming plague (the tenth plague); and then it would be repeated each year after that, not for protection, for as a memorial for God having had protected them on the very first Passover.

In the near future, Aaron would present this same teaching each year, when Israel would celebrate the Passover as a memorial. Many years after that, Aaron's son and grandson would oversee the Passover celebration. That would become the responsibility of the priesthood. At this time, Aaron probably had no clue as to what his role was going to be. In this same book of Exodus, in the near future, we will study in great detail Aaron's place in Israel.

Exodus 12:3a [Speak to all the congregation of Israel,...](#)

There had to be a well-designed set of authorities among the people of Israel, as Moses could not, by himself, speak to all of the people. Mostly likely, Moses and Aaron would address the elders and then these elders would then speak to the people. There was very likely a system in place which allowed for announcements from God to be relayed to the people.

The spiritual reason why Aaron is allowed in on this event is, he would soon occupy the office of the High Priest, and he would be overseeing rituals such as the Passover. Aaron himself would become a type of Christ, as the High Priest. He, as priest, would represent man to God (for instance, by offering up a sacrificial animal on the altar for someone). Man, in the previous dispensation, could not go directly before God; he had to go through Aaron, the High Priest. However, in our dispensation, Jesus, is our High Priest; He will intercede for us. We may go through Him directly to God. In this era, we do not go through a fallen human priest, as we ourselves are now priests, able to represent ourselves directly before God. We can represent ourselves before God because we are in Christ (a remarkable phrase which occurs nearly 90 times<sup>29</sup> in the New Testament).

Hebrews 4:14-16 [Therefore, since we have a great High Priest Who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have One Who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet He did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.](#)

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<sup>29</sup> There are similar phrases like *in Him* and *in Jesus* which I am not including.



Hebrews 10:11–14 Day after day every [human] priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this Priest [Jesus Christ] had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God, and since that time He waits for His enemies to be made His footstool. For by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. (New International Version; capitalized; reference to Psalm 110:1)

So, Aaron, as the first High Priest in Israel, would represent Jesus. Aaron is the first High Priest; and Jesus is the last High Priest. Jesus would also be called a priest after the order of Melchizedek, and that is different from being the priest described in the two passages from Hebrews above.

The entire Levitical priesthood would come from Aaron's line (it would be reasonable to call them the Aaronic priesthood). Interestingly enough, in order for this priesthood to continue, the priests must find wives, marry them and then have children. If they did not do this, the Aaronic priesthood would end. They *had* to marry; they had to have wives. Do you see how different this is from the so-called Catholic priesthood? Catholic priests are celibate. If any priest in the line of Aaron was celibate, then that ended his part in the line of priests then and there. There were no more priests in that person's line because he would not have a genealogical line. My point here is, there is no similarity between the Levitical Priesthood and the Catholic Priesthood.

Let's take this out of the realm of what might be an emotional theological debate for some of you. Let's look at the name Cohen. There are many families with the name Cohen. Let's say that, tomorrow, all Cohens stopped marrying and stopped having children. How long would the name Cohen last? Exactly one generation. Then all Cohens would be gone completely. At that point, the only place one might see the name Cohen is on various graves in cemeteries.

This is the only way the Levitical priesthood could be continued—through marriage and children.

As another aside, we no longer need a specialized priesthood in order to go to God. All believers in the Church Age are priests (1Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.—ESV; capitalized). The priest represents man to God; our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, has already represented us to God—we are saved by the death of our High Priest on the cross (Heb. 2:17 4:14–16). Jesus now lives to intercede for us forever more (Heb. 7:25). Going through a human priest in order to speak to God today is blasphemous; it disrespects the work of Jesus Christ.

Right now, we are studying Israel during phase 1 of the Age of Israel. The Age of Israel phase 1 is Abraham to Moses, which is known as the patriarchal period. During this period of time, Israel is a tribe, descended from one man, Abraham. The Age of Israel phase 2 is, Moses to Jesus, where Israel is a nation.<sup>30</sup> About the middle of the book of Joshua, Israel will be in the second phase of its existence. There will be a third phase, known as the Great Tribulation.

Exodus 12:3b ...saying: 'On the tenth of this month...

This celebration being laid out by God, will take place on the tenth of the month of Abib, the month that they are in. I would guess that the 10<sup>th</sup> day both corresponded to the time that they were at and is possibly related to the fact that this is the 10<sup>th</sup> plague.

Interestingly enough, the Bible does not set up a calendar for Israel, but it works with the calendar system which they have, modifying this month to call it the first of their months. There is no chapter in Leviticus where God says, "Okay, this is your calendar, Israel."

Exodus 12:3c ...every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father,...

Each household would take a lamb to be the sacrificial lamb for that house. This sacrifice needed to be as personal a thing as possible.

**On the Tenth Day of the Month, Each One is to Take a Lamb** (a graphic); from [the Warehouse](#); accessed March 9, 2021.

Exodus 12:3d ...a lamb for a household.

There is a strong argument that, if the father/husband believes in the Revealed God that, very often, as the spiritual leader of his family, his wife and children will believe as well. This is not guaranteed; but the husband is both the leader of his family as well as the spiritual head of the family.



Every animal sacrifice in the Old Testament points to Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God who bore our sins in His body on the tree (John 1:29 1Peter 1:19 2:24). Even though there is only one Lamb of God Who removes sin from us, this salvation must be obtained individually. Therefore, each household had a lamb so that everyone could observe this ritual.

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<sup>30</sup> Phase 3 will be Israel in the Tribulation.

This ritual (along with many others) was the way the gospel was presented to the Israelites. Jesus Christ had not come yet in the flesh, so God made certain that every child saw hundreds of animal sacrifices performed to cover their sins. At some point in time, they were to place their trust in the Revealed God. They would trust that He would remove their sins and the penalty of their sins from them. They would further trust that this removal had nothing to do with individual merit (the full extent of what the people believed at their salvation would have varied, but it would be trust in the God of Israel, as He revealed Himself in the Word of God).

What I am describing to you is the salvation of a young Israelite. He understood that his sins needed to be forgiven; he understood that the penalty for his sins were laid upon the head of a perfect, innocent animal. He understood that this animal substituted for him in the punishment for his sins. The salvation of this young Israelite would come when he believed in the God of Israel, the God Who required these various rituals. How much he understood of what I said depends upon the person himself.

When I personally believed in Jesus Christ, I knew some things about Him. But mostly what I knew about Him is, the Bible said, **Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved**. My memory of this point in my life (1972; I do not remember the month), is that I essentially pointed to this verse and called upon God to fulfill it or to answer it (or, whatever). There were a great many things which I learned about Jesus after that point in time, things which I did not understand or know about when I first believed in Him. But, I maintain that my salvation took place when I first believed in Him. Additional information came as I learned more and more about Christ and the Christian life. At the time that I was saved, I knew almost nothing about Jesus (even though I had gone to a few churches over the years).

Exodus 12:3 **Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.**

*Speak* is in the imperative, 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural. Moses and Aaron would both be responsible to teach this to the people of Israel.

I would assume that God is establishing and speaking to Moses and Aaron on the first day of their first month; so there are 10 days given to Moses and Aaron to present this to all Israel. It is my assumption that Egypt would be given this information as well (although that is not specifically spoken of in the Exodus record).

It is likely that this took place—the teaching of this chapter—previous to plagues 8 & 9. Most of the plagues had no effect upon Israel, so, while things were way crazy for the Egyptians, things were peaceful for the Israelites in Goshen. To be specific about the 9<sup>th</sup> plague, it appears that it was dark in Goshen, but that their lamps worked and gave them light (the darkness was so intense in the rest of Egypt, that it absorbed any light).

**Illustration:** During the time that I write this, there is great chaos occurring in the city of Portland, Oregon. However, I live in the same country, and similar potential problems in Houston, Texas were shut down almost immediately as they began. So, there was peace in my world, whereas, elsewhere in the country, there was great civil unrest. My life was normal where I lived; but the circumstances for some people in Portland, Oregon, during the same time period, was quite erratic and dangerous.

What I am saying is, after the first few plagues, Israel was no longer under the same judgment as Egypt was. Throughout Egypt, there was relative chaos; throughout Goshen there was relative calm.

Exodus 12:4a *And if the household is too small for the lamb,...*

The ritual has to integrate with reality to some degree. It would have been unusual for a home to be able to slaughter one lamb for every person. In fact, some households would be so small that they would be combined with another household. Furthermore, from a practical standpoint, an entire lamb—even a small one—would feed many people.

The act of eating the lamb represented having faith in the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. That the people of Israel followed this ritual, suggests that they believe in the Revealed God.

At some point, the religious class determined that a family of less than 10 (or, whatever) might look to combine with another household. I don't know that any specific number can actually be determined here (it would not surprise me if the Hebrew traditions actually specified some numbers here).

The key to understanding this is, the people were supposed to consume the entire lamb. Let's say there is a family of 3—it is pretty much impossible for them to eat an entire lamb. So they might find another family with 3 or 4 or 5 family members, and eat with them.

Exodus 12:4b *...let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons;...*

The small household will align itself with a neighboring house, with a headcount being done for all of the people in both homes.

This is a practical consideration here. When rituals are performed, they represent something in particular; but some adjustments must be made for the people and the circumstances. For instance, when Jesus instituted the first Eucharist, He likely took a portion of what each Apostle was to eat from the same slab of bread. The slab of bread represented the body of Jesus, which was given for each of His disciples. The act of each disciple eating a portion of that bread suggested that they had faith in the Lord.

Today, in a church of hundreds, this ritual of taking from the same slab of bread is much less practical. Furthermore, in this time of COVID (I write this in 2020–2021), this would not be a recommended practice (many churches use a sealed wafer affixed to a cup of

some weird unidentifiable purplish *juice*). An attempt to duplicate the first Eucharist for most churches is impractical. Also impractical, with the requirements of the Passover, is for a small family to offer up an entire lamb. However, were you aware that most Seder celebrations today lack lamb's meat?

**Application:** The believer needs to concentrate on what the ritual means; and the pastor-teacher should explain this ritual as the church partakes of it. The rituals which occur during the Church Age are quite limited by divine design. Whenever they are engaged in, the pastor needs to explain them.

Exodus 12:4c ...according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb.

What is to be considered is, the number of those eating in respect to the lamb which would be offered. People in the ancient world had a rough idea of how much a lamb would feed; just as people will buy a turkey for Thanksgiving according to the number of people they expect to show up.

Now let's look at the entire v. 4.

A nearly literal translation for this verse is "And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he shall take [a lamb], [even] he and his neighbor, to his nearest [lit., *next*] house according to the number of souls, each one according to his appetite [lit., *mouth*] shall you number with reference to the lamb." [Exodus 12:4]

Although the nearly word-for-word translation of this verse is rather cumbersome, the meaning is fairly simple; some households might have 3 or 4 people and an entire lamb might be excessive for that household (meaning that there would be a lot of waste). They are to go next door and participate with that family. There is to be a national bonding of all Israelites and an interdependence. God is expecting that each household completely devour their lamb in its entirety. No part of the lamb was to be left over until the next morning.

**Application:** In my early lifetime, the holidays of Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter were almost universally celebrated in the United States. This was both a national and spiritual unity. Quite a number of people went to church on Christmas and/or Easter, even if they did not go to church at any other time in the year. In most churches across the land, the pastors often went out of their way to present the gospel message to their congregation and visitors on those two days.

**Application:** Just as the people of Israel no longer celebrate the Passover, as God originally intended them to (which is fine now, as the Passover Lamb has already come to Israel), so there is less unity in the United States on those holidays. Over the decades, many people have grown up to be hostile towards any sort of celebration which has any sort of relationship to God. That is a very sad thing; but it helps us to understand why there is little hope felt by the American people in today's America (I write these words in

January 2021). Nevertheless, this is something that we ought to expect—spiritual decline will always be accompanied by a decline in hope and optimism.

Exodus 12:4 And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb.

As above, there are practical considerations. Ideally speaking, there would be one lamb sacrificed for all; but, even typically, that could be problematic. The idea of each household taking a lamb and sacrificing it emphasizes the free will on the part of that family. If Aaron simply sacrificed a single lamb, then this is Aaron acting on orders from God; it would not be the obedience of faith of each member of the household (each of whom would partake in the eating of the lamb). Obviously, there is no lamb large enough for it to be eaten by all 2 million people.

Typology and parables never line up perfectly on every single detail. There has to be some practical concerns which are taken into consideration. However, the idea is, the type lines up with so many parallels to its antitype that it is impossible for believers today not to understand that these lambs represent the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins (specifically, for the sins of the people of Israel at this time).

The idea was, Israel was to be so steeped in typology that, when the reality came to pass, they would recognize it. All Israel was to see the Lord and remark (as John did), “Behold, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world!” But, unfortunately, this was not the response of all Israel.

I have no doubt that, during the time of Jesus, several of His disciples understood—at least to some limited degree—how He lined up with some of the rituals which they had been observing from their youth. Certainly, this became more and more clear to the disciples, after the Lord's death on the cross followed by His resurrection.

## **Lessons 148–149: Acts 8:30–35 Psalm 22 Old and New Testament Scriptures**

We have been studying the instructions for the Passover which God gave to Moses and Aaron. God wanted nation Israel to be so steeped in doctrine that, when they saw and/or heard about the Lord, they would be able to see clearly how He lines up with the Scriptures they had studied and how well He matched up with all of the rituals which they participated in or saw performed.

We are going to examine two Old Testament passages, and see how well they synch up with the events of the New Testament.

### **Acts 8:30–35 (a brief exegesis)**



We have a wonderful example of this in Acts 8, where Old Testament Scripture is matched up with the reality of the cross:

There is a man in a chariot reading a passage in Isaiah. He is trying to make sense of it.

Acts 8:30 **And Philip having run up, heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and said, “Do you then understand what you are reading?”**

This suggests that, in the era, some people had access to the written Word of God. Let me suggest that this man is reading aloud the words of Isaiah, and then pausing and pondering what he has just read.

Philip, having been guided by the Holy Spirit, approaches this man. He hears him read the words of Isaiah the prophet, and he asks the man, **“Do you understand what you are reading?”** God wants the Jewish man to connect the Old Testament with the Person and work of Christ Jesus.

Acts 8:31 **And he said, “How indeed could I be able, unless someone will guide me?” And he invited Philip, having come up, to sit with him.**

The Scriptures available to the early church were the Old Testament Scriptures. At least 15 years transpired after the crucifixion before the first New Testament books were written.

There are several reasons why it took 15 years for anyone to record what happened during the ministry of Jesus and after. (1) There is no requirement that anything be written down. While there were, no doubt, records kept of the actions of government (such as, records kept of Pilate’s administration), there was no necessity that, following the Lord’s crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, anything be written down. How many witnesses thought to themselves, *I really need to write this down so that future generations know about Jesus?* Very few, if any (many believers of that generation believed that Jesus would return for them in that generation). Even Luke’s gospel is addressed to a friend or associate, apparently to fill him in on what Luke knew about Jesus. Luke did not record the historical events surrounding Jesus for future generations. (2) The former disciples of Jesus were quite busy at this time, traveling and evangelizing and being persecuted. The letters written by the Apostles were to specific people for specific reasons (for instance, Paul writing to the church of Corinth, concerning some of their actions and teachings). Paul did not think, *I am writing these words both for the church at Corinth and for many generations which will follow.* (3) People often fail to distinguish what, during their lives, is important, and what is not. During this time that I write this, COVID is a very big deal. It is in the news each and every day. 10 years from now, this could be a minor blip from the past or still an important event (depending upon what happens in the future). People who live through a variety of events during their lives often are unable to recognize the historical significance of those events. I can give an outstanding example of this from this year (2021). We have just inaugurated a president who, over a third of the country believes won through fraudulent means. Although this could be the most important story of this decade

for the United States of America, it is downplayed in about 95% of our media (and some tech media will actually censor folks who talk about it).

Back to our narrative:

The man in the chariot seems to recognize the importance of what he is reading, but he also recognizes that he needs the guidance of someone who understands the Scriptures.

Even though this will be some one-on-one teaching, it is the job of the pastor-teacher to take the information in the Scriptures and make it understandable to a group.

Acts 8:32–33 **Now the passage of Scripture that he was reading was this: “He was led as a sheep to slaughter, and as a lamb before the one shearing him is silent, so He does not open His mouth. In His humiliation, justice was taken away from Him. Who will describe His generation? For His life is removed from the earth.”** (Isa. 53:7–8)

Isaiah 53 is the most detailed description of what took place on the cross, with regards to Jesus paying for our sins. Isa. 53 explains the spiritual dimension of the cross; and Psalm 22 prophesies the actual physical events which took place at the crucifixion.

Acts 8:34 **And the eunuch answering said to Philip, “I beseech you, concerning whom does the prophet say this? Concerning himself, or concerning some other?”**

The man in the chariot asks the simple and logical question, “Who is Isaiah talking about here? Is he talking about himself here? What is this passage really about?”

This is why it is necessary in our dispensation to have the position of pastor-teacher. The pastor is the one to communicate the Scriptures to his congregation.

For many years, there has been this popular sentiment that we can somehow just open up the Word of God, read it and then find our own truth there. That is nonsense. The *only* reason why I am able to write commentary is because I had an excellent teacher for about 30 years, and a pretty good teacher after that. These two teachers got me theologically oriented. On top of that, since much of my work occurs in books and passages that they did not teach directly, I do loads of research. For the two book studies which I am currently doing (Exodus and Luke), this is what I do: Prior to writing the first word of commentary, I have viewed over 90 translations for each verse and I have personally translated the passage myself, having exegeted every single word in that passage (whether from the Hebrew or Greek). In fact, I provide 3 original translations in my word-by-word study of these books. **Exodus** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) ([Folder](#)). **Luke** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) ([Folder](#)). While doing this, I write commentary on the chapters that I have exegeted word-by-word. All of this is done *prior* to me writing a single word of commentary for these weekly studies which I send out.

Regarding the first pastor-teacher that I was under, I am still struck, decades later, by R. B. Thieme, Jr.’s teaching. He provided some outstanding work about the Assyrian Crisis

(taken mostly from some passages in Isaiah), the Life of David, and the book of Ephesians. No one could pick up that material and simply read it and study it and understand even a tenth of what Bob Thieme unearthed for those studies (and others; those just quickly come to mind). I do not know any pastors or commentators who, prior to Bob's teaching, came anywhere close to unearthing the information that he did from those examples (and he taught far, far more than just those 3 studies).

Acts 8:35 **And Philip, having opened his mouth and having begun from this Scripture, proclaimed the good news to him—Jesus.** (Berean Literal Bible)

Philip then explains Who Jesus is. Philip talks about what had recently happened: the arrest, crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord (all of which took place about 5 years previous to that day). Then Philip related what just happened to the words of Isaiah. He tells this man that Isaiah is writing about Jesus.

In order to understand Scripture, one requires a teacher. Whereas, it is possible for a math teacher to teach, even if he is only 2 or 3 days ahead of his students; this is *not* possible with the Word of God. A pastor-teacher cannot simply be 3 or 4 verses ahead of the congregation in whatever book he is teaching.

I mentioned Psalm 22, so let's take a look at it (using the Berean Study Bible translation; capitalized).

I will capitalize the pronouns which prophetically speak of Jesus (even though it is David who originally wrote these words).

David, who wrote this psalm, apparently faced great pain and discomfort (but we do not know why). It is not David's precise circumstance which is important here; it is the prophetic nature of this psalm. David actually experience great pain and suffering, and therefore, wrote this psalm. However, there is nothing in Old Testament Scripture which ties this psalm to any specific event in David's life.<sup>31</sup>

## The Parallels Between Psalm 22 and the Crucifixion

### Psalm 22

Psalm 22:1 **My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from saving Me, so far from My words of groaning?**

### New Testament Parallels

We know that there are parallels here between this psalm and Jesus on the cross, as He quotes the first half of this verse in Matt. 27:46. The words *My God* are repeated, because Jesus is speaking to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

<sup>31</sup> I have a guess as to when this happened; but the prophetic nature of this psalm is what is important.

## The Parallels Between Psalm 22 and the Crucifixion

Psalm 22	New Testament Parallels
Psalm 22:2 I cry out by day, O My God, but You do not answer, and by night, but I have no rest.	Jesus was on the cross during the day; but God brought darkness over the land when He paid for our sins. Hence the reference here to both day and night.
Psalm 22:3 Yet You are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.	God the Father is holy; which is why our sins must be dealt with. A holy and righteous God cannot come into contact with our sins.
Psalm 22:4 In You our fathers trusted; they trusted and You delivered them.	The people of Israel trusted in the Revealed God; and God saved them (those who believed in Him). This describes so much of Israel's recorded history.
Psalm 22:5 They cried out to You and were set free; they trusted in You and were not disappointed.	In the past, the people of Israel cried out to God and they were delivered. When they trusted in Him, they were not disappointed.  Are these the thoughts which went through the Lord's mind during the crucifixion?
David, the psalmist, is reasoning through his desperate situation like this: "Believers in the past have trusted in God and He has delivered them. Right now, I am calling upon You and I am trusting in You. Why are You not delivering me?"	
We are able, now, to answer David's question. God needed for David to record this suffering, as prophetic for the Lord's suffering on the cross.	
Psalm 22:6 But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people.	Jesus is the sort of worm which is crushed for its red color to be used in dyes; Jesus is despised by many men.
Psalm 22:7 All who see Me mock Me; they sneer and shake their heads:...	The people mocked the Lord and sneered at Him. Matt. 27:39 And those who passed by heaped abuse on Him, shaking their heads...
Psalm 22:8 ..."He trusts in the LORD, let the LORD deliver Him; let the LORD rescue Him, since He delights in Him."	Matt. 27:43 (Various people standing at the foot of the cross make this comment:) "He trusts in God. Let God deliver Him now if He wants Him. For He said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

## The Parallels Between Psalm 22 and the Crucifixion

Psalm 22	New Testament Parallels
Psalm 22:9 Yet You brought Me out of the womb; You secured Me at My mother's breast.	It was God's plan for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Member of the Trinity to become a man; born into the human race. This is the only way that sin could be imputed to Him.
Psalm 22:10 From birth I was cast upon You; from my mother's womb You have been My God.	God the Son has been devoted to God the Father since birth. He has never been out of fellowship with God the Father.
Psalm 22:11 Be not far from Me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.	God the Son calls upon God the Father to be with Him and to guide Him and to give Him the power necessary (Jesus, in His humanity, did not rely upon His Own Divine Nature).
Psalm 22:12 Many bulls surround Me; strong bulls of Bashan encircle Me.	<p>These bulls describe either Jesus' religious or political opposition.</p> <p>Matt.27:1 When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people conspired against Jesus to put Him to death.</p> <p>Matt. 27:41 In the same way, the chief priests, scribes, and elders mocked Him...</p>
Psalm 22:13 They open their jaws against Me like lions that roar and maul.	<p>Matt. 26:3–4 At that time the chief priests and elders of the people assembled in the courtyard of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and they conspired to arrest Jesus covertly and kill Him.</p> <p>Lions, opening their mouths to roar and maul the Lord, are analogous to those who falsely accused Him and then harmed Him physically prior to the cross (and possibly while He was on the cross). At minimum, they spoke vicious things to the Lord before He was crucified and while He was on the cross.</p>
Psalm 22:14 I am poured out like water, and all My bones are disjointed. My heart is like wax; it melts away within Me.	<p>Luke 22:44 And in His anguish, He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground.</p> <p>Some of the Lord's bone were pulled out of joint. Physically, the Lord was dealt an abundance of pain.</p>

## The Parallels Between Psalm 22 and the Crucifixion

Psalm 22	New Testament Parallels
Psalm 22:15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You lay Me in the dust of death.	<p>John 19:28 After this, knowing that everything had now been accomplished, and to fulfill the Scripture, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."</p> <p>Jesus' mouth should have been extremely dry while on the cross. The fact that He could speak at all could be attributed to His sinless body.</p>
Psalm 22:16 For dogs surround Me; a band of evil men encircles Me; they have pierced My hands and feet.	<p>Luke 23:10–11a Meanwhile, the chief priests and scribes stood there, vehemently accusing Him. And even Herod and his soldiers ridiculed and mocked Him.</p> <p>The Lord was surrounded by hostile gentiles; they drove spikes through his wrists and feet. The religious class lied about Him and slandered Him.</p>
Psalm 22:17a I can count all My bones;...	The position that Jesus was held in on the cross showed his bones.
Psalm 22:17b ...they stare and gloat over Me.	Mark 15:29a And those who passed by heaped abuse on Him, shaking their heads...
Psalm 22:18 They divide My garments among them and cast lots for My clothing.	Mark 15:24 And they crucified Him. They also divided His garments by casting lots to decide what each of them would take from that which belonged to Jesus.
Psalm 22:19 But You, O LORD, be not far off; O My strength, come quickly to help.	<p>As per the doctrine of Kenosis, God the Son depended upon the power of God the Holy Spirit. Jesus did not depend upon the power of His Own Deity.</p> <p>Jesus could have destroyed His enemies from the cross. In fact, He could have come down from the cross. However, He remained there to die for our sins.</p>
Psalm 22:20 Deliver My soul from the sword, My precious life from the power of wild dogs.	Jesus was not to die by the sword; nor was He under the power of the wild dogs (that is, the gentiles). Jesus would be ultimately delivered when He is raised from the dead. God the Father would deliver Him.
Psalm 22:21 Save Me from the mouth of the lion; at the horns of the wild oxen You have answered Me!	The lion and wild oxen here refer to the various political leaders in Jerusalem and Judæa. Although the crucifixion would continue to the Lord's death, He willingly yields up His human spirit.



## The Parallels Between Psalm 22 and the Crucifixion

Psalm 22	New Testament Parallels
Psalm 22:22 I will proclaim Your name to My brothers; I will praise You in the assembly.	<p>Jesus always glorified God the Father during His life and during the crucifixion.</p> <p>Jesus' name would be proclaimed among the Jews continually after His death, burial and resurrection.</p>
Psalm 22:23 You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All descendants of Jacob, honor Him! All offspring of Israel, revere Him!	<p>All Israel was to honor Jesus the Christ. Those who did not exercise faith in Him were not true Israel.</p> <p>The Lord's offspring are those who believed in Him.</p>
Psalm 22:24 For He has not despised or detested the torment of the afflicted. He has not hidden His face from Him, but has attended to His cry for help.	<p>There would be a point in time when the affliction of the cross would be complete. It would be at this point that Jesus said, "It is finished." At that time, God the Father would attend to His Son.</p>
Psalm 22:25 From You comes My praise in the great assembly; before those who fear You I will fulfill My vows.	<p>God the Father will approve of God the Son. Jesus had promises, from eternity past, to pay for our sins.</p>
Psalm 22:26 The poor will eat and be satisfied; those who seek the LORD will praise Him. May your hearts live forever!	<p>The poor are those who are grace oriented. Eating is parallel to believing. Faith in Christ results in eternal life.</p> <p>We come to Jesus not serving anything.</p>
Psalm 22:27 All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD. All the families of the nations will bow down before Him.	<p>All of the world will turn to Jesus the Christ, the Greater Son of David. As we read elsewhere in Scripture, <i>every knee will bow</i>.</p>

## The Parallels Between Psalm 22 and the Crucifixion

Psalm 22	New Testament Parallels
Psalm 22:28 For dominion belongs to the LORD and He rules over the nations.	Jesus would rule over Jerusalem; and also, over all the world. Jesus is prophesied in the Old Testament as David's Greater Son (meaning that He would rule as His father David ruled).
Psalm 22:29 All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before Him— even those unable to preserve their lives.	All will worship the Lord, including the very rich. We are wealthy because we have believed in Him.  We are unable to save ourselves.  Again, <i>every knee will bow before Him</i> .
Psalm 22:30 Posterity will serve Him; they will declare the Lord to a new generation.	Every new generation will have the opportunity to believe in Him. It is the job of every generation to pass down the gospel message and the teachings of the Word of God to the next generation.
Psalm 22:31 They will come and proclaim His righteousness to a people yet unborn—all that He has done.	The righteousness of Jesus would be proclaimed from that day forward; to all men; throughout the entire history of man. All that Jesus has done will be proclaimed.
See also 1Cor. 5:7 Heb. 3:1 4:14 5:5, 10 8:1 1Peter 1:19.	

### Lesson 150: Exodus 12:1–4

### The Passover and Unlimited Atonement

This is what we have studied so far:

Exodus 12:1–2 Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.

God is preparing Moses both for the final plague, but also setting up a tradition which will be followed for the rest of the Jewish Age.

Exodus 12:3 Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

What is described here is certainly the Passover tradition. There will be some adjustments made for this first Passover which are different from the Passover celebration which would

be followed every year for the next 1500 years. However, at least by the given text, there are surprisingly few.

Exodus 12:4 [And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb.](#)

If there is a small family, then they are to combine themselves with another family nearby. The lamb would be slaughtered and eaten, so there needed to be enough people to eat the entire lamb, as nothing was to be leftover. This is simply a practical consideration.

Even though there is but One Savior; it would have been impossible for one lamb to be shared among 2 million people. So, the distribution would be by household. Each slaughtered lamb would provide deliverance for each household (the exception to this noted above).

The idea about taking a household as a whole is quite apt. It is not unusual for Christian parents to raise Christian children; or for one person in a family to believe in the Lord, and for the others of the family to follow in kind.

Conversely, when a parent is not a believer (or not a mature believer), but has divine establishment norms and standards, raises his children, they may continue with most of these norms and standards, but they will often weaken with each subsequent generation.

Our Lord died for all mankind (see the links below) and it is the desire of God the Father that [all come to a knowledge of the truth](#) (1Tim. 2:4) as well as to [come to a change of mind](#) (2Peter 3:9—the change of mind is directed towards Christ). Jesus Christ paid the penalty for the sins of the world (1John 2:2) and God wants every man to obtain that which was provided for him. Therefore, God does not want there to be any of the lamb to be left over. He desires for the entire lamb to be consumed; which means that every man has consumed the portion designed by God for him. When there is leftover lamb, that means there was another person for whom Christ died who did not personally appropriate salvation for himself.

Ideally speaking, the families of Israel did not want this to be the case. They wanted every member of their family to believe in the Revealed God.

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This is only a small portion of the doctrine of Unlimited Atonement found on the Middletown Bible Church website.

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### **For Whom Did Christ Die? (George Zeller)**

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He died for ALL (1Tim. 2:6 ).  
He died for ALL MEN (Rom. 5:18; 1Tim. 4:10).  
He died for US ALL, for ALL OF US (Isa. 53:6).  
He died for the UNGODLY (Rom. 5:6).

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## For Whom Did Christ Die? (George Zeller)

He died for CHRIST-DENIERS (2Peter 2:1).  
He died for SINNERS (Rom. 5:8).  
He died for EVERY MAN (Heb. 2:9).  
He died for MANY (Matthew 20:28).  
He died for the WORLD (John 6:33,51; John 1:29 and John 3:16).  
He died for the WHOLE WORLD (1 John 2:2).  
He died for the WHOLE NATION of Israel (John 11 :50-51 ).  
He died for the CHURCH (Eph. 5:25).  
He died for His SHEEP (John 10:11 ).  
He died for ME (Gal. 2:20).

From <http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/reformed/4whom.pdf> accessed August 19, 2020.

This is only a small portion of the doctrine of Unlimited Atonement found on the Middletown Bible Church website.

The basic term *atonement*, comes from the Old Testament and it generally means, *to cover over*. It is a reference to sins being temporarily covered over during Old Testament times. However, in the New Testament, this word reflects a more permanent status (our sins are not simply covered over, but completely taken away).

## Definition of Terms Regarding the Atonement (George Zeller)

**The atonement:** For our purposes here we are using this term to refer to the cross-work of Christ in general, with special emphasis upon Christ's substitutionary death for our sins.

**Unlimited atonement** (general atonement, universal atonement): This is the doctrine which says that Christ died for the sins of all men, for all mankind, for every person, for the whole world. However, individuals do not benefit from the death of Christ in a saving way until they come to Christ and believe on Him. God's gift has been purchased, offered and extended to all (1John 5:11), but must be personally received by faith (1John 5:12; John 1:12).

**Limited atonement** (definite atonement, particular atonement, limited redemption): This is the doctrine which says that Christ died only for the elect. He did not die for those who will eventually be in hell (such as Judas or Pharaoh<sup>1</sup>). This is the third point of 5-point Calvinism, the letter "L" in the term TULIP.

**The Elect:** We use this term to refer to the saved of all ages. The term includes any or all of those who will eventually be in heaven and counted among the redeemed (compare Col. 3:12).

**The Non-elect:** We use this term to refer to those who will eventually perish in hell. It refers to those who persist in their unbelief and reject Christ even to the day they die. They are in hell, not because God elected them to damnation, but because **"they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved"** (see 2Thess. 2:10-13). Those who go to heaven have only God to thank; those who go to hell have only

## Definition of Terms Regarding the Atonement (George Zeller)

themselves to blame.

**Extreme Calvinism (Hyper-Calvinism, 5-point Calvinism):** This term...refers to those who believe in a limited atonement, that Christ died only for the elect.

<sup>1</sup> There has been some discussion over the centuries on whether Judas and/or Pharaoh are saved.

From <http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/reformed/4whom.pdf> accessed August 19, 2020.

I used the ESV (capitalized) below. No doubt that Dano was influenced by R. B. Thieme, Jr., as Dano was an assistant pastor at his church. I did some editing.

## The Doctrine of Unlimited Atonement (Buddy Dano/Kukis)

1. Definition: The judgment of Christ on the cross as a substitute for every sin committed in human history by every member of the human race. But just because the penalty is paid for doesn't mean they go to heaven. They still don't have eternal life and they still lack perfect righteousness. But sin is actually and truly paid for; that is the emphasis in unlimited atonement. The work of Christ made salvation available to all but did not actually assure the salvation of anyone. Only those who express faith alone in Christ alone are eternally saved.
2. As R. B. Thieme, Jr. expressed it, *God is a gentleman; He does not force you to believe in Him*. We choose to trust in Jesus Christ, and God saves us. John 3:16, 36
3. Historical background to this doctrine. There are people who believe in something called limited atonement, sometimes called limited redemption. It means that Christ's death was only for the elect and that Christ did not die for the unbeliever. This is part of a system known as Calvinism today. However, John Calvin did not hold to this. The concept of limited atonement was developed by Calvin's successors, specifically by Beza who systematized Calvin's theology after his death. Around 1610 there was a man by the name of Jacob Arminius who taught theology in Holland and he could not go along with extreme Calvinism because there wasn't enough room there for individual volition, responsibility and freedom of choice in relation to salvation. So he began to teach a theological system which emphasized human responsibility and free will. His followers set forth five points which emphasized that every human being has the ability live a perfect life, to please God by his works, that election was conditional on what man did, that Christ died for everyone—unlimited atonement. They believed that grace was resistible and that salvation could be lost. They did not believe in eternal security.
4. In response to their five theological points, the Calvinists reacted with their five points that have come to be known through the acronym TULIP. T = total depravity, total inability to be saved; U = unconditional election; L = limited atonement; I = irresistible grace; P = perseverance of the saints (which is nothing more than *Lordship* salvation). Perseverance of the saints simply means that a

## The Doctrine of Unlimited Atonement (Buddy Dano/Kukis)

person who believes in Jesus then goes on to live at least the minimum godly life (obviously, it is never clear as to what this minimum life might be).

5. The problems with 5 point Calvinism:

- 1) So that no one misunderstands, this bastardization of Calvin's teaching is not Biblically accurate (I am accepting the history presented herein by Dano).
- 2) This approach to salvation, known to some as hyper-Calvinism, removes our free will from the picture entirely. This makes us nothing more than chess pieces being moved around the chessboard; chess pieces who think they have some sort of free will, but, in truth, do not.
- 3) This would mean that every free will decision that we make, for good or for bad, is meaningless. We are just doing what God has set forth for us to do.<sup>1</sup>
- 4) This approach also assumes that, if a person does not persevere to the end, then it is likely that he was not saved in the first place. Given that no Christian is sinless, given that all Christians fail—what exactly are the minimum requirements required by this theology? Maybe I am better on Tuesday than I was on Monday, but suffer a setback on Wednesday. Does that mean that I was not really saved in the first place? Or do we somehow have to look at Thursday and Friday to make the final determination? Can I lose my salvation on Saturday but then regain it on Sunday through better obedience? If that is the case, how can I exhibit better obedience on the day I am not saved as opposed to, on a day when I am saved? Do you see how the idea of losing your salvation is illogical, even by simple human logic?
- 5) The key is, we are saved and we are kept saved by Jesus Christ. We might be the worst Christians in the world and God might remove us from this life by the sin unto death. However, even under those circumstances, we remain saved. That is because our salvation depends upon Jesus Christ and not upon our post-salvation behavior.
- 6) The correct understanding is this: we have free will, just as every angel has free will. God allows us to choose; He allows us a legitimate set of choices in our lives, including the choice to believe in His Son. However, once this choice has been made, God then freezes that choice and protects that choice. He does not allow us, after salvation, to be plucked out of His hand.
- 7) Nevertheless, we retain free will after salvation. So, even though we cannot be plucked from God's hand (nor can we *jump out* of God's hand), we can, post-salvation, make decisions to sin and to go against God. After salvation, we are given the choice to exit fellowship with God (by committing a sin) and we are given the option of returning to fellowship via 1John 1:9 (by naming our sins to God). The very fact of 1John 1:9 (**If we acknowledge our sins, then God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**) means that man sins after



## The Doctrine of Unlimited Atonement (Buddy Dano/Kukis)

- salvation.
- 8) The very fact that men suffer the sin unto death suggests that, even as believers, we can stray far from God.
  6. The true foundation of our salvation is what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross:
    - 1) 1 Peter 2:24 emphasizes the reality of Christ's substitution. **He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed.** (Isaiah 53:5b)
    - 2) Romans 5:7–8 makes clear the substitutionary nature of Jesus dying for us: **For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died [as a substitute] for us.** The Greek preposition *hupér* (ὑπέρ) [pronounced *hoop-AIR*] + the genitive means *as a substitute for*.
    - 3) 1Corinthians 11:23–24 **For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me."** The Eucharist memorializes what the Lord did for us.
    - 4) 2Corinthians 5:21 **For our sake He [God] made Him [Jesus] to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him [Jesus] we might become the righteousness of God.** This passage gives us the clear option that we have in life.
  7. There are several key passages in Scripture that Christ clearly state that Christ died for all:
    - 1) John 3:16 **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that **whoever** believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.**
    - 2) Acts 10:43 **To Him all the prophets bear witness that **everyone who believes** in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name."** The subjunctive mood is used here. Therefore, this is for anyone who *might* believe; salvation is open to all.
    - 3) 1Timothy 2:5–6 **For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself as **a ransom for all**, which is the testimony given at the proper time.**
    - 4) 1Timothy 4:10 **For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, **Who is the Savior of all people**, especially of those who believe.** Notice, believers are a sub-category of all men.
    - 5) 2Corinthians 5:14–15 **For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that **One has died for all**, therefore all have died; and **He died for all**, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.** So the issue now isn't sin, the issue is whether or not you possess the life of God, eternal life, and the righteousness of God, and that comes at the instant of faith alone in Christ alone.
    - 6) No one can make the claim, "I am simply unelected; Jesus did not die for my sins." We have free will, and we can choose for or against Jesus.

## The Doctrine of Unlimited Atonement (Buddy Dano/Kukis)

- 7) Emphasis is mine in the passages above.
8. God has designed this physical world in which we live, where His sovereignty can coexist with our free will. That is, God is able to remain sovereign over all; and yet, at the same time, we have volition.

<sup>1</sup> In personally considering the notion of free will, I have taken the time to consider my own near-future actions; and I have come to the conclusion, I do not know what I am going to do until I actually do it. Regarding some things, I know I will do one thing rather than another; but on things I am on the fence about and considering—I really don't know what I am going to do until the time comes that I choose to do it (I am not talking about life-changing decisions here, but just normal, day-to-day decisions).

From <http://www.divineviewpoint.com/sane/dbm/setup/1stJohn/1Jno16.htm> and modified considerably.

It appears that this doctrine has been fully covered by others. *Unlimited atonement* means that Jesus died for every person, not just the elect. The sins of every man have been paid for.

## Links to the Doctrine of Unlimited Atonement

A Defense of Unlimited Atonement ([Middletown Bible Church](#))  
Unlimited Atonement ([Wenstrom](#))  
Unlimited Atonement ([Rev. Thomas Tyree, Jr.](#))  
Doctrines of Propitiation; Unlimited Atonement ([Divine Viewpoint](#))  
For Whom Did Christ Die? ([Doctrine.org](#))  
Scripture Teaches Unlimited Atonement (mostly [L.S. Chafer](#))  
A Critique of Limited Atonement and the Problem of Double Jeopardy ([Timothy Ministry](#))

Not being too deep into the Christian debate world, I did not realize that this was such a controversial doctrine.

## Lessons 151–152: Exodus 12:1–8

## The Typology of the Passover

Now let's look at these 8 verses all together. This will allow us to better understand the symbols used by God. These symbols—or types—are real things which were used in order to celebrate the Passover; which things looked forward to being fulfilled or supplemented by parallel persons, things or events in the future (which are called antitypes).

Exodus 12:1–4 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, "This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household. And if the household is

too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. (ESV)

To remind you, Moses and the Israelites are in Egypt. 9 plagues have occurred; and God has promised one final judgment. In order to keep from being judged, those who believe in the Revealed God will have to follow His instructions (which involves very specific instructions regarding a Passover lamb). Those who follow these instructions—which are the Passover requirements—will not be touched by the 10<sup>th</sup> and final judgment. Those who do not will lose their firstborn (children and animals).

These instructions are to be followed by the Hebrew people going forward. At the point in time that we are studying, obeying these instructions will protect the Hebrew family from the 10<sup>th</sup> judgment; however, in the future, they will be memorializing the first Passover (and in this observance, be looking forward to the Messiah-Savior; but they do not realize that as this point).

These instructions for the Passover are to be followed for the next 1500 years. It is not clear to me whether the rules for this particular Passover were any different from the ritual which would be practiced for 1500 years; or if the rules for the Egyptian Passover (I am assuming that there was one) were any different. I suspect that, if there were any differences, that they were left out of the text, so that later generations would not be confused by them. For instance, let's say an Egyptian, right after the judgment of darkness, came to a Hebrew family and bestowed upon them silver and gold. The Hebrew father might then tell the Egyptian what to do to prepare for the next plague. However, given the shortness of time, the Egyptian might be required right then to take a lamb for his family and to slaughter it that very night. The same Egyptian family would use the blood on his doorposts and be required to eat the entire lamb (or to burn what remains). Whether or not this was an option made available to Egyptian families is unknown to us. I am only suggesting this as a possibility; we have no Scriptural evidence for Egyptians following the instructions of the Passover. Absence of this information does not mean that it did not happen. Many things happened in history which is not recorded in the Word of God.

We have discussed the timing of this warning too many times already; but the Hebrew people would have had to have known about this pending judgment at least before the 9<sup>th</sup> plague and perhaps before the 8<sup>th</sup> one. You may recall that Israel was not affected by the 8<sup>th</sup> judgment; but it was partially affected by the 9<sup>th</sup> judgment (their house lamps worked, which was not the case for the Egyptians during the darkness).

Given that these plagues are progressively applied to Egypt, Moses is not going to tell the people of Egypt what to do about the 10<sup>th</sup> plague if they have not been under the 9<sup>th</sup> plague first. My point being is, if there was an Egyptian Passover (no idea how many would have obeyed the instructions), it would be impossible for them to be the exact same as those given to the Hebrew people—the timing would make that impossible. Therefore, logically,

there may have been a way out offered up to a few Egyptian households; but their way out would have been similar but not the same as that given to the sons of Jacob.<sup>32</sup>

Exodus 12:5a **Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year.**

This lamb represents Jesus Christ, Who would die for our sins (the people of Israel did not understand this). The people understood that an innocent lamb slaughtered would deliver their family. They did not know what the lamb meant, with regards to future events.

A year old male is a lamb who is no longer a kid, but still a young lamb, arguably in the prime of its life. That the lamb is unblemished—something called for many times in Scripture—represents the fact that the Lord did not sin (nor was sin imputed to Him at birth nor did He have a sin nature).

The lamb is a type of Christ, but the sons of Israel would not have understood this. When the antitype (Jesus) appears, then the studious, ideally speaking, can look back at the type (the lamb) and see the many parallels. But the first-century Israelites, who were intimately associated with so many types, did not fully appreciate what those things stood for (some did and some did not). These things were designed to be more fully understood *after* the 1<sup>st</sup> advent of our Lord. What I mean to say is, you and I, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, have a better understanding of these things, given our vantage point. The writer of the book of Hebrews, years after the crucifixion of our Lord, began to put all of these things together, matching up the types to their antitypes throughout that book.

What did the 15<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Israelites understand? The Hebrew people knew that God was their Savior. They understood that these animal sacrifices were a substitute for them, where their sins were placed upon the animal and the animal was sacrificed (this goes back all the way to Adam and the woman).

The Hebrew people completed the ritual by eating the lamb which had been sacrificed, accepting by faith the instructions delivered to them from Moses (and, ultimately, from their God). Offering up a substitutionary sacrifice was required of every Israelite. Because this was never fully propitious, Hebrew believers offered up innocent animals in their stead for their entire lives. Their faith in the God of these sacrifices (or, the God requiring these sacrifices) was what was necessary for their salvation.

Exodus 12:5b **You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.**

Various animals were used in the various sacrifices made by Israelites. However, this ceremony, the Passover, always required a year old male from the sheep or goats. The True Savor of Israel would be taken from the people of Israel.

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<sup>32</sup> An Egyptian Passover is only theoretical. I believe that this was an option given to many Egyptian families; and that few, if any, followed it.

For this reason, Jesus is called the Lamb Who takes away the sins of the world. The lamb is a *type* of Jesus. John 1:29 ([John the Herald] saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world!"—ESV; capitalized)

Exodus 12:5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

The lamb without defect is certainly a picture of Jesus Christ, perfect in His humanity (Heb. 9:14 2Cor. 5:21 1Peter 1:19). Believers are not judged for their sins; Jesus Christ, the perfect Lamb of God, is judged in our stead (John 1:29 1Cor. 5:7b). Just as the lamb of the Passover acted as a substitute for the people (the death of the lamb preserved their family), Jesus acted as our substitute on the cross.

Jesus Christ did not begin His formal ministry until He was an adult at about the age of 30. We know very little of His life as a child except that He grew by means of God's Word as a youth (and, therefore, as a young man) (Luke 2:46–49, 52). Therefore, a lamb was chosen in young adulthood to represent the Lord.

The lamb is to be without blemish, like the Lamb of God. The lamb was to be a male in the prime of its life—also a parallel to Jesus Christ. The younger the lamb, the easier it would be to find one which did not have any scarring, injury or blemish of any kind (the unblemished lamb represented the sinlessness of the Lord).

Exodus 12:6a Now you shall keep it [the Passover lamb] until the fourteenth day of the same month.

Now, throughout this weekly study, I use the NKJV translation, which is normally an excellent translation. There are some minor problems in the translation for this verse. My own translation:

Exodus 12:6a It [the lamb] is for you to watch until the 14<sup>th</sup> day of this month. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The first phrase of this verse is not easy to give a good word-for-word English rendering to. It begins with a conjunction and the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular, Qal perfect of the absolute status quo verb *hâyâh* (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*] and it means *to be, to become, to come to pass*. This is followed by the *lâmed* preposition (with the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix), which means *to, for, in regard to, near, into, with reference to you [all]*. So far, this gives us: *and it [the male lamb] shall be for you* (or to you).

Then we have again the *lâmed* preposition followed by the Hebrew word: *mish<sup>ê</sup>mereth* (מִשְׁמֶרֶת) [pronounced *mish<sup>ê</sup>-MEH-reth*] and it means *watch, custody, sentry, observance, guard, charge*. We end up translating this preposition and noun like an English verbal infinitive: *to watch, to guard, to observe*. A more literal translation might be, *for watching, for observation*.

Notice that the lamb was not obtained and killed immediately. The lamb is chosen on the 10<sup>th</sup> (Exodus 12:3) and then slaughtered on the 14<sup>th</sup> (Exodus 12:6). There will be time allowed for the observation of the lamb. The lamb is chosen, but not immediately slaughtered. This, of course, is another parallel between the Passover lamb and the Lord. The Jewish people would observe Jesus throughout His public ministry. It was important for them to hear Him correctly teach the Scriptures of God; it was important for them to recognize that He was a man without sin. Jesus, in His public ministry, had to establish many things which identified Him with the Old Testament types.

Therefore, the lamb to be slaughtered remains in the house for 3–4 days prior to its slaughter was analogous to Jesus Christ coming to earth and living among us, His public ministry lasting approximately 3–4 years. The lamb was observed and tested (the Israelites kept it in the house for three days and were to be certain that it had no defects; the three days gave them more than enough time within which to carefully check the animal out). Jesus Christ was similarly studied during his three (or four) years of His public ministry for defect (Luke 11:53–54 John 8:46 18:38—He was found to have no defect).

Exodus 12:6b **Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight** [lit., *between (or in the midst of) the evenings*].

I thought that *between the evenings* was a simple Hebrew phrase; however, there are, apparently, a number of different interpretations than this. There are a number of translations which purport to translate this phrase literally, which offer up these translations: *at evening, in (on) the evening; at twilight; toward evening, within the (that) evening, just before dark, at dusk, at twilight, in the afternoon [before dark], at sunset, during sunset*.

Since the destroyer was going to come through and kill the first-born at midnight (Exodus 12:29) and because the Israelites were not to go outside until morning (Exodus 12:22), this means that between the two evenings is probably immediately at sunset. This would have allowed time for the lamb to be slaughtered, offered up and then eaten before midnight.

Compare Exodus 16:12, where they have a meal of quail *between the two evenings*; yet in the morning they go out and gather manna; this would be dinner and breakfast. See also Num. 28:4 where *morning* and *between the two evenings* are in contrast with one another.

Exodus 12:6b **Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight** [lit., *between (or in the midst of) the evenings*].

The entire congregation of Israel will slaughter the lamb (recall that there will be a lamb for each household).

The chilling portion of this verse is this: **then shall the entire assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it**. The God of Israel, who loved and chose Israel from the foundation of the world, came to Israel in the flesh, as a man, and Israel would rise up as a whole and



kill Him. Do not mistake this statement for anti-Semitism. God chose Israel in eternity past, knowing full well that they would deny the Lord Who bought them, and slay Him when He came to them offering them the kingdom. Furthermore, the Roman rulers in Jerusalem were fully on board with this execution. Despite Pilate's initial reticence, he still went through with the Lord's execution (we will study that in detail off in the future in the book of Luke). The actual crucifixion was performed by the Romans, as the Jews of that era lacked the authority to execute anyone.

In any case, this Lamb (Jesus Christ) must be slain (Matt. 16:21–23 Heb. 9:22). When the lamb is slain, that is Jesus Christ dying on the cross on our behalf, paying the penalty for our sins (Heb. 10:10–14 1John 1:7).

Exodus 12 not only sets up directions for this and every future Passover, but v. 6 also is typical of the Jews rising up to kill their own Lord Who comes to them. For many, many Passovers, Jews will kill a lamb for their household; and around A.D. 30, they will kill the True Passover Lamb (John 1:29 1Cor. 5:7 Isa. 53:7), sent to them by God. Jesus is the True Passover Lamb Who will die for their sins. The millions of lambs who were killed at Passover were types of the True Lamb of God. Those animals did not take away their sin; they were typical of the One Who would.

Exodus 12:6 **Now you shall keep it [the Passover lamb] until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.**

The people of Israel choose their Passover lamb, a lamb without spot or blemish. Each household will observe this lamb; then the entire assembly of Israel will rise up and kill it at twilight (at sundown).

The true Lamb of God is Jesus Christ. He is born without a sin nature and He never committed a personal sin. Israel observed Jesus in His public ministry; and, in the end, the people rose up to kill Him, pressuring the Romans to execute Him on the cross. Jews and Gentiles both had a hand in the execution of Jesus Christ, because **all have sinned and come short of the glory of God**. Jesus Christ paid the price for the sins of both Jews and Gentiles (including those who had a hand in putting Him up on the cross).

Exodus 12:7a **And they shall take some of the blood...**

The blood of the lamb is typical of the spiritual death of the Lord. The blood represents the spiritual death of Jesus Christ (meaning, our atonement is the result of God the Father judging the Son of Man for our sins while He was on the cross). This is His payment for our sins where our sins are poured out upon Him and He endures the punishment for them.

The judgment for our sins had to fall upon the humanity of Jesus Christ; only He is able to bear our sins in His humanity.

The actual extreme physical pain associated with crucifixion is unrelated to payment for our sins. The stripes, the beatings, and the insults are all unrelated to the payment for our sins. These things were *illustrative* of an innocent man taking upon Himself the guilt of the world; but not a single sin was expiated because of that physical pain and suffering. Jesus paid for our sins by taking on in His Own body on the cross the punishment for our sins, which punishment was meted out by God the Father. The shame and horror the punishment for those sins being placed upon the Son was far greater than any of the suffering which preceded the Lord's spiritual death.

What we are studying here is *typology*; where there are persons, things and incidents in the Old Testament (called *types*) which have parallels to persons, things, and acts in the New (called *antitypes*). The lamb to be slain for the Passover is a type; Jesus, on the cross, dying for our sins is the antitype.

The concept of typology receives a few brief mentions in the New Testament; but it has been further explored and dramatically developed by several theologians long after the NT was written. In fact, most of the theological work done on typology has occurred during and after the Reformation.

It occurs to me that, the study of Christian theology over that past 2100 years would be fascinating. What was happening in the minds of those most devoted to the Word would have been very different in the 300's if compared to that in the 1600's if compared to that in the 1800's? Church history and Christian trends have been studied; but what Bible doctrines came out each era? How many theological arguments allowed certain doctrines to be honed in on?

Don't misunderstand that statement—the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith have remained unchanged from the beginning. However, there have been, throughout human history, various doctrines which have been developed considerably. Let me put this in a different way: there are doctrines from the Word of God which you are potentially able to understand more thoroughly than even Paul did.

Exodus 12:7b [...and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel...](#)

Around the door is the door frame, and each household was to apply some of this blood to the sides and top of the door frame. This represents the blood of our LORD where the nails were driven (in His wrists) and His head upon which the crown of thorns was placed. The blood from the top of the door frame would also drip and land upon the threshold, which represents the nails driven into our LORD's feet.



The blood dripping from above on the

upper beam and the blood on the two door posts looks like a cross with our Lord's hands and feet nailed and bleeding, and the blood from his head due to the beatings and the crown of thorns.

**Painting Blood on the Doorframe** (a graphic); from [Westview Christian Reformed Church](#); accessed March 9, 2021.

The blood above the door would have dripped down on the door sill. The blood on the doorway would match the blood on the Lord's hands, head and feet. The sacrificial lamb, shown at the foot of the door of the graphic, represents Jesus (or is typical of Jesus). The blood from that lamb was placed upon the top and sides of the door.

All of this is representative of Jesus dying for our sins. However, the actual blood and the specific wounds cited did not take away our sins. The sacrifice of the perfect and innocent lamb was tied to the blood put around the entry door; which directly correlates with Jesus on the cross. However, the actual payment for our sins was not seen by anyone other than God the Father. This is because God made the region around the cross pitch black while Jesus paid for our sins.

It appears that no one could see the Lord, but Psalm 22 seems to indicate that He screamed from the cross during the judgment for our sins.

Exodus 12:7b *...and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel...*

The word *to put, to place* is in the Qal perfect; placing the blood on the door post is a completed action which insures salvation forever (the act of placing the blood there does not; the faith in Y<sup>e</sup>howah is our means to attain salvation; but the basis for our salvation is the cross).

*Eating* is often used as a metaphor for obtaining salvation and it can be expanded into a metaphor for spiritual growth. Eating is a non-meritorious action which everyone is capable of—immoral, amoral, moral, sinful, self-righteous, and men of all descriptions eat—and eating the sacrificial lamb is analogous to believing in Jesus Christ. Eating is something which can be done without attributing any merit to the eater; and believing is something that can be done without attributing any merit to the believer.

When a person eats food, there are dozens of general functions which take place in the body. The body is able to take the various nutrients and send these nutrients to where they are all needed. When I eat steak, salad, and a vegetable for dinner, my body somehow figures that this set of nutrients needs to go to my brain; this other set of nutrients needs to be sent to my muscles, and a portion of what I eat is sent out from the body as waste. When all of this takes place, I am not guiding these nutrients to where they need to go. I cannot take any credit for them going where they go. That is the body that I was born with. This is the body designed by God. The distribution of nutrients is a nonmeritorious function. Another way of putting it is, this is a grace function from God. Just as I choose to eat some applesauce—without being able to claim any merit for that

or where it ends up going to—so is my faith nonmeritorious. My volition directs my faith towards what I choose to direct it towards; but the actual faith is nonmeritorious and the end results of having faith are nonmeritorious.

However, once this activity of faith in Christ is begun (right at our second birth) it must be continued in order to experience spiritual growth. We, as newborn Christians must continue to feed upon the word—an activity which is also lacking in personal merit—and through eating His Word we grow. We do not deserve the opportunity to grow spiritually; we do not deserve the apparatus which makes it possible for us to grow spiritually (which R. B. Thieme, Jr. called the *grace apparatus for perception*, *GAP* for short). Just as salvation is available to any person who desires a relationship with God; so spiritual growth is available to any believer who desires a growing fellowship with God.

God has given protection to those who have taken refuge in His blood, who partake of spiritual food, whether it be by believing in Him initially or believing in His Word as time goes by. To make this clear, no spiritual growth occurs apart from spiritual food.

Exodus 12:7c ...of the houses where they eat it.

Wherever the family would gather to eat the lamb, the entry door would be painted with blood on the frame, as the graphic above (this is just for the first Passover). The blood represents the Lord dying for our sins (1Cor. 5:7). Eating the lamb represents exercising faith in Jesus Christ (John 6:54). So the entire Passover ritual is typical of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Exodus 12:7 And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel [or, top of the door jam] of the houses where they eat it.

This was to be done to each home where they fed upon the slaughtered lamb (or goat). God would not kill their firstborn if He saw the blood on the doorposts of the homes.

Each home would be covered by the blood. The avenging angel would see the blood and pass over that house. The blood is a symbol; it symbolizes the spiritual death of the Lord.

Exodus 12:8a Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire,...

They eat the flesh of the Passover lamb in the night. Eating the lamb represents having faith in Jesus Christ (the Hebrew people who participated in this event were exercising faith in their God). That this takes place at night parallels the Lord receiving the penalty for our sins in thick darkness.

Prior to salvation, we are in spiritual darkness. God reveals salvation to us either directly through His Word or by the witness of a believer.

The roasting with fire is typical of judgement by God of Jesus Christ. Throughout the Scriptures, fire represents the judgment of God.

That eating the flesh of the lamb represents faith in Jesus Christ; is a parallel which the Lord used several times throughout His ministry. The idea is, everyone is able to eat; so eating the lamb is not a matter of merit but a matter of choice. The house offering up a lamb is choosing to believe the Revealed God. Therefore, the household partakes of the lamb.

Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." (John 6:47–51; ESV; capitalized) We have not yet studied the manna from heaven, but that is coming up later in the book of Exodus. But Jesus, in that passage, relates the type (the bread coming down from heaven) to the antitype (Who is Jesus, the Bread of Life, coming down from heaven).

Then, when the Jews appeared to be confused over these words, Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on Me, he also will live because of Me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever." (John 6:53b–58; ESV; capitalized)

Jesus is not suggesting that all who believe in Him engage in some weird cannibalism, but simply that eating is analogous to faith. Eating His flesh and drinking His blood is typical language, indicating that we place our faith in Him for salvation. We believe that His sacrifice for our sins is efficacious. Although Jesus would explain to His disciples during His incarnation that He would go to the cross for our sins, it appears as if John was the only one of the 12 who had some understanding of what Jesus said (John was the only man of the disciples to observe the crucifixion).

Exodus 12:8b ...with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

The unleavened bread speaks of no intermingling of yeast, which is analogous of false doctrine being added to the pure gospel. When it comes to false doctrine, the yeast is primarily works—trusting in ourselves to provide salvation. The bitter herbs speak of the repugnance of our sins to Jesus Christ and how difficult it was for God the Father to judge His Son for our sins.

The preposition which accompanies *bitter herbs* is 'al (עַל) [pronounced *gah*] and it means *upon, over, against, beside*. The unleavened bread is to be eaten *along side, beside* the bitter herbs. This is symbolic. The unleavened bread speaks of the humanity of our Lord and the bitter herbs speak of the judgment of Jesus Christ.

There are parallel tracks here for the things which we are studying. Old Testament saints read these words and they think one thing; New Testament believers read these things, and understand them to mean something else. The Old Testament believer is not aware of typology; they do not know, when they partake of the lamb, that represents having faith in Jesus Christ. However, the New Testament should be able to take these things in the Old Testament (true historical events) and match them with Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for our sins.

Exodus 12:8b ...with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

In the context of Exodus, the Hebrew people ate unleavened bread, because this took place the night before they would be asked to leave Egypt. They will not have time to bake yeast bread to take with them. They had to gather whatever belongings that they could carry and leave immediately. They could not wait for the bread to rise (people who have made bread understand this; if you have only purchased bread, you might not fully appreciate that making bread is a process which takes time). In any case, for the Passover, eating unleavened bread has the Hebrew person looking backwards toward his ancestors, who suddenly had to leave Egypt on a moment's notice.

The bitter herbs, which are eaten along side the unleavened bread, suggests the bitter treatment received by the Hebrew people from the hand of the Egyptians (Exodus 1:14).

We understand the unleavened bread in a different way as Church Age students of the Old Testament. The unleavened bread represents bread which has not been corrupted with leaven (yeast). The unleavened bread *represents* the gospel as being undiluted and pure. It represents truth which has not been corrupted or compromised. Nothing has been added to it.

To us today, the bitter herbs indicate the repugnancy of Jesus taking our sins upon Him. These bitter herbs represent the sins which are judged. Association with our sins would be bitter for the Lord. Although Jesus interacted with sinners; He had no close association with sin Himself until the cross.

## **Lesson 153: Exodus 12:5–10**

## **The Passover Lamb is a Type of Christ**

God has been describing to Moses what the Passover should be. There is the selection of the lamb:

Exodus 12:5–6 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

Herein described appears to be the instructions for right then, at that time, for the final night in Egypt; and that this instructions would carry over into all future Passovers.



The lamb was to be without defect; a young adult male; and the animal was to be watched for a period of 3 to 4 days.

This certainly parallels Jesus, Who is a man without defect, taken from among the people of Israel, Whose public ministry took place over a period of 3 or 4 years.

Just as Israel was to rise up and kill the lamb that they had selected; as future Israel would rise up against Jesus and kill Him.

Exodus 12:7 "Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.

Each family was to take blood from the lamb which they selected and put it on the sides and top of the door frame for their homes. The Angel of God would see the blood on their door frames and He would not enter the home to kill the firstborn (which is what the final judgment of Egypt was going to be).

Exodus 12:8 Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

The fire represents judgment and the blood represents the Lord's spiritual death for our sins. Eating the flesh of the lamb is analogous to exercising faith in Jesus. The unleavened bread represents the truth, not infiltrated with falsehoods (leaven). The bitter herbs represent the bitterness of the Lord coming into contact with our sins. All of the things found here in Exodus 12 are types; and what they represent are antitypes. For example, the bitter herbs are types; the repugnancy of Jesus having to come into contract with our sins is the corresponding antitype.

God continues to give Moses instructions as to how to observe the Passover. Observing this first Passover delivered the firstborn of Israel from death. As previously discussed, this

ceremony may have been applicable to some Egyptian families, who would have followed a modified version of the Passover.



**The Family Passover Meal** (a graphic); from [St-Takla.org](http://St-Takla.org); accessed March 9, 2021.

Exodus 12:9a Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water,...

The lamb was not to be eaten raw. This would be analogous

to admiring Jesus the great teacher, but not accepting that He died for your sins.

Speaking of which, over my lifetime, I have observed a great change of attitude towards Jesus by the unsaved world. When I was first saved in 1972, it was common to run into people who believed that Jesus was a very good man, and wonderful teacher; but that everything beyond that was exaggeration and myth.

More recently, I have come across unbelievers who seem to be angry at Jesus (and certainly angry towards those who believe in Him); yet many of them do not believe that He even existed at all. Whereas, 40 years ago, the starting point of the opposition was, *Jesus may have been a good man and wonderful teacher, but He was not the Unique Son of God*. But today, the starting point for some unbelievers is, *Jesus never existed, He is a myth; and His teachings are shite*. Both views of the Lord's opposition are distortions of the truth; or a watering down of the truth.

Boiling the sacrificial lamb would be analogous to watering down the truth.

Exodus 12:9b [...but roasted in fire—...](#)

In Scripture, fire represents judgment, and Jesus was judged for our sins and He paid the penalty for our sins; therefore, this is what this represents. The roasting of the meat by fire represented judgment of the Lord.

The meat was not to be boiled, as judgment is better illustrated with fire. Some have claimed that the gospel is not to be watered down.

One of the things which modern society has attempted to confuse is the concept of justice. When we have a firm grasp of what righteousness and justice are, then one might extrapolate from those themes to the righteousness and justice of God, which is eternal and perfect. However, if righteousness and justice as they apply to man are dramatically distorted—as is happening today—then it is more difficult to take those steps which take us from human justice to divine justice. Some refuse to hear the gospel, because divine righteousness and justice is so dramatically different from contemporary views of the same.

There is a true sense of justice and righteousness, which would be a part of the laws of divine establishment; but today, those concepts have been warped (as have the other laws of divine establishment).

Exodus 12:9b [...but roasted in fire—...](#)

Fire speaks of judgment, and the Lord was judged for our sins. The gospel is related to judgment—there is no good news unless the Lord was judged in our stead.

The lamb was not to be boiled in water because the gospel is not to be watered down; judgment must be a part of the gospel narrative. All of the lamb is to be roasted in the fire,

because God offered all of His Son in our place. It is the fire that represents judgment—our sins must be judged and paid for in order for us to be forgiven.

The animal cannot be undercooked. In the Passover, completely cooking the animal indicates that Jesus has died for all of our sins. When dying for our sins, there is no one who was left out.

Exodus 12:9c ...its head with its legs and its entrails.

The lamb was roasted whole, with its legs unbroken. They were not broken and removed, just as the Lord was crucified without breaking His legs (something typically done to the victim of a crucifixion at the end of the day to speed up death in a crucifixion).

The innards were removed, cleaned, and then burned up entirely. Jesus took upon Himself our sins in His body on the tree. The innards often represent the sin nature, which each of us have (Jesus did *not* have a sin nature). Our sin nature will be removed from us prior to our coming face to face with the Lord.

We might understand the entrails here to stand for our imputed sins which were judged in the Lord.

The positioning of the lamb's head upon its feet and midst represents the cowered head of our Lord struck with the judgement for our sins.

Jesus offered Himself up whole on the cross. No bones were broken; he was not cut into pieces; He was fully alive and whole when taking upon Himself our sins. **He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed.** (1Peter 2:24; ESV; capitalized)

This Roman cross is one of the few executions which takes a very long time to cause the criminal/victim to die. Generally speaking, executions are completed relatively quickly. One of the most barbaric forms of execution, the guillotine, is also one of the quickest. We do not know how long it takes for the soul to leave the body of a beheaded man, but the guillotine execution is only a matter of a second or two. The use of chemicals or the electric chair generally take 10 or 20 seconds (ideally speaking). Depending upon how the hanging is done, it can take that or more time.

There might be some fanfare which occurs prior to an execution, but the actual execution, of whatever sort, usually takes less than a minute (of course, there are a few cultures who are exceptions to this). In any case, the judgment of the Roman cross required a lengthy period of time, which allowed enough time for God the Father to judge God the Son for our sins.

The judgment of the crucifixion is both actual and representative. Jesus was truly innocent, yet was subject to one of the most lengthy and inhumane deaths known to man. His actual going to the cross as an innocent Man was not efficacious; but this execution represented

what happened to the Lord when on the cross. Our sins were poured out upon Him by God the Father and then judged. Jesus was truly innocent of all sin, yet He took upon Himself the penalty that we all deserve.

This differentiation is found even in Old Testament prophecy:

Isa 53:4 Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

V. 4a represents the Lord's substitutionary death for our sins (bearing our griefs and carrying our sorrows); and v. 4b describes what man observed, that He was an innocent Man put on the cross (we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted).

Isa 53:5 But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed. (ESV; capitalized)

V. 5 is the spiritual death of the Lord, taking upon Himself our sins.

Since the Lord committed no sins, He is clearly innocent of any crimes. He will truly be an innocent Man going to the cross. Nevertheless, all sins and crimes will be imputed to Him while He is on the cross.

Exodus 12:9 Do not eat it [the lamb] raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails.

As the animal in the Passover, Jesus remained intact on the cross.

The lamb cannot be eaten raw. That is, a person cannot simply believe in Jesus, the do-gooder, the great teacher, the great healer etc. We must believe in Jesus, the man judged for our sins on the cross. That is represented by the fire. The person who believes must receive enough gospel information to understand that Jesus is more than just a great Jewish teacher.

God the Holy Spirit takes the information which we are given when we hear the gospel and makes it real to us. That is, we are taken to a point where we know there is a decision for us to make, and we choose whether or not to believe in Jesus Christ. Jesus is revealed to us in whatever gospel message that we are given (which could come from an individual speaking face to face with us; from a pastor or evangelistic giving a message to a group; or from reading the Scriptures). When we mix these words that we hear, with the understanding that God the Holy Spirit has given us, add in a little faith, then we are saved.

There are not multiple ways of salvation. Christians and Old Testament Hebrews are saved by believing in Jesus Christ but Buddhists are *not* saved by following Buddha. Christian Scientists are not saved by following the teachings of Mary Baker Patterson Glover Eddy. We are saved just one way; there is no watered-down (boiled) gospel which

saves us. God the Son must be judged; therefore, the lamb must be roasted by fire as the Old Testament parallel. There are not two ways of doing this. **There is none other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved** (Acts 4:12).

Exodus 12:10a **You shall let none of it remain until morning,...**

These instructions are still about the lamb which was sacrificed.

None of the meat was to remain uneaten. Jesus died for all of our sins. He did not skip over the sins of those who would not believe in Him. No man can ever claim, *God predestined me to hell*. Our eternal state is left up to our volition. If Jesus died for all mankind, then any man may choose to believe in Him.

Exodus 12:10b **...and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire.**

Any meat that could not be eaten that night was to be burned with fire.

The parallel here is, Jesus provides *unlimited atonement*. That is, Jesus died for the sins of believers and unbelievers alike. Even if Charley Brown goes his entire life without believing in Jesus, his sins were still paid for on the cross. This is analogous to the uneaten meat which is burned with fire before daybreak.

When it comes to salvation, we are only required once to believe in Jesus. We do not have to renew our faith or rededicate our lives in order to be re-saved or to somehow continue or complete the salvation process.

As an aside, this is a common malfunction in the Christian life. So many people have gone off to do their own thing, at some point after salvation. However, they hear some emotional message, and some of them come forward, or they rededicate their lives, or something along those lines. The only worthwhile thing which comes out of such a set of actions is, very often, the person involved names his sins to God. "I now know that I have been such a lousy so-and-so, and I have done X, Y and Z." The naming of the sins puts the person back into fellowship.

Going further on this tangent, I want you to consider the illogic behind one *rededicating* his life to Jesus. We all get out of fellowship the same way. We sin. We remain out of fellowship when we do not name our sins to God. However, *we do not lose our salvation*. Let's just, for the sake of argument, say that we lose our salvation, but that we can regain it by rededicating our lives to Jesus. This would mean that, we are saved, and then we lose this salvation. But then, from an unsaved state of being, we rededicate our lives to God. So, somehow, from being saved, things go to crap; but then, somehow, while being in a state of no salvation, we do that which is necessary to regain our salvation. At a point where we have all of the divine operating assets, we screw things up so much that we lose our salvation. But then, at a very emotional point of our lives when we are no longer saved, we somehow do something that puts us back on the salvation train. All of that is illogical and it suggests that there is human effort involved in regaining salvation (since we

go from an unsaved state to a saved state often because we are emotionally engaged). The original state of salvation just wasn't enough; but, because we felt great emotions, that was enough to get us back into this state of salvation. The point I am trying to make is, this is an illogical point of view which seems to add emotion and human effort into the (second) salvation process.

The correct view is, *once saved, always saved*. We may get out of fellowship and we may get out of fellowship for an extended period of time; but we always have the door to get us back into fellowship—we name our sins to God. It might be 10 seconds after getting out of fellowship or 10 years after getting out of fellowship. However, everything involved is God's grace. The ability to get back into fellowship is completely God's grace. We simply make the choice.

This does not mean that you cannot be emotionally involved. Sometimes, when a person is out of fellowship for an extended period of time, the pain of divine discipline takes that person to a sad or emotional frame of mind. We are forgiven our sins when we name them, no matter what our emotional state is. Whatever emotion that we are feeling does not add nor does it detract from being restored to fellowship.

#### **Lesson 154: Exodus 12:, 5–8, 10–11      Those participating in the Passover Meal**

We are studying the Passover generally; and the disposition of the Passover lamb and the meal specifically. In this chapter, God is giving instructions to Moses.

A review of Exodus 12:3, 5–8:

Exodus 12:3 “Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household.

A balance is struck between what is practical (a lamb for each household) and what would be typical (a lamb for the entire population of Israel).

Exodus 12:5–6 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

The lamb represents Jesus, without sin, as a young adult. Just as Israel would observe Jesus for 3 or 4 years, so the families would observe their lamb for 3 or 4 days.

Exodus 12:7–8 "Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. ESV (capitalized)



Without the blood, there is no remission of sin. The blood represents the spiritual death of our Lord. Roasting the lamb with fire represents judgment; eating the lamb represents faith in Christ.

Exodus 12:10 You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire.

No part of the lamb was to remain in the morning. It was to be fully ingested or burnt up with the fire. Eating the meat represents placing one's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as He has been revealed to you at gospel hearing.

The parallel is, Jesus Christ died for everyone's sins; no one was left out of this option. Once our sins have been paid for, it is a done deal. There are no sins for which Jesus did not die; Jesus never returns to the cross. No more animal sacrifices need to be offered (as the antitype supplants the type<sup>33</sup>).

We place our trust in the entire Person of Jesus Christ, just as the households in Goshen ate the entire animal. God the Son paid the full penalty for the sins of the world. Jesus did not just die for a few sins, nor did He die for most of our sins, so that if we keep sinning, we might lose our salvation. His death for our sins was complete and absolute. He does not have to return to the cross to die again for our faults; there is no other savior who will come along later.

Note that every little thing that they did was analogous to the salvation that we have presented from the retrospection of the cross. The gospel of the Hebrew people looked forward to the cross.

What if they did not fully comprehend it? In Old Testament times, God the Holy Spirit made enough of the gospel understandable to them that if they exercised positive volition by believing in Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Israel, they were eternally saved even as we are.

I have often expressed Old Testament salvation as placing faith in the Revealed God (in God as He has revealed Himself). Just as you or I did not have a complete and thorough understanding of the gospel and what Jesus did for us on the cross at the time that we were saved; so it was with Old Testament people who believe in the Revealed God. They knew a smattering about God (what He revealed to them); and they believed that; and they were saved by their faith in Him. As we read in Gen. 15:6 **And he believed the LORD, and He [God] counted it to him [Abraham] as righteousness.** (ESV; capitalized) God revealed Himself to His people, little by little, in shadow form, through the animal sacrifices and the reading of the Old Testament Scriptures. At some point, various people chose to believe in that God. What God reveals to the individual is all that he needs to trust.

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<sup>33</sup> The animal sacrifices (the type) look forward to Jesus dying for our sins on the cross (the antitype). Once Jesus has died for our sins, we no longer look forward to it happening.

Even during the public ministry of Jesus Christ, He told Nicodemus to believe in Him (John 3). Jesus had not gone to the cross yet; Jesus did not reveal to Nicodemus that He would die for Nicodemus' sins and that He is the true Lamb of God. Nicodemus simply had to believe as much as Jesus revealed to him, and that was enough. For nearly all men at salvation, the amount of gospel information which we know is quite limited. Yet God finds us acceptable if we merely believe in His Son (the Revealed God in the Old Testament).

Back to the actual Passover meal:

Exodus 12:11a *And thus you shall eat it:...*

There were a number of specifics required for this first Passover. This is what we have been studying in the immediate context. V. 11 describes the state of the person eating the lamb. Like the rest of the Passover observances, this would look backward to the first Passover and, at the same time, forward to the cross.

Just so there is no misunderstanding, no one participating in the Passover meal understood that the Son of God would come to this earth and die for our sins. The Passover meal looked forward to the cross inasmuch as, it was a type, and the cross what the corresponding antitype.

Exodus 12:11b *...with a belt on your waist,...*

Those celebrating the Passover had to be *ready to go*. Now, the practical aspect here was, for this first Passover, even though no one was going to leave Egypt in the midst of the Passover meal, they would be leaving quickly the next morning. When they were told to leave, they had to do so immediately. Their dress indicated that they were ready to move out when God gave them the word.

The *loins girded* (the expression often used in other translations for v. 11b) means that the person eating the Passover was ready to go. This means the man had on a belt, which held everything together. He was ready to leave.

Exodus 12:11c *...your sandals on your feet,...*

The reason that one wore sandals on his feet are the same reason as given above—the celebrant is ready to go. When God says, “Move out,” then it is time for the believing Hebrew people to move out (we believe this to be all Israelites). There was to be no lollygagging around.

All of this has a New Testament parallel.

Exodus 12:11d *...and your staff in your hand.*

The Hebrew person of that era was to eat the lamb even with a (walking) staff in hand. The staff would help to steady the man when walking over rocks and uneven ground; but

it could be used as a weapon as well. This would be part of the standard issue *uniform/equipment* necessary for all Hebrew males.

Exodus 12:11a-d *And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand.*

When the sons of Israel left Egypt, this describes how they would leave: their loins would be girded (that is, they would have a belt on), they would be wearing sandals, and they would have a staff in hand.

There are two things always in view with these instructions. (1) What God is requiring is going to be a matter of practicality. These things must be done in order to facilitate their quick exit that very next morning. (2) Ideally speaking, there should be some parallels to Jesus dying for our sins and to our salvation; as that is what the Passover represents.

The sons of Israel were to be poised, ready to go. This would be the final plague; and they would be sent forth out of the land because of this final judgment on Egypt. The description above indicates that they are fully dressed and ready to move out. God has not required this of them before.

The New Testament person, immediately after believing in Jesus Christ, is ready to begin the Christian life. This does not mean that he is ready to produce divine good or to do great things for God; but he is ready to grow (and new believers choose for or against this).

Exodus 12:11e *So you shall eat it in haste.*

Eating in haste meant that, the eater would be ready to go. He would finish eating quickly so that he could leave at any moment.

Even the meal, they were to eat in haste—this is with the idea that, at any time, the people of Egypt could come to them and say, “Get out, now! Leave Egypt forever!”

For the believer, we should pursue the Lord early, and express faith in Him as soon as possible. But then, we are made ready to serve Him afterwards. However, we need to spend time learning how God thinks before we act.

The sons of Israel were to leave out from Egypt. The last thing that they were to do was to eat this lamb, which would also protect them from the final judgment brought against Egypt. After that, they would be sent out of Egypt and they had to be ready to move out at a moment's notice.

Once the judgment of the Lord occurred, where the firstborn of all those not covered by the blood died, those people (the Egyptian parents of those who died) would come to the Hebrew people and demand that they leave. There would be no requirement that they go out into the desert-wilderness and then return in a week or two; as God had originally said.

All Egypt—including Pharaoh—would want every Hebrew person gone, out of the country immediately, never to return.

Exodus 12:11f *It is the Lord's Passover.*

The Passover would be a feast celebrated by the Hebrew people from this day forward. It is one of the few feasts still celebrated even to this day, although, quite obviously, it has been considerably modified. Even from this first celebration, it was modified somewhat for the next celebration, a year hence (for instance, they were no longer concerned that the death angel would take their firstborn).

This particular Passover—the first one—is unique in many ways in its celebration. The traditions of this first Passover will continue, but with some minor modifications.

The Passover is God's idea; it is completely His plan. What God revealed, Israel was to execute.

Eating quickly means we are to apprehend Christ as quickly as possible and to make maximum use of our divine operating assets. It is important that we take this salvation when it is offered to us. It was not normal to eat wearing shoes or with a belt cinched around the wearer's waist. Most people in the ancient eastern world took their shoes (actually, sandals) off their feet as they entered into a home (see Exodus 3:5). The loins girded, the sandals on the feet and staff in the hand speak of the Israelite being ready to leave Egypt.

Exodus 12:11 *And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover.*

**This is the manner in which you will eat it** (Illustration by James Tissot); from [Flickr](#); accessed March 10, 2021. The link leads to a description of the book from which this came.

Book Description: *The edition, of which 561 copies were printed, contains 360 mounted colour, black-and-white and duo-tone illustrations in the text and 40*



*plates in three states: sepia-tone, partly hand-coloured, and finished coloured state.*<sup>34</sup>

Tissot did quite a number of illustrations, like this one, to try to show how he envisioned various scenes in the Bible. Here, you can see the sandals, the staffs, the belt around their waists. They are standing and ready to move out. What strikes me is the weird hats they are all wearing.

The impression is, the Jews of today follow the Old Testament; and Christians follow the New Testament. This is very, very wrong. The current traditions and celebrations of the Jews today are *very* different from what we are studying here. The similarity between the meal which we are studying here, and the observation of the Seder today, is that this is a meal and people are eating it. As we study the Old Testament, we cannot but remark as to the dramatic differences between what we read and what Jews practice today.

## Lesson 155: Exodus 12:11–12 11:9

## The Warning of the Tenth Judgment

Animal sacrifices, as a response to God's requirements, date back to when Adam and Eve first sinned. The animal skins that they wore were a covering (kâphar) which came from a slain animal. The animal skins which God put upon them gave them a temporary covering. These sacrifices spoke of Jesus Christ coming and dying on the cross and in this way conveyed the gospel to people who lived historically prior to the cross. This does not mean that a person participated in the Passover and realized, *my salvation is going to be in One who will come and die for my sins*. They understood that this ritual was of God, and that the slaughtering of the lamb protected them from the wrath of God. They understood the substitutionary nature of the animal which died for their sins. When they exercised faith in that particular God—the God Who required these things of them—they were saved. This would be the *Revealed God*; or God as He revealed Himself to man. It appears that the entire Exodus generation was saved.

God passed over these people who believed in the Revealed God through the animal sacrifices. However, the blood of bulls and goats did not remove sin; these sacrifices were a temporary measure, a sign and a promise of things to come. See **The Levitical Offerings** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Salvation always came from believing in the God Who Revealed Himself.

Exodus 12:11 *And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover.*

These who committed to the Passover believed in the God Who demanded that they observe the Passover. This faith was credited to them as righteousness.

There is an interesting parallel passage to Exodus 12:11 in Eph. 6:11–18 *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do*

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<sup>34</sup> From <https://www.flickr.com/photos/phillipmedhurst/42514697735> accessed March 10, 2021.



not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,... (ESV)

The spiritual battle that we play a part in, is far different from the everyday conflicts found in this world.

Exodus 12:12a *'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night,...*

God is making specific promises for that very night. He would pass through all Egypt on that very night.

God presents this information to Moses and Aaron in Exodus 12:1–13. Moses and Aaron repeat this information to the sons of Israel (Exodus 12:21–24) and Moses warns Pharaoh what is about to happen (Exodus 11:4–8). I believe that, as a part of the Hebrew people speaking to the Egyptians, when they asked for silver and gold (Exodus 11:1–3), they also warned many of them about the judgment to come.<sup>35</sup>

It is God who will pass through the land of Egypt that night. He will take the lives of the firstborn. The assumption clearly is that the people of Goshen, the Hebrews, will be under the blood as a matter of free will.

Exodus 12:12b *...and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt,...*

God would strike down every firstborn living in the land of Egypt. There would be exceptions to this—wherever God saw the blood—the blood of the Passover lamb—He would pass over that home.

This warning applied to Egyptians and Hebrews alike. Goshen, where the Hebrew people lived, was a part of Egypt. The Israelite who ignored this requirement would have lost his firstborn as well (it appears that none of them did).

To me, it seems logical that there be an out offered to the Egyptians from this final judgment. We don't know that there was; the Bible is quiet on this subject. Furthermore, the requirements of the Egyptians would have been similar, but not identical, to those

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<sup>35</sup> Exodus 11 and 12 are not presented in chronological order. It is conjecture on my part that the requirements of the Passover were revealed to the Egyptians. I believe that they received a modified set of requirements, similar to the Hebrew Passover.



followed by the Hebrew people (we have already discussed how the timing would not have allowed the Egyptians to do all that the Hebrews did). For that reason, the recording of a different set of requirements—and I am assuming that such requirements were given to some Egyptians—could have been confusing to later generations.

Exodus 12:12c ...both man and beast;...

God would be striking down the firstborn of the animals and the firstborn in human families.

Exodus 12:12a-c 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast;...

God's judgment would be against every person and animal who did not believe Him. Those who owned these animals made the free will choice not to put themselves under the blood. God's judgment was against the gods of Egypt and against the people who believed in them.

Exodus 12:12d '...and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment:...

God would bring judgement against Egypt, and therefore, by definition, against the gods of Egypt.

Each judgment that we have studied was against one or more of the heathen gods of Egypt. We must realize that these gods are made in the image of man or they represent demons (or both). Some religious Egyptians sincerely believed in their gods and believed their gods to be every bit as valid as the God of Israel. People today look at other gods and prophets and believe them to be every bit as valid as the God of the Universe. These gods are made in man's own image and when we worship them, we are worshiping ourselves. The other option is that they represent the demons behind them and when we worship them, we are worshiping these demons.

All religions provide a bloodless gospel of works and of personal human merit. The average person on the street, the average movie or television show, when it comes to having anything to do with the concept of salvation, human merit is always at the forefront. God is weighing our good deeds against our bad deeds and this, to most people, determines our eventual destination, heaven or hell. Even some *Christian* religions, although they mention the cross and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, still reason that if we do not exhibit at least some sort of mediocre morality and try to be good, then what our Lord did on the cross was not quite good enough and that we will burn in hell with the unbelievers. They either believe that if our life does not show that we were saved then we either have lost our salvation or we simply weren't saved in the first place. Our crappy Christian life reveals that fact.

Despite these popular beliefs, we are saved totally apart from any personal merit whatsoever. No matter how awful we are by any standard, if we have believed in Jesus Christ, we are eternally saved. We have expressed those few seconds of positive volition

toward Who and What God really is and have believed in His Son, then by the merit of our Lord and not by any personal merit, we may stand blameless before God.

Since God leaves us alive after salvation, there is the matter of the spiritual life. But, at that point, our salvation has been taken care of and we cannot lose that.

Exodus 12:12e *'...I am the Lord.*

God proclaims Himself; He is God. Throughout Scripture, God presents Himself as a very specific Being.

Each plague from God was an execution of judgement against the gods of Egypt. We have noted some of them. In this context, it should be noted that the firstborn in Egypt were dedicated to their gods. God, by taking their firstborn from them, the child dedicated to the Egyptian gods, has made war against those gods with this plague.

There are no gods which compare to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, yet these are not entirely imaginary beings. God would not declare war against something that did not exist. The gods of Egypt can represent demons; as can anyone's false god or gods. Satan's original sin of arrogant pride included *"I will be like the Most-High."* This is just another facet of the spiritual war in which we find ourselves.

Exodus 12:12d-e *'...and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord.*

It is fascinating that, this night, God would go through Egypt and execute judgment against all of the gods of Egypt. Let me suggest that, at least some of the people of Egypt knew that this final judgment was coming and they knew what that judgment would be. A small number of them may have killed a lamb for the family and painted the blood on their doors. Just to be clear, all of this is speculation. I do not find Moses warning Pharaoh or anyone else of this coming judgment *and* offering him (or the people of his country) a way out. However, I am assuming this, simply because every judgment has been preceded by a warning (although we are also unsure about the warning with the 9<sup>th</sup> plague of darkness).

The Bible does not speak to Egyptians hearing a warning nor does it speak of them following similar requirements delivered to the Hebrew people. Most of them depended up and prayed to the gods of Egypt for protection. They may have even had various god statues upon which they depended. But, God would go through Egypt and, wherever He did not see the blood of the lamb, He killed the firstborn. The blood of the slaughtered lamb was their only protection.

There is the warning given by Moses to Pharaoh, in Exodus 11:4–9. There is also some indication that maybe Moses offered Pharaoh a way out (but that is not completely clear).

Exodus 11:9 *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not listen to you, that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt."* (ESV, capitalized) Although these words

seem to refer to Pharaoh's general response to all of the plagues, these words are recorded right after Moses has warned Pharaoh of the final judgment to come.

I believe that Moses also offered Pharaoh a way out, which was akin to what the Israelites would be doing, but that is not recorded back in Exodus 11 (we are finding out about what Israel must do in Exodus 12; and as previously discussed, Exodus 12 would have logically preceded all or most of Exodus 11 in time).

Exodus 12:12 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord.

Israel lives in Egypt, in the land of Goshen, which is a region set apart for them. The sons of Jacob have only one way of deliverance from this judgment to come, and that is to kill the lamb and put its blood on their door frames.

God is warning everyone in Egypt; but there are far more Egyptians who will be judged that night than Israelites. In fact, there is no indication in Scripture that anyone of Israel was judged or that any Egyptian household was passed over.

In my own mind, some Egyptians were warned and given the opportunity to offer up a lamb for their household, similar to what Israel was doing. God's directions were clear and I have assumed that the people of Egypt had heard them as well (perhaps when the Hebrew people came to them requesting jewelry and payment for their decades of service).

## **Lesson 156: Exodus 12:3–14**

## **The Passover will be a Memorial Celebration**

A Brief Review of Exodus 12:3–12:

God is giving instructions to Moses, which he will, in turn, give to the people of Israel, about observing the Passover.

Exodus 12:3, 5–6 Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

A lamb for each household will be selected, and the people will observe their lamb for several days.

Exodus 12:7–8 "Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it.

When they kill the lamb, blood from it would be painted onto the doorframe. That night, when the Angel of God is expected to come, the Hebrew people would eat that lamb, roasted and with bitter herbs.

Exodus 12:12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD.

God will pass through the land of Egypt (which included Goshen, where the Hebrew people live), and He would kill all of the firstborn of the land.

Exodus 12:13a Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are.

God is speaking to the people of Israel (God first said these things to Moses who then taught these things to the leaders of Israel).

The blood splashed onto the door frame is for His people Israel; this would protect them. The blood on the door frame is typical of Jesus dying for our sins. This indicates to God that our sins have been paid for by the (spiritual) blood of Christ.

The blood is a *sign* or a *distinguishing mark* or a *pledge of assurance*. This is to benefit the people in the house.

Exodus 12:13b And when I see the blood, I will pass over you;...

God will act (or, more properly, not act) when He sees the blood. When God sees the blood, He will pass over that house; He will pass over that family. He will not enter into the house to kill the firstborn.

The blood of the sacrificial lamb is sufficient to protect the occupants of the home from the wrath of God, just as the blood of our slain lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ, is sufficient to protect us from the wrath of God. **By this we will have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Heb. 10:10). The blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin (1John 1:7b).**

**The Lord Checked for Blood on the Doorpost** (a graphic); from [Tonya's Blogspot](#); accessed March 9, 2021.



Exodus 12:13c ...and the plague shall not be on you...

The plague, or judgment, is the killing of the firstborn. God will not kill the firstborn in that house.

The word *plague* is used today to refer to all of the catastrophes which God brought upon the people of Egypt; however, it seems to refer primarily to this last incident. In Exodus 9:14, we have the first use of this particular term when applied to what God did to Egypt: God tells Moses that He is about to send all of His *plagues* into the heart of Pharaoh. It is only used two other times in this context (Exodus 11:1 12:13) and both times for this final sign. However, the verb cognate is found earlier with the inundation of the frogs, so this is not a hard and fast rule.

Exodus 12:13d ...to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

What God would do would wreak havoc on the people of Egypt. All they needed to do was to kill a lamb and apply the blood to their doorframe in order to protect themselves. Any person who did this would be a man who believed the signs which he had already seen; indicating that he had believed in the Revealed God of Israel.

Prior to this point in time, there were animal sacrifices (see Keil and Delitzsch's [Sacrifices in the Old Testament](#)), but they were not as common or as systematic as they will become from this point on (post Mount Sinai). The purpose of the animal sacrifices was to reveal Jesus Christ prior to His death and resurrection. The Mosaic Law, which systematized many things (including animal sacrifices), was a freedom code for a new nation, a document which condemned us for our sins and revealed to us Jesus Christ who would come and pay for our sins. This does not mean that the Hebrew people were able to follow these sacrifices to their logical end in the future. All that was required for a Hebrew man to be saved is faith in their God, the Revealed God.

Ideally speaking, after centuries of offering up innocent animals to God as substitutionary sacrifices, the people of the 1<sup>st</sup> century should have been able to look at Jesus Christ and recognize, "He is the true Lamb of God!" (as John the Herald proclaimed to his followers)

The Law, over the years, was twisted by certain Hebrew scholars into a legalistic maze to be followed to the letter for salvation. They disregarded its true purposes.

The Mosaic Law revealed this to the people of Israel: (1) all sins had to be paid for; (2) no sin could be ignored; (3) there was a substitutionary





aspect to these sacrifices. After a lifetime of animal sacrifices, any Hebrew should have been able to recognize these things in the ministry of Jesus.

**The Angel of Death** (a graphic); from [Covenant Messenger Ministries](#); accessed March 9, 2021. On something like this, I am hesitant to include this graphic, based upon the figure represented by it.

Exodus 12:13 *Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.*

God would execute judgment on the people of Egypt and on the beasts of Egypt. Any household which followed God's instructions would be passed over; any household which ignored God's instructions would suffer the loss of their firstborn (both persons and animals). This applied to Jews and Egyptians alike. Whoever believed God—and all of them had seen evidence of His power—would be exempt from this judgment.

**Blood on the Passover Door** (a graphic); from [Blogspot.com](#); accessed August 22, 2018.

Now God describes a feast that Israel will celebrate every year.

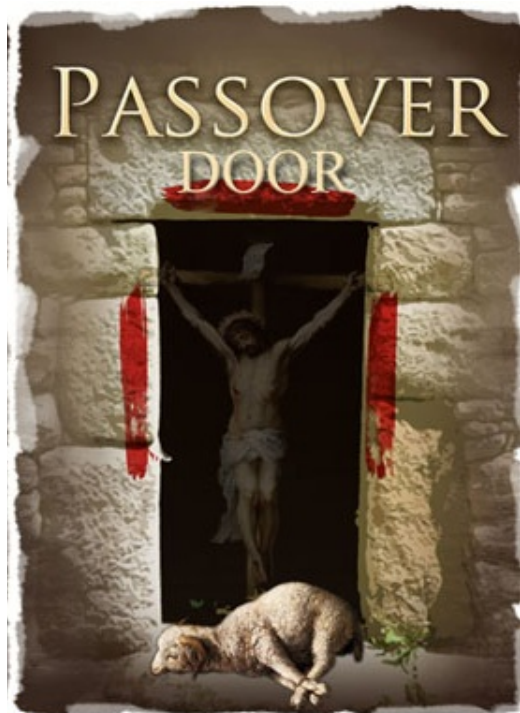
Exodus 12:14a *'So this day shall be to you a memorial;...*

The word for *memorial* is zik<sup>e</sup>rôwn (זִכָּרוֹן) [pronounced *zihk-ROHN*], which means, *a memorial, a reminder, a remembrance*. Strong's #2146 BDB #272. This feast is to help them to remember what they are about to experience.

God is speaking of the Passover, which He has just outlined. At the time, it may have seemed as if God was describing a one-time feast—a solemn feast—but this observance would continue throughout all future generations of Israel.

At this point, God tells the people that this feast will be continued as a memorial.

The day that God is speaking of is the day which is coming up, the day which He has been telling them about in this entire chapter. The dates have already been specified. They choose a lamb in the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month that they are in right now. They keep the lamb until the 14<sup>th</sup>, upon which day they slaughter the lamb. Then they roast the lamb and ate all of it. This is day that God is speaking of.





Exodus 12:14b ‘...and you shall keep it....

Here, the perfect tense is used as a future tense, indicating a certain future event (or, in this case, series of events).

Exodus 12:14c ‘...as a feast to the Lord throughout Your generations....

This feast was designed to celebrate God and it was for the Hebrew people.

My translation has *Your people* (...—a feast to Y<sup>e</sup>howah for *Your people*—...); and this one has *Your generations*. The idea is, this celebration will be for all future generations of the Hebrew people.

This feast—the Passover—will be kept throughout their generations. Even today, there is a subdued observance of the Passover.

Exodus 12:14d *You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.*

Then God gives an additional term which indicates that they will celebrate this feast forever. *Everlasting* is the word *‘ôwlâm* (עוֹלָם) [pronounced *‘ô-LAWM*], which means, *of [in] times past, from ancient time, old, antiquity, long duration, everlasting, eternal, forever, perpetuity*. Strong’s #5769 BDB #761.

This ordinance would be observed for a very long duration by the Hebrew people. The Passover is still celebrated today, but not quite the same way.

Exodus 12:14 ‘So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

I want you to see a couple of other translations:

Owen: This day shall be for you a memorial day and you shall keep (a feast) it. A feast to Yahweh throughout your generations, an ordinance forever—you shall observe it.<sup>36</sup>

The KJV: And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it as a feast by an ordinance forever. *The Amplified Bible* is very similar.

Now the NASB: Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance.

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<sup>36</sup> As always, I have supplied the punctuation, capitalization and have slightly changed the word order for Owens, to make it more readable

Notice the key differences between the various translations are the words *keep* or *observe* as versus *celebrate*. The word is *châgag* (חָגַג) [pronounced *khaw-GAHG*] and it means to celebrate a feast, to attend a festival-gathering. *Strong* points out that by implication it means *giddy*; 1Sam. 30:16 has it used in a very similar way. Even though this is a solemn time and the reasons for the celebration are extremely important and serious, this day is, nevertheless, a celebration. When you have been born-again into God's kingdom, with the rights and privileges thereto, it is a grand celebration. It is found first in the Qal perfect, indicating that this is established forever, and then in the Qal imperfect indicating the continued celebration year after year.

As an unbeliever, my clearest understanding of the Old Testament were all of these fasts which they had all of the time which were of some spiritual significance. Later, as I began to learn more, I found out that the Old Testament is far better known for its feasting and celebrations, rather than it is for fasting. In the Torah, for instance, there are over 40 mentions of the words *feast*, *feasting*; there are no such mentions of *fasting* anywhere in the Torah.

Exodus 12:14 'So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

The Passover also caused the Hebrews in later generations to look backward into time to Egypt and their slavery in Egypt and their miraculous deliverance by Yahweh, the true God. All of this is illustrative of salvation. By looking backward into time, they also look forward to the cross, to Jesus Christ, the lamb of God being slain for our salvation. His blood (that is, His spiritual death) is offered up for our sins, redeeming us from the slave market of sin.

The proper way to celebrate the Passover today is the Eucharist.

So, we have 3 different ways of describing this feast as being perpetual. It would be a memorial (a reminder); it would be held throughout their generations; and the keeping of the feast would be an everlasting ordinance.

God describes how the Passover feast would be kept. It makes sense that, under the circumstances in Egypt, there are some differences from the way that the Passover would be observed in later years and what they would do here at this time. However, apart from the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (vv. 14–20) and the painting of the blood, I do not find any differences.

## Lesson 157: Exodus 12

## The Meaning of the Passover

Prior to this point in time in the book of Exodus, there were animal sacrifices, but they do not appear to have been as common or as systematic as they will become from this point on. The first 7 or 8 chapters of Leviticus will present a very organized system of animal sacrifices; far more than had been offered previously.

What we have been studying is God's instructions for the first Passover.

The Passover Lamb is a Type of Christ

### **The Passover, or the Passover lamb, is a type of Christ**

1. When John the Baptizer saw Jesus coming towards him, John exclaimed, **"Behold, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world!"** (John 1:29b).
2. Paul called Christ our Passover in 1Cor. 5:7b (**Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed**).
3. The Passover lamb is with the family for a few days in part to scrutinize the lamb for any blemishes and also so that they might grow some attachment for the lamb. Jesus Christ was under public scrutiny (some of it hostile) for a period of three or four years during His earthly ministry and He was found to be blameless in all things. The charges brought against the Lord in order to get Him to the cross were phony. Jesus had broken no laws. Luke 11:53–54 John 8:46 18:38 1Peter 1:18–19 2:22 3:18.
4. The lamb, having been tested (inspected for defects), must be slain (Exodus 12:6 Matt. 16:21 John 12:24 Heb. 9:22). The blood of the lamb must be used in order for God to pass over the house. There is no other way for any family of Hebrews (or Egyptians) to be passed over; including invoking a deity of Egypt. The writer of Hebrews warns us that, **...without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins**. (Heb. 9:22b) God sees the blood of the lamb, representing the blood of Jesus Christ, and He does not take the life of their first-born. The great tragedy to the unbeliever—even more than losing one's firstborn—is to spend eternity in hell, burning in judgment, separated from God.
5. As per Scofield, this ritual "refutes universalism" (Exodus 12:7, 12b John 3:36 Acts 4:12). For the Jew (and any Egyptian household that followed suit), applying the blood was proof of their faith in Y<sup>e</sup>howah and God's Word (as spoken by Moses). It was a sign of their faith but not the means of their salvation (Exodus 12:13 Heb. 9:11-14, 22, 28).

## The Passover, or the Passover lamb, is a type of Christ

6. Salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone, as He took upon Himself the punishment for our sins (we thus bypass the judgement due us). This deliverance from judgment is illustrated by the application of the blood around the door, which caused Y<sup>e</sup>howah to pass over their household. God refrained from executing judgement upon those in the house. Exodus 12:13 Heb. 9:13–14 (**For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.**) Heb. 10:10 1John 1:7
7. The blood of the first Passover is put on the top of the door sill (which would drip to the threshold) and on both sides of the door. This picture foreshadows the cross, foreshadowing the bleeding of Jesus from His feet, His hands and His head. The application of the blood foreshadows in the True Passover (Jesus dying for our sins). Exodus 12:22 1Cor. 5:7

**Blood on the Header and Side Posts of the Door Foreshadows the Cross** (a graphic); from [Blogspot](#); accessed March 31, 2021.



8. The feast afterwards was a foreshadowing of our memorial supper, the Eucharist (which foreshadows eternal fellowship with God).
9. The eating of the flesh of the slain lamb is analogous to believing in Jesus Christ, as eating is the non-meritorious function which all humans are able to do. Today, we eat the bread as Christ's body, to illustrate our faith in Jesus Christ, Who is the bread of life (Matt. 26:26-28 John 6:31-35, 46–58, 19:18 1Cor. 11:23–26).
  - a. As an aside, the bread does not actually become Christ body.
  - b. This heresy came about because some person did not understand the concept of a metaphor (hundreds of figures of speech are found throughout the Scriptures).
10. Scofield: *To observe the feast [of the Passover] was a duty and a privilege but not of condition of safety.* Nor is eating the meat (or bread) salvation; those things are analogous to salvation. 1Cor. 10:16 11:25 Rev. 13:8
11. One of the most chilling phrases found in Exodus is Exodus 12:6b, when speaking of the Passover lamb, reads: **Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it.** Can't you just hear in those words the Jews in

<b>The Passover, or the Passover lamb, is a type of Christ</b>
A.D. 33 calling for Jesus to be crucified?
Scofield quotes are from <a href="https://biblehub.com/commentaries/sco/exodus/12.htm">https://biblehub.com/commentaries/sco/exodus/12.htm</a> accessed December 9, 2020.
All Bible quotes are from the ESV (capitalized).

The Passover was fraught with meaning. However, it meant one thing to the Hebrew people at this time; but it means something different to us in the Church Age. In fact, there is more meaning to be found in the Passover today than during the Age of Israel.

The ESV; capitalized is used below unless otherwise indicated.

<b>The Symbolgy of the First Passover</b>		
<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning to Hebrews</b>	<b>Meaning to Church Age Believer</b>
The plague is the death of the firstborn.	The Hebrew people understood this to be simply a judgment against the Egyptians and those who did not believe the warning of God, which required the use of the blood of the lamb.	We understand that the death of the firstborn to be related to Jesus Christ dying for our sins, as He is called the firstborn of God (Rom. 8:29 Col. 1:18 Heb. 1:5).
The lamb.	The lamb is an animal sacrifice, as God requires. Its blood needed to be painted on the doorframe. The Hebrew people acted out of obedience to God.	The lamb represents Jesus Christ dying for our sins. <b>Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.</b> (1Cor. 5:7b)  Jesus takes the penalty for our sins upon Himself.
The observation of the lamb.	It would be normal for a family to develop some sort of attachment to a lamb which they watch over for 3 or 4 days.	The people of Israel were able to observe Jesus for 3 or 4 years, to confirm His sinlessness and that His power was from God.
The blood of the lamb.	All things were cleansed by blood in the Old Testament. This very much describes the first quarter of the book of Leviticus.	The blood of the lamb represents the spiritual death of our Lord. It was not Jesus' physical death on the cross; or His physical suffering which saves us. It is the judgment for our sins which He endured. 1Peter 1:19 Rev. 7:14

## The Symbology of the First Passover

Symbol	Meaning to Hebrews	Meaning to Church Age Believer
The blood of the lamb on the door.	God would see the blood and pass over that house. There would be no judgment for the occupants inside.	The blood reveals the cross 1500 years prior to the crucifixion. When we believe in Jesus Christ, we are trusting His work on the cross for our deliverance. 1Cor. 5:7b
The lamb is to be eaten, having been roasted with fire; not raw and not boiled in water.	These are simply God's requirements for the lamb sacrifice. The people respond in obedience to what God requires.	Roasted with fire refers to judgment by God. We cannot place our faith in a Jesus Who is just a teacher; nor can we place our faith in a watered down gospel. <b>For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.</b> (1Cor. 2:2)
All of the lamb must be consumed by morning.	These are God's simple requirements for this sacrifice.	There is a time frame (while we are alive) during which we must believe in Jesus Christ. <b>Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.</b> (2Cor. 6:2b)
The lamb is to be eaten in haste.	The Hebrew people were to leave Egypt soon afterwards. They had no time to waste.	We are to believe in Jesus as soon as possible. It is a big mistake for a person to understand the issue and to kick it down the road. 2Cor. 6:2b
Those eating the lamb must be wearing sandals and a belt.	The Hebrew people would be ready to move out when they were ordered to.	We must be equipped as saints. A more detailed equipment for the saints is described in Eph. 6:11–17. We are equipped by the Holy Spirit and knowledge of Bible doctrine.
Unleavened bread	Because the Israelites had to move out so quickly, there was no time for the bread to rise.	Leavening represents corruption; we are not to believe a corrupt gospel. The Lord's Supper is practiced with unleavened bread. 1Cor. 5:6 Gal. 5:9



The Symbology of the First Passover		
Symbol	Meaning to Hebrews	Meaning to Church Age Believer
Bitter herbs	These are God's requirements for this sacrifice.	This represents the bitterness of Jesus Christ taking upon Himself our sins. Zeph. 1:14
God would see the blood and He would passover that house.	The blood on the door posts allowed God to see which house was to be passed over.	This blood of Jesus allows God to pass over us when it comes to eternal judgment. Heb. 9:12 <b>He entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of His Own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.</b>
This celebration was to be observed throughout the future years of Israel.	Israel was to always be able to look back on this time to see God's acts on their behalf.	We observe the New Testament version of this, which is communion (which should be accompanied with teaching). We also look backwards. 1Cor. 11:25–26

In many cases, the Hebrew people simply did as they were told out of obedience to the Revealed God. Obviously, they must believe in the Revealed God in order to be obedient to Him. Faith in God, as He revealed Himself, is the means of salvation for the individual Hebrew.

The Feast of the Passover was to be observed from that day forward. Today, Jews still observe the Passover, which includes a meal at home with family and friends called the Seder. In many cases, someone will recall the story of the Exodus to those around the table. They won't be offering up a lamb sacrifice, however.

The big picture is, God delivered the Hebrew people out of slavery, making a sovereign nation of them. As believers in Jesus Christ, we are delivered out of slavery to the world and to the sin nature. 1Peter 2:9 **But you [believers in Christ Jesus] are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His Own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.** (ESV; capitalized)

## Lessons 158–159: Exodus 12:15–17

## The Feast of Unleavened Bread

At this point, we move to v. 15, which speaks of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, something which would be celebrated in the future, but not necessarily during the time prior to the Exodus (remember, prior to the Passover, there was a lot going on, which included the

previous 9 judgments against Egypt; so there was no one week break before the sons of Israel exited Egypt).

Exodus 12:15a [Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.](#)

During the Passover Feast—which would be celebrated yearly, the people of Israel could only eat unleavened bread. This feast would take place after the Passover. However, it would not be celebrated with the first Passover. After the first Passover, the people would leave Egypt.

Leavened bread is bread which has been fermented (it has yeast in it) and for anyone who has baked bread, you know that it takes time for that bread to rise. We get our yeast from yeast packets that we buy in the store; but many take a small portion of the uncooked dough and use that as yeast or leaven for the next batch of bread (this is called sourdough starter, and some lay claim to having [65 year-old starter dough](#); and others, [122 year-old starter dough](#); SF's famous sourdough bread claims to use [160 year old starter dough](#)). I read a [story](#) where 4500 year old yeast from Egypt had been used to bake bread with.

Subsequent generations would bake unleavened bread in remembrance of this first Passover followed by their sudden exit from Egypt. After the Passover and the death of so many firstborn in Egypt, Pharaoh would send the people of Israel out of Egypt, and they would have to move quickly. Therefore, the bread that they made and ate would have to be unleavened. They had time to make it, bake it and take it. They did not have a few extra hours to let the bread rise.

Exodus 12:15b [On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses.](#)

This is the first mention of leaven in the Scriptures (*unleavened* is found once in Genesis and in this chapter, v. 8). Leaven also came to mean contamination; so they would eat bread that was not contaminated.

Unleavened bread has two basic meanings: (1) to early Israel, the reason that they ate unleavened bread at the Passover is, they had to be ready to go. They had to be ready to leave Egypt immediately. When Pharaoh said, “Go,” they needed to go that instant. Therefore, they did not have time to let their breads rise. (2) Leaven is presented in the New Testament as that which infects or invades—like the sin nature—and it has repercussions throughout all that it has invaded. The phrase, **A little leaven leavens the whole lump**, is found twice in the New Testament. However, mostly in the New Testament, leaven is understood to refer to a corruption of true doctrine. However, any sort of corruption is implied by the word *leaven*.

Precept Austin: *The specific symbolism of the passover required the absence of leaven, which symbolizes a corrupting influence. Leaven is associated with fermentation which is a process of decay (thus*

*representative of God's curse on the earth) and is also connected with the production of the toxic substance, alcohol.<sup>37</sup>*

Leaven was to be removed from the homes. So, not only was leaven not to be used, but it was to be removed from the homes as well. This better corresponds to the second meaning of leaven.

At some point in the future, all leaven (by which I mean sin and evil) will be removed from the earth. We simply cannot have the corruption continue to exist. The world and all of life is corrupted by it.

Exodus 12:15c **For whoever eats leavened bread....**

This is the first part of a complete thought. Here we have someone in Israel who eats bread that has been leavened.

The original Passover spoke of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given on our behalf and the blood, which speaks of the judgment that He took upon Himself—the judgement which we deserve. This feast, which looked forward to the first advent of our Lord would be replaced in the Christian era by the Eucharist which looks backward to the cross. **And while they were eating, Jesus took bread, and, after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." And He took a cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood fo the covenant, which is shed on behalf of many for forgiveness of sins"** (Matt. 26:26–28; see also 1Cor. 11:23–26). God carefully tied these two rituals together, one being the reflection of the other, and both speaking of the cross. Otherwise, all that we have here in this passage is some heathen ritual involving the striking of blood around the door and eating flat bread. God, however, knew the end from the beginning and He knew that **the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world** (Rev. 13:8b). Another way of looking at this is, in His divine decrees in eternity past (from the foundation of the world), God planned the death of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

Exodus 12:15d **...that person shall be cut off from Israel...**

There was a severe social penalty for someone who ate bread with yeast during this time of the Passover.

Exodus 12:15e **...from the first day until the seventh day.**

The person who ate leavened bread during the Passover was to be cut off completely from Israel. It is not clear to me how long this lasted...would this last for a lifetime or were they removed in some way for only for the 7 days of this feast? Does the 7 days apply to the time when leavened bread could not be eaten or the time during which a person could be cut off from his people (or to both)?

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<sup>37</sup> From <https://www.preceptaustin.org/exodus-34-commentary> accessed March 30, 2021.

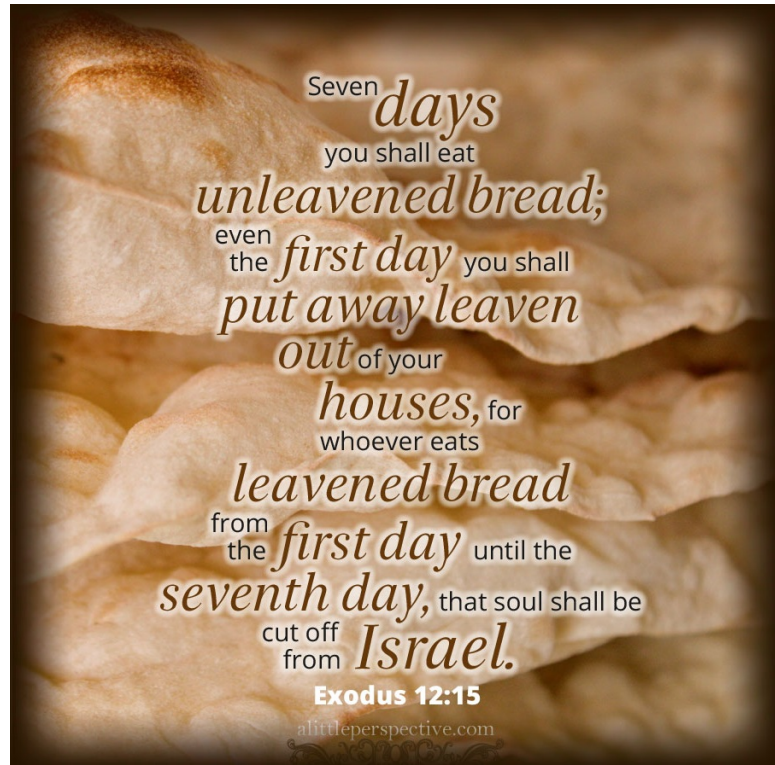
These feast days required participation from the people. The Israelites were all to partake of the celebration and all that it entailed. Even if a person made the best leavened bread in the world, if he baked it for the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, he was cut off from Israel.

We do not know, at this point, exactly what it means to be cut off from Israel. I would assume that they would not be allowed to take part in the celebration of this feast. I would think that being *cut off* would have more of an impact than just that, but it is not completely clear what that penalty would be.

Exodus 12:15 *Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.*

**Exodus 12:15** (a graphic); from [A Little Perspective](#); accessed March 9, 2021.

This week of unleavened bread occurred after the Passover celebration. The unleavened bread and the offering up of the lamb for each household were two sets of events which took place right before the people of Israel left Egypt.



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Leaven speaks of a corruption in the Scripture. Jesus Christ, during His incarnation, was uncorrupted by an old sin nature and by personal sin. It would be best to go over the **doctrine of leaven** at this time to see how it is actually used in the Bible.

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The most vicious attacks on God's Word are attacks from corruption (or, *leaven*) from within. The most evil of the religions often imitate Christianity and many so-called Christian religions (such as Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses) are great perversions of the faith.

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## The Doctrine of Leaven

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1. Surprisingly enough, there are three or four words in the Old Testament which are rendered by "leaven" in the English. However there is but one equivalent OT word for "unleavened." To most people, the word *leaven* probably has very little meaning. The Hebrew word is...
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## The Doctrine of Leaven

- a. Châmêts (חָמֵץ) [pronounced *khaw-MATES*] (Strong's #2557), means *to ferment, to be sharp or sour*. Strong points out that it figuratively means "extortion," but it is not ever translated that way.
  - b. Matstsâh (מַצָּה) [pronounced *mahts-TSAWH*], (Strong's #4682), means *sweet or sweetness, not made bitter with yeast*. We recognize this word and it is used even today to describe unleavened bread.
2. We find "unleavened" occurring only one time prior to Exodus, and that is in Gen. 19:3. When two angels visit Lot, he serves them unleavened bread. It is likely that this is all he could put together for them for a quick meal.
3. It would help if we had a clue as to why leaven is forbidden during certain religious feasts and unleavened bread is required. The majority of the passages in the Old Testament deal with the prohibitions but not the rationale behind them. We can certainly get a better understanding from the New Testament as to the meaning of leaven and unleavened, figuratively speaking, but how were the Hebrews to grasp their meaning? As we have seen, the Old Testament and New Testament take on something can be quite different.
  - a. Prior to the flood, there was no active bacteria found in close proximity to man. Whether it was deeply buried or how it came into being after the flood, we do not know—perhaps it was the result of so many dead bodies (animals and human) as a result of the flood. Whatever the reason, there was no wine or leavened bread prior to the flood. Sometime after the flood, Noah planted a vineyard, harvested a few grapes and drank the wine which fermented from it (some things just happen by accident; Noah certainly did not know what he was making the first time).
  - b. During one binge, Noah was so drunk that he ran around naked in his tent. Where his wife was, we don't know, but most women do not find a drunken husband to be too entertaining, so she probably stepped out. If she were there, his drunken behavior may have which repulsed her. Ham, his son, walked in afterwards; very possibly he was listening or saw the commotion and found his father naked. Rather than give him the respect he should have as a son and cover him up and walk out, Ham made light of the situation and told his brothers about it. As a result, Noah cursed Ham's son Canaan. So fermentation was, from the beginning, associated with drunkenness and cursing. Gen. 9:20-26.
  - c. Later, Lot, Abraham's nephew, was given enough wine to be seduced by his own daughters at the end of Gen. 19. Lot, although a believer in the Revealed God, led pretty much a worthless life as a believer and spent the last few years of his life hiding in a cave with his two daughters. When they seduced him, they produced two sons, Moab and Ben-ammin, both of whom fathered tribes which gave Israel trouble for centuries. So here we find fermentation, or leavening, associated with incest and drunkenness. These are the only two recorded incidents of fermentation. These incidents, in addition to what we have come to associate with drinking, gave a strong negative connotation to fermentation.



## The Doctrine of Leaven

- d. In both cases, the corruption of the grape juice led to poor judgement, lack of self-control and errant behavior.
  - e. Wine, as a drink, is presented in the later portions of Scripture as both a cursing and a blessing.
4. Precept Austin provides an excellent explanation: *The specific symbolism of the passover required the absence of leaven, which symbolizes a corrupting influence. Leaven is associated with fermentation which is a process of decay (thus representative of God's curse on the earth) and is also connected with the production of the toxic substance, alcohol.*<sup>1</sup>
5. For our own understanding, we should turn to the New Testament, where many Old Testament symbols are properly interpreted.
- a. Jesus warned several times of the *leaven* of the Pharisees (Matt. 16:6, 12 Mark 8:15 Luke 12:1). The Pharisees were the religious establishment of that time. They were the *so-called* conservative theologians. They claimed to believe in the Holy Scriptures; or at least gave lip service to them. However, they did not understand God's Word and they were at best, actors (hypocrites) when it came to following God's directives (Matt. 23). They were whitewashed tombstones—that is, a clean appearance on the outside but filled on the inside with dead men's bones. In other words, they were unregenerate with a sin nature always functioning.
  - b. Jesus associated leaven with the corruption of the Scriptures by the false teaching of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. They added their own twist or interpretation to the Scriptures; that addition being corruption.
  - c. Leaven is also mentioned in 1Cor. 5. Here, a Christian is living in incest with his mother (or step-mother). The Corinthians, living in a city of debauchery, boasted about this. We may not understand this, but it was a source of pride to them to be associated with such a person; to be able to say so-and-so was a Christian. Paul corrects them on their false concept of separation (you separate from believers who are involved in overt, immoral behavior; not unbelievers). Paul points out that this kind of overt immoral behavior would corrupt, or *leaven*, the entire church if left unchecked and this person must be excommunicated. Paul also lists the kinds of believers with whom we are not to associate: immoral, covetous, swindlers, idolaters, revilers and drunkards. As an aside, this is why a pastor, backed by his board of deacons, would not tolerate immoral behavior during church meetings. Although that seems like a given, I have been in a Lutheran church where lesbian couples expressed great affection towards each other during the service. There is a proper balance which must be struck here—people with anti-Bible sexual proclivities are certainly not to be barred from attending church. They can be saved and they can grow spiritually. However, their overt behavior on church grounds should not reveal to anyone what they do behind closed doors. So, even a male gay couple could attend church together, but there should be no



## The Doctrine of Leaven

- signs of affection between them in the church or in the parking lot, as that is a perversion.
- d. The problem with the Galatians is that after salvation, they were infiltrated with the legalists who enjoined them to keep the law for spirituality. All the Judaizers had to do was to get the Galatians to concede to them in one point; to follow the Sabbath or to get circumcised in order to maintain their salvation or to further their spirituality, and this would corrupt the Galatian church. Paul points out in Gal. 5:9, **A little leaven leavens the whole lump.** To make this simple for someone who does not cook; it only takes a small amount of yeast to cause a large loaf of bread to rise (a teaspoon of leaven would be more than enough to make an entire loaf of bread rise). In this situation, it only takes a small amount of legalism to corrupt the entire congregation.
6. In Leviticus 7:13, we have the introduction of leaven into one of the offerings. This instance of leaven (or yeast) in the bread did not violate the prohibitions found in Exodus 23:18 or Leviticus 2:11 because this was not an offering which was burned at the brazen altar; in other words, it did not represent Christ's death upon the cross. Jesus Christ had no old sin nature, so anything offered in conjunction with the brazen altar had to be without leaven. However, when the offering speaks of us and our fellowship with God, we do carry an old sin nature within us and therefore should be offering up bread with leaven.
7. Our conclusion is simple: leaven is associated with corruption of true doctrine with false; of proper behavior with immorality; of a congregation dedicated to God by those who are not. Leaven is associated with the old sin nature, which is why it is never found in burnt offerings (signifying the death of our Lord) but it is found in other offerings.

<sup>1</sup> From <https://www.preceptaustin.org/exodus-34-commentary> accessed March 31, 2021.

Exodus 12:16a **On the first day there shall be a holy convocation,...**

This is the first day of the Feast of Unleavened bread. A holy convocation would be a gathering and a celebration.

There would be two days in particular devoted to a holy celebration. There would be the first day.

The Hebrew word for convocation is *mîk<sup>e</sup>râ* (מִקְרָא) [pronounced *mihk-RAW*] and it means, *an assembly, a calling together for worship or for sacred rites*. So that this is not misinterpreted, God recognizes that the children of Israel must eat and it would be allowable to prepare meals during this time.

What we studied at the beginning of the chapter was what would happen specifically for the first Passover. However, in this portion of the chapter, what is being described is what would be celebrated for hundreds of years.

Exodus 12:16b ...and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you.

There would be another holy celebration on the 7<sup>th</sup> day.

There would be another gathering and celebration at the end of this week.

Exodus 12:16c No manner of work shall be done on them;...

The Hebrew people were not to work during these days. It is not clear to me that this is for the entire week or just particularly for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> days. If they are gathered to the Tabernacle, then they would be far from work anyway.

Food preparation and all that necessary in order to prepare a meal (such as, building a fire) was allowed. These celebrations and their regulations were reasonable, not legalistic.

Also, it is worth noting that Israel would *not* put slaves to work while they sat around, *not working*.

When Jesus healed on Sabbath days, right there, on the spot, the pharisees decided that this was works, and therefore, Jesus was violating the Sabbath. There are, of course, no prohibitions of miracles or healings being done on the Sabbath. This is an example of the leaven of the pharisees.

Exodus 12:16d ...but that which everyone must eat...

If they are going to eat the Passover lamb, then obviously, someone has to slaughter, clean, sacrifice and prepare the lamb. So, logically, this was allowed. Preparation of the lamb was not a violation of the Sabbath.

Exodus 12:16e ...—that only may be prepared by you.

The work related to preparing the Passover meal was allowed. This seems to indicate that each household would be responsible for the preparation of their own lamb.

The bizarre statutes and rules which later characterized the Sabbath were not a part of the Law but added by legalistic religious types who were trying to be saved by works.<sup>38</sup> It is not clear what they have in terms of divine revelation or just how much the Hebrews have in

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<sup>38</sup> One which comes to mind from a Jewish History course of many years ago was, if mud had been splashed upon your garment, you could not clean the garment; however, you could allow the mud to dry and then squeeze the portion which was dirty one time and that would partially clean off the mud and you would still be within the limits of the Law (that is, within their legalistic interpretation of the Law) because *you were not working on the Sabbath*

oral tradition. Whatever was added along side the pure Scriptures by religious Hebrew religious types is leaven. We know that, even though these traditions hung on, they were never made a part of the Scriptures.

A week is a long time without some structure. Therefore, God will give some structure and guidance to this time period.

Exodus 12:16 On the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you.

The Passover would be the first day of a week-long celebration, call the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It is described here. The first and final days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread were to be treated like a Sabbath<sup>39</sup>; there was to be no work done on those days.

However, this no-work was not a legalistic approach or an unrealistic approach. Making the meals would require work and time; and this was allowed.

It may seem confusing that we have instructions for the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread here and elsewhere, and the way they are set up are not exactly the same each time. This is easily explained. We have the initial celebration, which takes place in Egypt on the eve of leaving Egypt; and we have the observance of these holy days while in the desert-wilderness; and they are then observed while in the land of promise. Therefore, for some of these days, there may end up being as many as 2 similar celebrations which are not exactly the same. What I mean is, the Passover was observed in a very specific way when the Hebrew people resided in the land of Egypt. However, the Passover was not observed in the exact same way in subsequent celebrations. For instance, there was no Feast of Unleavened Bread associates with the Passover observation held in Egypt.

Exodus 12:17a So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread,...

In this section, God sets up the rules for observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

God reiterates that the celebration of this week-long festival would be a long-term thing. It would be the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It was celebrated to the time of our LORD and it would not be surprising if this celebration continued in one form or another today. However, to be clear, the celebrations practiced by Israel in the Old Testament are nothing like what is practiced today. The most obvious and fundamental difference is, there are no animal sacrifices. So, even though the Hebrew people, as a whole, continue to reject Jesus as their Savior-King, they no longer offer up animal sacrifices, which sacrifices point towards Jesus.

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<sup>39</sup> The commandment of the Sabbath has not been given yet.

Exodus 12:17b ...for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt.

God explains that this is *why* this week would be celebrated. On this very day, God brought the sons of Israel out of Egypt.

The unleavened cakes speak of pure, unadulterated, uncorrupted doctrine and a pure relationship with God.

The word often translated *hosts* is the Hebrew word *ts<sup>e</sup>bâ'ôwth* (צְבָאוֹת) [pronounced *tz<sup>eb</sup>-vaw-OHTH*] and means a mass of persons, usually organized for war (that is, *an army*). Everyone is appointed to their proper duty stations and is expected to perform their proper function. At this point in time, Israel had no army; they were slaves. God was going to change all that. God expected them to trust Him and this would involve marshaling an army and taking the land which He gave to them. We may question this, but God knows much better than we do what He is doing. Men who are willing to sacrifice their lives and to fight for their country are much more selfless and less arrogant and pompous than those who would refuse to stand up for their country or those who must be emotionally stimulated before they are willing to fight. Furthermore, the land was filled with a cancer which needed to be cut out (the idolatrous peoples of the land). God will achieve His ends through the armies of Israel.

Here, God uses the term *your armies*, even though such an armed insurrection would have seemed quite incredible to the sons of Israel.

This is the rationale for this celebration—it was on this day that God would bring the people of Israel out of Egypt. God calls them *armies* here. They apparently would leave in a very organized fashion (which is a good step towards national discipline).

Exodus 12:17c **Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance.**

This celebration would continue for many generations.

God will, in the law, set up the feast days, but he is also doing it in time. This is one aspect of the principle of unfolding or progressive revelation. It took awhile before we got to the point to where all necessary revelation had been given to us. In fact, we are the first dispensation where that was true. We are one of the few nations where the Scripture is not only available but it is available in great abundance. Even though decent Bible teaching is difficult to find, God has promised us if we desire to know the doctrine, God would reveal it to us. At this point in time in this Exodus generation, they are taking in these doctrines one point at a time. They get a little bit here; and they will get a little more information later in the Torah.

This week-long celebration would commemorate the people of Israel being led out of Egypt by God. It is to be observed for as long as there is an Israel.

God would give several feasts to the sons of Jacob to observe—most of which are found in the book of Leviticus. This particular feast was rooted in specific historic events, as were many of the feasts celebrated by the Israelites.

Throughout the presentation of these future celebrations, there is an emphasis upon what these celebrations are based upon. The historical nature of these celebrations is key to how the Israelites understood them.

We have quite a number of celebrations in the United States, which is a good thing. It is key for parents and schools to teach our historic background for such celebrations. For instance, reading some of the presidential proclamations for Thanksgiving would be wise.

## **Lesson 160: Exodus 12:17–21**

## **The Feast of Unleavened Bread/Passover**

In the future, the Hebrew people were to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, celebrating their exit from Egypt.

Exodus 12:17 *So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies [or, hosts] out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance.*

The children of Israel will leave Egypt suddenly. Immediately after the Passover, the Hebrews will be ordered to leave. They will not have enough time to even let their sustenance bread rise (hence the connection to unleavened bread).

For many generations after, first the Passover would be observed, followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread, both of which look back to this period of time—the day when Israel marched out of Egypt. It is because of the Passover that the Hebrew people were freed from slavery.

Bear in mind that none of this has happened yet. This is God speaking to Moses about what Israel is to do in the future, after leaving Egypt.

Exodus 12:18a *In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening,...*

God sets up some of the parameters of this celebration. This celebration would begin on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of this first month in the evening...

Exodus 12:18b *...you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.*

The sons of Israel would eat unleavened bread from the evening of the 14<sup>th</sup> day to the 21<sup>st</sup> day. Again, there is the parallel set of concepts. The unleavened bread looks back to the fact that they had to be ready to leave Egypt, so that they could not use leaven and watch their bread rise. There would be no time for that.

Also, it would come to be that leaven would be seen to represent evil and the permeation of evil into everything from just a small beginning.

This is a repetition of what God has said. He is making it very clear that during this third week of this first month—the Passover week—there was to be no spiritual corruption. God is summarizing portions of this week. However, we learn from this verse that it will be the Hebrew custom to determine days from evening to evening. We technically observe a new day beginning at midnight. Unofficially, a new day for most of us begins somewhere between 4 am and 9 am.

Exodus 12:18 *In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.*

This celebration would take place in the third week of the first month. What appears to be the case is, this celebration began the evening of the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month (which actually begins the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month); and it ran through the 21<sup>st</sup> day, ending that evening (which would begin the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of the month). Since this feast actually begins on the 15<sup>th</sup> and ends at the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> day, it is a 7-day feast.

Exodus 12:19a *For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses,....*

Apparently, leaven is to be removed from the houses for the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of Abib (vv. 18–19). It is not clear where this leaven is to be stored. It is possible that all leaven is simply to be out of sight, not to be seen or used.

I would assume that Israel, even at its most legalistic, did not engage *leaven patrols*.

Exodus 12:19b *...since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel,...*

The person who cannot stop himself and chooses to eat a bread with leaven will be cut off from the congregation of Israel. God is very serious that His policies and celebrations be correctly followed. Remember, a little leaven leavens the whole lump.

I would suggest that such a person might be cut off from Israel for the rest of his life. However, for this infraction, the actual penalty is someone obscure (we will find out, later in the book of Exodus, when someone violated the Sabbath, they would be cut off, meaning they would be executed).

Exodus 12:19c *...whether he is a stranger or a native of the land.*

No one is exempt from this requirement, whether an immigrant or native born.

Notice here that God is calling the Israelites *natives of the land*. They have not even left Egypt yet, but God is outside of time and recognizes that they will possess the land and they will for the rest of history be tied to this land (although they may not possess it as God



has intended until the end of human history). The Hebrews are spoken of as being in the land with immigrants. The way that the Hebrews would be a witness to other countries would cause those in other countries to come to Israel for spiritual food. Sometimes God would cause people to wander through Israel that He could evangelize them through Israel. Part of the evangelization process which was done on those who are the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and on those who had recently immigrated to the country, or were simply passing through.

Exodus 12:19 For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land.

There would be no leaven allowed in the house during this period of celebration. Leaven was seen as a contaminating influence. No one was to even be tempted to use leaven in their bread making.

Exodus 12:20a You shall eat nothing leavened;...

This is God speaking to Moses, who would eventually communicate this information to the people of Israel. During these times of the unleavened bread, nothing with leaven was to be eaten.

Exodus 12:20b ...in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.”

We have examined the concept of leaven as being corruption and the infiltration of false doctrine. What is abundantly clear is that God will not tolerate corruption of His Word. Here, the same thing is being said in the negative and in the positive sense to emphasize the importance of this portion of God's ritual.

Exodus 12:20 You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.”

This would be for the week long festival which would, from the next year and forward, occur every year.

This celebration without leaven would hearken back specifically to them suddenly leaving Egypt. There was no slow migration; there was no long-developed treaty written and signed. The sons of Israel left Egypt in a hurry. So they had no time to use leaven. Speed was of the utmost importance. They prepared their bread without any fermentation; without any yeast product. So, on the one hand, this looks backwards to this time when Israel will leave Egypt; but this passage has an additional meaning of avoiding corruption (another way in which leaven is seen).

The speed with which Israel was to leave Egypt is key. This testifies to God's direct action within Egypt to secure the freedom of Israel.

So ends the instructions given by God to Moses and Aaron. Bear in mind that this—the Feast of Unleavened Bread—would take place in the future.

**The Lord's Supper** (a photograph); from [Unashamed of Jesus](#); accessed March 10, 2021. The New Testament celebration of the Passover, known as the Eucharist, looks back upon the cross of our Lord. The bread stands for His body and the grape juice (not wine) stands for His blood (which blood represents His spiritual death).



God has been speaking to Moses and Aaron; and now Moses is going to explain all of these things to the elders of Israel.

Exodus 12:21a [Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel...](#)

Moses is in charge right here.

Moses summons the elders of Israel, to give them their immediate orders. These mandates would be for the upcoming Passover.

You may recall after the first time that Moses spoke to Pharaoh, Pharaoh increased the workload, and the elders were quite angry with Moses. That is water long under the bridge. That happened a long time ago (relatively speaking). By this time, the elders clearly recognized Moses' authority. At this point, whatever Moses said, was taken as having come from God.

Now Moses passes these instructions onto the elders of Israel. There has always been a hierarchy of authority, even in the spiritual realm. God speaks to Moses and Moses to the elders and the elders to the heads of the families and they to their families. Part of this authority chain is logistical—there is no way that Moses can effectively address all of the people, lacking a newspaper and a public address system. This is certainly God's plan; God speaks to us through His Word and not directly.

God being God, you may be thinking, *why doesn't God just speak to everyone at once? Surely He is capable of that.* There will come a time when God will do that, not too far into the future from where we are here. However, God nearly always maintains the concept of a mediator between Him and man. Having a mediator between God and man will become fundamental to the history of the Israelites. Sometimes that mediator will be a king; at other times, that mediator will be a prophet or a priest. In all cases, that human mediator is representative of Christ Jesus.

God gave Moses and Aaron instructions; now Moses and Aaron would speak to various groups in order for these instructions to be followed. There was an organization to the people of Israel. Moses would speak to the elders and they themselves would speak to other groups of Israelites.

Even though God spoke to Moses about the Passover and about the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Moses will speak to the elders about the Passover only. The Feast of Unleavened Bread would not be observed for another year.

Exodus 12:21b ...and said to them, "Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families,...

Moses tells them that now is the time to choose the proper lamb from the flocks; and this would be according to the family size and who would eat the lamb.

God has told the Hebrews to *mâshak*<sup>e</sup> (מָשַׁךְ) [pronounced *maw-SHAHK<sup>e</sup>*], which means *to sow, to prolong, to develop, to march, to draw, to drag*; obviously it is a verb with many applications. Strong's #4900 BDB #604. This is in the imperative mood.

A second imperative is used: the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative of *lâqach* (לָקַח) [pronounced *law-KAHKH*], which means, *to take, to seize, to take away*. Strong's #3947 BDB #542. Most translations downplay the language used here. It sounds too much like the Hebrews are going out selecting a Christmas tree. They are simply going to their flock and selecting or choosing a lamb. However, they are actually being told to go into the flock and grab a lamb; they were to drag a lamb out of the flock and kill it, just as Jesus was dragged from His place of prayer to trial and to His crucifixion. It sounded incongruous to the Hebrews at that time (and also to most translators) to *choose* a lamb without spot and blemish, but then to *drag* it out of the flock; but this is a perfect picture of our Lord at the crucifixion.

Exodus 12:21c ...and kill the Passover lamb.

The word *lamb* is not found in v. 21c. In the Hebrew, there are just 3 words here. Literally, this reads, *...and slaughter [you all] the Passover*. (In the Hebrew, the definite article is not a separate word, as it is in our language.)

What is it that they are killing? Obviously they are killing the Passover lamb, but it does not say that. On the one hand, it is a metonymy where *Passover* stands for the *Passover*

*lamb*—that is fairly obvious. However, the One Who is *passing over* is God the Son; He is taking the lives of the first-born; and right here the Israelites are told to kill the *Passover*—they are told to kill Jesus Christ, their Passover lamb, the One passing over them that night. You might say that this is a double-metonymy; literally and in the past, they are killing the Passover lamb. However, typically and in the future, they will kill the true Passover lamb, Jesus Christ, Whom God the Father will require slain in our stead. As a result, God the Father will then pass over us.

Even though this is the vocabulary and the literary style of Moses, God the Holy Spirit, Who knows the end from the beginning, speaks through Moses in such a way that we can see that the entire Bible is the mind of Christ (1Cor. 2:16), perceived of as a whole in eternity past, yet written down in various times for our growth, our edification today.

The people are to slaughter the Passover. This word is used both of the feast to be celebrated as well as to the lamb who would be slaughtered.

#### **Lesson 161: Exodus 12:21–22b**

#### **The Hyssop and the Blood**

Exodus 12:21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover lamb.

Moses gathered and spoke to the elders of Israel, to prepare them for what was going to happen. They were to be in charge to see that every household offered up a lamb.

You may remember that there was a time when the elders were quite upset with Moses and they were angry that he suddenly came on the scene. However, by this time, it is clear that he is the man in charge, the man with the connection to God. They accept his authority without question—at least, right at this point in time.

For the Hebrew disciple of Jesus, who begins to understand what is happening, this is a most disturbing verse. The Passover Lamb is Jesus Christ; and the Hebrew people here are told to kill the Lamb. The Hebrew people during the time of Moses and subsequently throughout Israel’s history, did not fully appreciate what this ritual represented. However, there would have been some Jewish people in the time of our Lord’s ministry and shortly after who understood and drew the proper connection. Paul wrote, in 1Cor. 5:7b **For indeed Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed in our place.** (WEB) John the herald called Jesus “**The Lamb of God.**” (John 1:29) Jesus is referred to on several occasions as the *Lamb* in the book of Revelation (Rev. 5:6 7:10, 17 14:4).

God has given Moses the entire scope of the Passover observance; in this verse and in the verses that follow, Moses gives this same information to the elders of Israel (not every detail will be restated).

Exodus 12:21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover lamb.

Each family is to choose a Passover lamb for their household. They are to kill this lamb.

Exodus 12:22a [And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin,..](#)

The blood of the lamb would be collected into a bowl and then a hyssop bunch would be used to strike the door with blood.

Although Hyssop is found several times throughout the Old and New Testaments, we do not know exactly which plant from the ancient world is referred to by hyssop. However, the type of plant is not as important as its significance. It is used here at the first Passover and in several other places (the purification rites for lepers and the red heifer sacrifice).

### HYSSOP

1. Sources disagree as to what the hyssop is and some claim that the NT hyssop and the OT hyssop are different plants. Some claim to know what the New Testament plant was but not the Old Testament plant. Some believe that different plants were used throughout the OT, even though it is called by the same name.
2. When the Bible was translated into the KJV, they almost certainly did not know what the hyssop was; therefore they transliterated the word out of the Greek.
  - a. The Greek word is hussopos (ὑσσόπος) [pronounced, *HUÇ-sō-positive*].
  - b. This Greek word is found in only two New Testament passages, John 19:29 and Heb. 9:19, and it is found in the Septuagint. This would indicate that the translators of the Septuagint in 300 B.C knew what the hyssop was.
  - c. This makes sense because the hyssop would have been used continuously from the Torah forward in some purification rites.
  - d. It is possible that over the centuries, because God's Word had been misplaced and because the Hebrew people were in reversionism many times, that a different plant could have come to be used by the Hebrews and that would account for the NT hyssop and the OT hyssop being different. Therefore, this change, if it occurred, likely would have taken place prior to the translation of the Septuagint.
3. The opinions:
  - a. Dr. William Smith in *Smith's Bible Dictionary* defers to Dr. Royle, who claims that the hyssop is not marjoram or some similar aromatic plant, but, after considerable research, claims that it is the caper-plant of Linnæus. He also points out that the Arabic word is quite similar to the Hebrew word translated *hyssop*.
  - b. *The New Bible Dictionary* asserts that the hyssop is not the plant presently called *Hyssopus officinalis* L., which is found growing in Southern Europe but is not native to Palestine, but very likely the marjoram in the Old Testament and the *Sorghum vulgare* in the New Testament (at least at the



## HYSSOP

- crucifixion). Other possibilities are listed there.
- c. Although what the plant was exactly is not too important to us today, it is reasonable to expect that the two references in the New Testament are the same plant and very likely refer to the same plant in the OT (since the Septuagint uses the same word). However, this word is found therein in both the male and female gender, which is why, I suspect, that *The New Bible Dictionary* said that the OT references did not always seem to be for the same species.
- d. Zodhiates places the hyssop with a group of plants such as the Egyptian marjoram and thyme. *Their hairy stems would serve well as a brush*, he points out.<sup>1</sup>
- 4. Whatever the plant, no previous non-ceremonial, Biblical references exist and it is closely associated with certain other purification rites in the Old Testament:
  - a. It is used in Exodus 12:22 in conjunction with the first Passover. It was dipped into the blood of the lamb (or goat) and the blood was brushed on the top and sides of the doorposts at the front of the houses of the Hebrew believers (it is likely that all of the Hebrew people believed in the Revealed God).
  - b. The obedience of Israel to the Passover requirements helps to explain why God brought so many plagues upon Egypt prior to this final judgment.
    - i. We have seen that the Hebrews did not receive Moses warmly; especially after his first meeting with Pharaoh (which caused the increased workload of the Jewish slaves).
    - ii. Therefore, they had to see continual signs and wonders to become (1) believers and to (2) have the sense to follow Moses.
    - iii. Had God given only or two plagues, then many Hebrews would not have participated in the Passover and their firstborn would have died. It will actually be their sons and daughters who will enter the land; not the Jewish slaves of that time period.
  - c. We do not find hyssop mentioned again until Leviticus 14:4, 6, 49, 51 and 52. In Leviticus, it is used in the purification rites of a leper (and the house where leprosy was). A leper on the outside has the same appearance as we do on the inside. A leper being cured of leprosy is analogous to an unbeliever believing in Jesus Christ and being cleansed and purified. A leper is considered to be unclean and only the healed lepers were a part of this ritual. This ritual made them ceremonially clean. This ceremony, like most of the OT rites, speaks of Christ dying for our sins on the cross, the just for the unjust and His blood (spiritual death) cleansing us from all
  - d. The hyssop is used in the red heifer sacrifice in Num. 19:6,18
  - e. 1Kings 4:33 tells us that the hyssop plant grows on the wall (the context is Solomon's wisdom and academic excellence in all areas).
  - f. David alludes to the hyssop in one of his Psalms (51:7) and relates it to purification.
- 5. The book of Hebrews adds some information to what the OT tells us about what



## HYSSOP

occurred in ancient Israel. Since God's Word is accurate, we must accept this additional information as true.

- a. In Exodus 24, Moses has just finished reading the Words of the Law to the people in the desert and vv. 6–7- read *And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and the other half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people and they said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will be obedient!" So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people and said, "Behold, the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words."* There is a lot to unpack in this passage, but we will wait until we get to this chapter to do that.
  - b. Heb. 9:19 tells us *For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people.* That is, Hebrews tells us that the blood was also sprinkled on the book of the Law and that water, scarlet wool and hyssop was involved.
6. John 19:29 is the other reference to hyssop in the Bible. Jesus, after He had died spiritually for our sins, was given a small amount of sour wine on a hyssop. How appropriate that the Lamb without spot and blemish would be associated with this plant after our sins had been paid for and that God the Holy Spirit could see down the centuries of time to this when He included the use of the hyssop in the various OT purification rituals.

<sup>1</sup> *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 178.

Exodus 12:22a *And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin,..*

This entire ritual is symbolic of the death of the Lord. The blood is actually representative of the LORD's spiritual death, as Jesus did not bleed to death on the cross. The life of an animal is in the blood; but the life of man is his soul. A man is dead when his soul leaves his body; the amount of blood in his body at that point is irrelevant.



**Using the Hyssop** (a graphic);

from [Toward a Sane Faith](#); accessed March 9, 2021. The thing in his hand is the hyssop.

Exodus 12:22b ...and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin.

The blood placed on the sides and top of the door match with the blood of the Lord when put onto the cross.

They would gather the blood in a basin and dip a bunch of hyssop into the blood, and strike against the top of the door frame and on the two side posts of their door.

They are not *painting* the blood on the door; they are *striking* the doorframe. The Hebrew word is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect of *nâgaʿ* (נָגַע) [pronounced *naw-GAHG*], and it means, *to cause to touch, to cause to touch [the ground—i.e., to destroy], to touch*. Strong's #5060 BDB #619. The causative stem suggests that the one who kills the lamb and bleeds it may not be the same person to strike the top and sides of the doorframe.

Naturally, the blood would drip from the top of the doorframe and onto the doorsill. In this way, this blood represents the crucifixion, where the Lord's hands, head and feet are bleeding during the crucifixion.

**Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed** (a graphic); from [Michael D. Lawson](#); accessed March 9, 2021. The quotation is obviously from 1Cor. 5:7.



We are in the midst of studying what Moses and his people were to do for the first Passover.

So far, in this chapter, we have not yet come to the 10<sup>th</sup> (and final) judgment; and the people of Israel are still in Egypt. Both of these events are still to come in this chapter.

Exodus 12:22a-b **And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin.**

The blood represents the spiritual death of the Lord. That is, during His time upon the cross, God the Father poured out our sins upon Him. This occurred when God covered Golgotha with a thick darkness (Matt. 27:45). No one was allowed to see Jesus as our sins were poured out on Him.

So that there is no misunderstanding, the physical bleeding of Jesus does not save us. The physical suffering which He endured on the cross (and prior to the cross) is not what saves us. These things help us to relate to what happened. The horrendous pain that Jesus endured on the cross because of the cross itself was representative of Him taking upon Himself our sins (1Peter 2:24). What saved us, is the fact that God the Father poured out our sins on Jesus, and judged Him for those sins which we committed. No one actually saw this occur; not even those who were there standing at the foot of the cross. So, every person who has believed in Jesus—including those standing at the foot of the cross—have to apprehend their salvation by faith. No one actually could see the event that saved us. The people there saw Jesus crucified; but when God the Father poured out our sins on God the Son, at that point, it was pitch black.

When Jesus said, “Finished,” that indicated that He had paid for our sins entirely. What we deserve by way of punishment was placed upon Him in such a concentrated way that we are unable to even imagine it. The devastating humility that the Lord suffered before the cross and the excruciating pain that He endured on the cross—these things help us to understand, in a very small way—what it meant for Him to pay for our sins. But those things are only illustrative, for our benefit.

Peter, who was not there at the cross, wrote, **Jesus took upon Himself our sins [when] His body was placed upon the cross so that we, [through] dying to [i.e., giving up] the sinful life, would live for righteousness. You were healed [from your sins] by His being brutally treated.** (1Peter 2:24, An Understandable Version) The first sentence tells us how we were saved—because He took upon Himself our sins while His body was placed on the cross. The second sentence ties the crucifixion to Isaiah 53:5d (**...and by His wounds we are healed.** WEB).

Just as the millions of sacrificial lambs offered up by the Jewish people was a teaching aid, so that they might believe in the God to Whom they sacrificed; so is the actual drama of the cross a teaching aid to us as well. The pain and suffering of the cross was only illustrative; but the pain and suffering of enduring the punishment for our sins is the reality.

Back to our narrative, where Moses continues to give the instructions for the Passover to the elders of Israel:

Exodus 12:22c **And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.**

Moses is talking about the people who are participating in the first Passover. No one could leave their home that evening. They must remain *under the blood*, so to speak.

The Hebrews must remain inside of the house protected by God. First and foremost, this means being under the ultimate protection of the Revealed God—that is, the faith of the person is revealed by obeying these directions. This indicates that the person is saved. In our era, this is equivalent to being *in Christ*.

Also, remaining in the house speaks of continued fellowship with Him. We always have a wall of fire, a wall of protection. However, when we fall out of fellowship, we do not lose this wall, but we are subject to discipline, which can be quite harsh, depending upon our length of stay outside of our temporal relationship with God.

God has spoken to Moses in vv. 2–20. Moses is now speaking to the elders of Israel (presumably, they will pass along these directives to the people). In vv. 21–23, Moses will tell the elders what they are supposed to do regarding the Passover lamb.

The exact words which Moses uses are quite fascinating to me. At the end of v. 23, I will tell you exactly what is so interesting about Moses' words.

Exodus 12:22 *And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.*

The occupants of each house were to take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood, and then splash the blood on the sides of the doorsill and at the top. They were to remain inside of their houses the entire day. By remaining in their homes, they remained under the blood of the lamb (which represented Jesus Christ). God would see the blood and he would pass over their home. No one inside the home would be harmed. The blood at the entryway told the avenging angel not to go into that residence.

Exodus 12:23a *For the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians;....*

God promised for His 10<sup>th</sup> plague that He would enter into Egypt and kill all of the firstborn. Moses describes Him about to do this.

**Hebrew for Pass through** (a graphic); from [chaimbentorah.com](http://chaimbentorah.com); accessed March 10, 2021.

This is the Qal perfect of 'ābar (עָבַר) [pronounced *ḡaw<sup>b</sup>-VAHR*], and it means, *to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to*





*pass, to go over [beyond], to cross [over]. Strong's #5674 BDB #716.*

Exodus 12:23b ...and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts,...

God will see the blood on the door frame—at the sides and the top—exactly as Moses instructed the Hebrew people to do.

Exodus 12:23c ...the Lord will pass over the door...

God then passes over that home, not because of the good character of the people inside the home, but because of the blood. The people were covered by the blood; they were protected by the blood.

When the Destroyer saw the blood, He would pass over that door opening. He would not go into that house.

Exodus 12:23d ...and not allow the Destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.

God would not allow the Destroyer to go into any house where the blood was.

Although Bullinger lists this as an anthropopathism, it is and it isn't. God is omnipresent; He cannot confine Himself to a point in space. Therefore, it is impossible for Him to pass over or through any area. However, the preincarnate Son of God takes on an angelic form, or a human form, or the form of a burning bush, etc. This form which God takes is able to pass over the households where He sees the blood. When God takes on such a form, He is the revealed member of the Godhead (= Christ Jesus).

When one is said to see God, he is seeing a manifestation of God; not God Himself, as God is a Spirit. He no more sees God than we see our family or friends. What I mean by that is, we see the bodies that our friends and family inhabit, but we do not see their souls, their immaterial part, which makes up the greater portion of what is actually *them*. We generally like and dislike people for what they are inside and not for the outer covering. I personally have seen many beautiful women that once you began to unwrap them (that is, you get to know them well enough to *peer into their souls*) they suddenly lose their attractiveness. You find out that they are generally ungrateful; or that they are unhappy most of the time; or that they nag. Once you get past that beautiful exterior, you may be quite unhappy with what is just beneath the surface. You can have two people who are in physically the same package—that is, who appear to be twins—but inside they are so totally different that you could love one and hate the other.

Even though God is a Spirit, as God the Son, He manifests Himself in many ways. We do not know whether there was any kind of a physical manifestation here or not, however there was a certain personal touch in the *visiting* of each Egyptian household as the first-born is taken from them in death.

When we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ, God does not look carefully at us; His righteousness does not examine our unrighteousness. Instead of seeing us, God's righteousness sees the righteousness of Jesus Christ. We are covered by Christ's blood. This is all symbolic of that. God passed over these people wherever He saw the blood, since that looked forward to the blood of Christ; that is, His death on our behalf on the cross. This is what *covered by the blood* means. It does not mean that somehow the blood of a lamb is all around us; nor does it mean that Jesus' actual blood is all around us. The blood of the lamb represents the blood of our Savior which represents Jesus' death for our sins.

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 not allow the Destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.

Wherever the blood was, there was protection for the occupants.

It sounds as if there are two entities going to each house; and where the blood is found, the Lord would not allow the Destroyer to go in and take the life (or lives) of the firstborn.

This verse suggests that only Egyptians were struck by the Destroyer; this would further suggest that all sons of Israel, by this time, had all believed in the Revealed God and, as a result of that faith, now obeyed Him.

#### Moses' vocabulary in Exodus 12:21–23

I suggested that there was something very interesting about the actual words of Moses found in vv. 21–23. Let me give you those verses again (using Young's translation, updated), and I will mark certain words and phrases (I will explain why after you read these verses):

Exodus 12:21–22 And Moses calls for all the elders of Israel, and says unto them, “**Draw out** and take for yourselves from the flock, for your **families**, and **slaughter** the **passover-sacrifice**; and you [all] have taken a **bunch** of **hyssop**, and have **dipped** it in the blood which is in the **basin**, and have **struck** it on the lintel, and on the two side-posts, from the blood which is in the **basin**, and ye, you [all] **go not out** each from the **opening** of his house till morning.

Exodus 12:23 “And Jehovah has passed on to strike the Egyptians, and has seen the blood on the lintel, and on the two side-posts, and Jehovah has passed over the **opening**, and does not **permit** the **destruction** to come into your houses to **strike**.

Recall that in vv. 2–13, God is telling Moses what must be done for the Passover. In vv. 21–24, Moses tells the elders what must be done for the Passover.



What is quite striking is this: the words I have highlighted *do not occur* in the first half of this chapter. A few of these words occur only here in the book of Exodus. Some of the specific actions are found here in these 3 verses, but not earlier in this chapter. This is worth thinking about, because God gave Moses directions for the Passover in vv. 1–13. So somehow, God gave directions for the Passover without using any of the bolded words that we read above.

Since some of the actual acts are different, then Moses is not simply paraphrasing the commands of vv. 2–20. Since Moses is always presented as respectful of God, we know that he is not just making up some stuff up on the fly or throwing in some of his own ideas.

The logical explanation is simply this: God said more than what we read in vv. 2–20; and, obviously, God said more than what we read in vv. 21–23. This is presented in written fashion, as a record of these events, but in such a way that it is not repetitious. What Moses says in vv. 21–23 no doubt came directly from God (Moses may or may not have paraphrased what God said). However, as the human author, Moses wrote these things in such a way as to avoid strict repetition (just as he did for the other plagues brought by God upon Egypt).

Exodus 12:24a *And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance...*

What the person will observe is the word *dâbâr* (דָּבָר) [pronounced *daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR*] which essentially means *speech, word, discourse, saying, thing, charge, utterance, matter, affair, cause, way, manner*. It is a reference to what is spoken; a one word consistent translation is difficult and it is found translated in almost as many different ways as it is found in the Old Testament.

Like the Eucharist, the Hebrews were to observe this ritual yearly (throughout their own dispensation). This ritual would always cause them to consider the time that they were spared because God saw the blood of the sacrificial lamb on their doorways and did not strike them down. For the many Hebrews who will believe in Jesus Christ during the 1<sup>st</sup> advent (and after), this is one of the many passages which will suddenly have meaning that it did not before.

Exodus 12:24b *...for you and your sons forever.*

The *you* here is a masculine singular. This would be to each individual that God is speaking to through Moses.

What God is saying here was to be kept by the people of God forever. *Forever* actually means, until the reality replaces the ritual.

Exodus 12:24 *And you [all] shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever.*

This would become a yearly observation. They were to remember just what had happened at this time. The fathers were to remember what happened the night before the exodus and they were to tell their sons (and each generation was to tell the next generation).

Most of the Hebrew people would observe the Passover and think about the happened originally. They were supposed to do this. In addition to this, the Passover also was typical (that is, it represented Jesus dying for our sins).

### **The Ceremonies and the Scriptures:**

In many portions of Torah, there is a twofold system of remembrance. There would be customs that the people observed; and there would be the Scriptures themselves. There would often be this twofold witness to the truth of God. So, the people of Israel would hear the Word of God being taught whenever (for instance, during the festival gatherings); but they themselves would also be observing certain feasts and days, based upon historical incidents. So what they observe in their yearly customs matches what they read (or hear) in the teaching of their Scriptures.

The Hebrews observed these rituals and ceremonies because their fathers had done the so; but they also observed them, as they came from the Word of God. The observances of these various rituals comes down to them both through the tradition of the ritual itself and through the Scriptures themselves.

This understanding is very important; because there are so-called scholars who, from time to time, make the claim that Moses did not write the books of Moses and that someone (or, several groups of people) wrote these words centuries later; and then somehow, convinced the people that these words of Scripture had existed all along.

However, passages like this tell us that the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Passover began at the very beginning; and that they continued every single year after, so that even today, at Seder, the events of the Hebrew people in Egypt are recalled.

Let's assume that this was not the case. Let's say that some person or various groups of people wrote these words hundreds of years later. How do you, hundreds of years after the fact, convince all the people of Israel that you have the words of Scripture for them? Israel has a very complex system of observances and rituals, firmly based in their actual historic experiences and the guidance of God's Word. If the Word of God was not there to begin with, where did the rituals come from? If their rituals came only from their experiences, then why are the words of God necessary?

Now, either they had been observing all of these festivals and ceremonies from the very beginning, or they had not been doing that. If they had been observing this complex set of rituals, then how did they know about them? Where did this set of rituals come from if they did not have some uniform explanation of the each ritual? Exactly where does this

uniform explanation come from if not the Scriptures? Or, let's assume that they were not observing all of these rituals—how do you convince a people, hundreds of years after the fact that, “Here are the books of Moses and here are the rituals that we should have been observing all of this time, but we were not”?

The rituals and the record of their origin and their continued observance go hand-in-hand. You cannot take an heathen nation and one day say to them, “We are not a heathen nation; we are a nation which has been observing all of these rules, regulations, and ceremonies; and here are the books to prove it.” That sort of approach makes little or no sense, if that nation had not already been observing these rituals and feast days. If they were already observing this complex set of rituals, where did these *new* books come from?

Now, even if you do not believe in Israel's God, and even if you think that Moses completely scammed this people; still, his writings and these festival observances still have to occur hand-in-hand with the related events and with the words of Moses. Moses can say, “Here is a celebration that we will observe each year; and let me describe it to you.” And, at the point, the people begin to observe that particular festival. It makes perfect sense for there to be a beginning point, and for that beginning point to be the words of Moses spoken at the time of these various events described in the book of Exodus.

Besides the witness of the Scriptures and the ceremonies, the fathers were responsible to explain these ceremonies and their meanings to their sons. These fathers would, in later years, tell their own sons about the celebrations and what they are all about. The father telling his son what these rituals mean—that is a third witness to the genuine nature of the ceremonies and the Scriptures. At some point in time, a child would ask, “Why are we doing this?” Then the father would say, “I will tell you what my father told me.” Or, in the alternative, the child would grow up celebrating the various rituals, with an explanation given by his father or grandfather prior to the observation of the ritual.

Let me further press this issue: if these complex observances of law, regulations and religious holidays all occur at the same time that the Scripture for them is written (which is the only logical approach), then how are we to view the miracles and plagues found in this book of Exodus? If these are all lies and made up stories, don't the people of this first generation rise up and say, “These are all lies and made-up stories!” Generally speaking, people don't follow leaders who they know are lying to them (this is different than people who follow leaders who don't believe that they are lying—how many Democrats believe that Presidents Obama and Biden are/were truthful? Almost all of them.).

The people during the time of Moses would have observed with their own eyes the miracles and judgments described in the book of Exodus. If they did not see these things, and Moses is writing Scriptures saying that they did—do you see the problem?

Here is my logical thought progression: it makes perfect sense for the Scriptures to be written at the same time that these ceremonies are established (what I mean by the same

time is, in the same decade). The ceremonies bear witness to the Scriptures; and the Scriptures, in turn, bear witness to the ceremonies. The fathers in each generation tell their sons what is happening, beginning with the generations which we are studying in Exodus 12.

The elders remember Moses coming to them and saying these things; and then they remember organizing this first Passover event. But then, as part and parcel of these religious holidays, are the signs and miracles which also took place *at the same time and were observed by the very same people*. Do you see how this logically leads us to accept the miracles of the Scripture—particularly of this book of Exodus—as having occurred, as all of these people saw these things take place. All of this ties together these things which we are studying as interdependent events. You cannot have a history where, half of it is false and half true—not where the people themselves are witnesses to this history.

One of the things which I find remarkable are the *sorts* of great acts or miracles we find throughout the Bible. They are always appropriate to the audience. For instance, when Jesus healed someone, the people listening to Him teach were often able to observe the healing as a group. Often, the person being healed would have been known in his village as injured, sick, or whatever. Many of his neighbors would have actually seen the healing take place (which was instantaneous); or they would see the person *after* he had been healed. In any case, such healings were exactly right for a small group of people (10 or 20; or maybe a few hundred). But when God performed a great miracle for the Exodus generation, this would be something which they could all observe. They could all see the pillar of fire or the cloud pillar. They will all walk across what used to be a river bed (in the very near future). My point being, Moses records these events and the people affirm the events by their observation of the various ceremonies commemorating these same events.

And why would an entire nation observe the second Passover ritual if this first Passover never occurred?

This history that we are studying occurs coterminous with the celebrations and observances.

Now, could someone have inserted all of the miracles and signs and fantastical events after the fact? Maybe the rituals and events occurred mostly as written, but the more fantastic information was added, or the events were embellished. Is that not possible?

I want you to consider this. Let's say that I want to add a verse to the end of Matthew, and it would read, *And before Jesus went up, He told His disciples, "Now, you must name all your children, Bob."* Now, how exactly would I convince everyone in the world that is the true final verse of Matthew? That would be an impossible task. Now, maybe if I had a dynamic and forceful personality, and was a natural leader (I am not any of these things), I might gain a following of a few hundred who would go along with this—and these people might name all of their children *Bob* as a result. That is best/worst case scenario. So, I

might convince a few hundred people that there is one more verse in the book of Matthew, but, for the most part, the rest of the world that knows about this movement would consider me a nut—and the movement of the extra verse in Matthew would be considered a cult.

Would there ever be universal acceptance of that one simple extra verse that I want to add at the end of Matthew? Of course not! That would be absurd. Similarly, changing the Bible after the fact or presenting the Hebrew people with Scriptures long after those Scriptures were supposed to have been written—that would be equally absurd. People could not, hundreds of years after the fact, add all of these miracles into the book of Exodus. How would they convince the entire nation to buy into it?

Furthermore, there was a semi-permanent copy of the Pentateuch engraved on rock (Joshua 8:32 Deuteronomy 27:2–3, 8). There were also, very likely, many copies made of these holy books (an entire industry of copying manuscripts arose in nation Israel). No one would have bought into these sudden changes—particularly the fantastical changes. Especially hundreds of years later.

So, the true logical position is, the ceremonies and the Scriptures occur at the same time in Israel's history (which is what we read in the books of the Law). This would mean that there is testimony contained in these same Scriptures that all Israel observed a myriad of signs and miraculous (or wondrous) events. The people of Israel not only accepted the Scriptures, but they revered the Scriptures—and this reverence continues even to this day, even though the bulk<sup>40</sup> of the sons of Israel do not believe in all of these miracles.

### **The Respect of Scholars for the Scriptures:**

This respect for their own Scriptures runs so deep in contemporary Hebrew culture, that they continue to revere these Scriptures—whether they take them literally or not—and they carefully translate them into whatever language that they speak. I work with these Jewish translations nearly every day of my life—when it comes to the Bible, there is no discernable difference between the Jewish translation, the Roman Catholic translation, a non-denominational translation and any other translation you want to throw in there (apart from any translation done specifically for a cult<sup>41</sup>). Now, the vocabulary might be slightly different, the sentence structure will be different, but what the text says is virtually identical in all of these different groups.

I have chosen to use the NKJV translation throughout this weekly study of Exodus; but, I could have used the New Tanach or Kaplan's translation or the JPS translation, and those Jewish translations would not have affected my explanation of the text one whit. Once and awhile, I would have to say, "I think this should be translated in a different way, and this is why..." But I do that with the NKJV on occasion as well.

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<sup>40</sup> I think; I have never checked a survey on this.

<sup>41</sup> Like the Jehovah Witness translation.

Let me add that, if I did not identify the translation, you would, as a reader, not have realized that you were reading a Jewish translation (of course, now and again—not often<sup>42</sup>—a very Jewish term might be thrown in).

One of the simple reasons that Scriptures are so consistently rendered, regardless of the viewpoint of the organization doing the translation, is, so much of the Bible is narrative. So much of the Bible is like this: *Moses went to the store to pick up a dozen eggs*. Now, one translation might change up the order, the vocabulary or even insert a word or two, and say, *To the store Moses went, [intending] to purchase 12 eggs*. Now, maybe one translator wants to follow the word order of the Hebrew closely; and another may want to use contemporary sentence structure. That, generally speaking, has no effect on our understanding of what is taking place. Narrative is narrative. How do you change Moses going to the store for a couple dozen eggs around to reflect a more Catholic point-of-view or a more Jewish perspective or the theology of Protestantism? You cannot take simple narrative and change it around to present a particular theological viewpoint. I don't know exactly how much of the Bible is narrative, but I would guess perhaps half of it.<sup>43</sup> Whatever percentage it is, there would be no reason for there to be a very Catholic version and a very Jewish version. In fact, when I present a representative sample from the 90 Old Testament translations that I refer to, I group them. One group I call the Jewish Name Bibles and another group I call the Catholic Bibles. Of all the groups of Bibles that I deal with, these two groups are probably the most alike.

I am trying to make a point about the accuracy of the many available translations. I am not Jewish, nor am I Catholic.

The men and groups who translate from the Hebrew Scriptures into a modern language (like English) take this responsibility very seriously, be they protestant, Catholic or Jewish scholars. There is a lot less slanting of the Scriptural text than you would think.

We also know that translators (and, before them, copyists), for a very long time have handled the Scriptures with great care. Accuracy has always been of the foremost importance. For this reason, we can compare a Hebrew manuscript from 200 B.C.<sup>44</sup> to a Hebrew manuscript from the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D., and there are no significant differences. Whether I made a translation from one or the other, and taught from that translation, what I taught would not change one iota.

Now, when I do a complete work-up on a chapter of the Bible, I refer to perhaps 90 different translations (over 100 for the New Testament). Only on rare occasions do I compelled to say something about this or that translator's take on a verse. "So-and-so

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<sup>42</sup> Depending upon which Jewish translation we are talking about.

<sup>43</sup> I have seen the claim of 40% doing a DuckDuckGo search; but that would certainly depend upon just how specifically you defined *narrative*.

<sup>44</sup> The oldest manuscripts that we have of the Old Testament go back to about 200 B.C.



does not give us a very good translation here, and that is because..." For instance, there is a passage in Deuteronomy where it sounds as if a man could rape a woman, give her father some money, and then marry her. Well, that is not what the passage says, even though several translations give that impression. To me, that understanding needed to be carefully corrected. But passages like this are rare. Therefore, I rarely find myself having to deal with problem translations.

## **Lessons 164–165: Exodus 12:21–28**

## **Instructions for the Passover continue**

So far, this is what we have been studying:

Exodus 12:21–24 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said unto them, "Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the Passover. And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out from the door of his house until the morning. For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He see the blood upon the lintel and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance to you and to your sons forever. (Niobi Study Bible)

In Exodus 12:1–20, God spoke to Moses about the coming Passover (and He talked a little about the Feast of Unleavened Bread). With v. 21, Moses begins speaking to the elders. However, it is very likely that he already conveyed what God said in the first 20 verses. In vv. 21–27, Moses is simply telling the elders what must be done for the first Passover.

Exodus 12:25a It will come to pass when you come to the land which the Lord will give you, just as He promised,...

Throughout Israel's history as a people, they have been promised this land of milk and honey. This took place with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They had direct interaction with God. Since then, for the people of Israel, there has been no divine revelation—for a period of about 400 years (this long period of silence occurs twice during the Jewish Age).

Moses is telling these leaders that this day will come, just as God has promised them. At this point in Israel's spiritual understanding, this land of promise was key. It loomed large in the minds of those who believed God. After they came to the land and took it, their Messiah then loomed large in their minds as the next great, yet unfulfilled promise of God.

A simple reading of this text indicates that the people there understand what Moses is talking about. None of the elders calls a time out and asks, "Just what land are you talking about? Where is this land? What did God promise?" Since no one asks these questions, that suggests that these people knew this information (which information comes from the book of Genesis).

Although there are not a huge number of references back to the book of Genesis, there are enough to indicate that the people of God knew their own history and their relationship with the Revealed God. They may or may not have had the book of Genesis in writing. We do not know when that occurred. However, up to the end of the book of Genesis, I believe that the divine Scriptures were passed along orally.

Exodus 12:25b ...that you shall keep this service.

*Service* is the word ʿăbôdâh (עֲבֹדָה) [pronounced *gû<sup>b</sup>-vo-DAWH*] and it can mean *labor, service and work which is related to servitude or to the temple*. Strong's #5656 & #5647 BDB #715.

God has told Moses to tell the people that there will be certain things that they must do—in particular, there is a celebration that they must take part in. Moses is saying, “When you get into the land, you must continue to observe this rite.”

Again, no one asks, “What land are you talking about?” This is because the people of Israel are familiar with their history, suggesting that they are familiar with the book of Genesis.

Exodus 12:25 *It will come to pass when you come to the land which the Lord will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service.*

They were to continue to observe this celebration, even upon entering into Canaan. This was a brand new thing being added to Jewish tradition. In fact, this was the first of many things which would be added to the lives of these Hebrew people and their descendants.

My guess is, some of what Moses was explaining may have gone over some of their heads. They understood what they needed to do for the night of the Passover—that they were careful about—but the celebrations in the future? Did they fully appreciate them? Did they wonder when they would be in Canaan? Did they consider that they might observe some of the feast days in the desert-wilderness? My guess is, based upon their clear lack of spiritual knowledge, that they have not carefully considered their future or what these ceremonies would look like in the future.

The way I have described the Hebrew people sounds rather schizophrenic. On the one hand, I am telling you that they knew the promises of God which came out of the book of Genesis. On the other hand, I am telling you that they did not fully appreciate all that Moses was telling them. We will find that there are two very distinct generations of Israel who would receive these words. One generation is nominally obedient (sometimes even enthusiastically responsive), and another generation seems to be taking all of this in and believing it.

Now, even if there were large groups of Hebrew people who did not really appreciate what was happening here, this would be taken care of. God would put the Levites in charge of spiritual things. They would continue all of the feast celebrations.

Moses and Aaron, and Aaron's two youngest sons, concerned themselves with these matters. They thought about these things. The spiritual education of the people would be considered fundamental.

Exodus 12:25 *It will come to pass when you come to the land which the Lord will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service.*

When I first went through Law of Moses, I found it odd that the Passover would be spoken about here, and then there; and then somewhere else. Of course, I wondered, why didn't Moses just write down, "This is what you will do for the Passover..." and put it all in one place? There would have been less repetition and less required searching to obey God's mandates.

Here is why: the Passover was first celebrated in Egypt—before the people even completely appreciated what was going on (they will leave Egypt in the aftermath of the first Passover). They are being told that, in the future, they will enter into the land given them by God, and they are to observe the Passover in the land as well.

This approach to the Passover is very much in keeping with Moses' day-by-day interaction with the people of Israel, from the plagues all the way to going into to the edge of the Land of Promise. Had these Scriptures been written hundreds of years later, their approach would have very likely been, "Here is the first ceremony that you will observe. It is called the Passover and this is what you will do." And then everything would be laid out in one place. But that is not what happened.

Moses will interact with the people for 40 years; and God will interact with Moses throughout these same 40 years. This first Passover is a unique experience. All the firstborn of the land would die that night, if they are not protected/covered by the blood. That aspect of the Passover was not repeated. God did not promise to kill the firstborn every subsequent Passover. However, this event was still important enough to be remembered; and for the details to be shared with their children.

As an aside, we will find this sort of thing occurring throughout the Mosaic Law. Some information here, then some information there. Part of the reason is related to the time and circumstance of the first celebration of this or that holiday; which is then slightly modified for future observances. However, this does not explain all the scattering of information in the Pentateuch (specifically, in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy).

Exodus 12:26 *And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?'...*

The service being spoken of is the Passover rite, as it would be celebrated in the future. It was designed to be a teaching aide. This verse makes that clear. While participating in this rite, years hence, certainly the younger persons who were not a part of the Exodus will wonder why their fathers have a custom or a ritual such as this. That situation provides the opening for the father to explain to his son their relationship to the living God. Ritual

without reality is meaningless. This is to help the young person understand the Passover; the Father speaks of Y<sup>e</sup>howah God to his sons and daughters.

Here we come to one of the most important things that fathers will do—they will tell their sons about the ceremonies in which they will all take part. These ceremonies are crammed with meaning; they are filled with information; and the sons are to learn from their fathers; and many years later, they will teach their own sons these same things.

Quite obviously, when there is a break in the way things are done (that is, they all observe a holiday), children will naturally ask why. The parents are to tell them during this celebration why they are doing what they are doing.

One of the purposes of a holiday is to convey information from sometimes many generations ago; information that generation believed important to convey. In the United States, if you tell your children, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, we gather with friends for a BBQ and we set off fireworks, then you are not really passing along any important information. If all Thanksgiving is, is a gathering of family to eat a massive meal, then you have not conveyed to your family what Thanksgiving is. You are doing them a disservice.

Exodus 12:27a ...that you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the Lord,...

The children of Israel would ask about the celebration, and the elders would explain that this is the Passover to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. Then they will explain exactly what that means.

Exodus 12:27b ...Who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt...

Part of the celebration of the Passover includes the fact that God would pass over the houses of the sons of Israel.

Now, bear in mind, that the first Passover is actually future from this point (but it will occur in the chapter which we are studying).

Exodus 12:27c ...when He struck the Egyptians...

The 10<sup>th</sup> plague would involve the killing of the firstborn of all people and animals in Egypt (we do not know if they were offered the option of killing a lamb in their household; I believe that they were). The striking down by God would be the killing of all the firstborn.

Exodus 12:27d ...and delivered our households.”

One of the most important words in the New Testament is the word *saved* and its many variations and cognates. The corresponding Hebrew word is found in this verse: nâtsal (נָצַל) [pronounced *naw-TSAHL*] and it means *deliver, snatch away, save, escape from, rescue, recover*. Strong's #5337 BDB #664. This word is found several hundred times in the Old Testament, it is used primarily for temporal deliverance. This word is also a shadow illustration of eternal deliverance.

The houses where God saw the blood, He passed over those homes. That blood represents the blood of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 12:27a-d ...that you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the Lord, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.' "

They are to explain to their children what this celebration is all about. They tell their children about the first Passover. They tell their children what God required, and how their fathers were spared, because they put the blood on their doorframes.

This provides yet another witness. There are 3 witnesses: the witness of the ritual itself; the witness of the directions for this ritual found in the Scriptures; and the witness of the parents teaching these historical events to their sons. In this way, their sons are receiving three witnesses: the Scriptures, the observation of the ceremony, and the explanation given to them by their fathers.

The modern celebration of the Passover no longer has these corroborating 3 witnesses. What they do today and what is required from the Old Testament are two different things entirely. The Seder, as is celebrated today, is little more than a person summing of the events of the Exodus. There is no witness in the Scriptures to the Jewish person today. What the Scriptures tell them to do and what they actually do is not the same.

Exodus 12:27e **So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.**

The people, having observed all that they have observed to this point in time, now worshiped their God.

Moses is explaining this to the elders, and they bow down and worship. They are not worshipping Moses; they are worshipping God.

The problem is, these people will not continue to place their faith in the doctrines of God; or in the doctrines taught by Moses.

Exodus 12:27 ...that you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the Lord, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.'" **So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.**

V. 27 is all about that 3<sup>rd</sup> witness, the witness of the fathers to their sons.

Exodus 12:28a **Then the children of Israel went away and did so;...**

It is easy to read this and not recognize what Moses has done. God first began telling Moses what needed to be done for the Passover. Moses then explained these things to the elders. Moses would have told the elders what God said to him, which information was continued. And now, out of nowhere, **the children of Israel went away and did so;...** So,

you see we have moved almost imperceptibly from God speaking to Moses, to Moses speaking with the elders, to someone speaking to the people; and to the people responding. Most people, when they read a passage like this, simply fill in the missing information without really thinking about it. That is how good of a writer Moses is.

At some point, Moses and Aaron and the elders spoke this information to the people and the people did what they were told to do. However, this is *not* a part of the narrative; although it was certainly something which takes place. If you will notice, the first time the *people* are mentioned is in v. 27e.

If this was the first time that Moses spoke to them about the Passover, then the elders would first teach these things to the rest of Israel and then they would follow the directions which Moses gave them.

Exodus 12:28b ...just as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

God explained what the people were to do regarding the Passover, and this was explained to the people by Moses (and perhaps Aaron and/or the elders). The instructions originally came from God and Moses repeated them.

A month or two prior to this, if Moses and Aaron went to the people with these instructions, they would not have listened. The Plagues opened them up to God's direction and to Moses' leadership. Every now and again, the passage mentions Aaron so that we know he is still there.

Exodus 12:28 Then the children of Israel went away and did so; just as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

One of the reasons that all of these plagues were needed was so that all of the Hebrews would obey Moses when he told them what to do.

Again, the implication is, all of Israel did what God told them to do. It is likewise apparent that all, or nearly all, of Egypt ignored these warnings by God.

It is my estimation that the Hebrew people did two things. They went to their Egyptian neighbors and they asked for gold and silver—reparations for their years of slavery. Even though they were told to do this back in Exodus 11:2, they actually followed this commandment in Exodus 12:35.

You may recall that the text makes it sound as if plague 9 and 10 are completely separate, disjoint events. However, I have suggested that, when Pharaoh changed his mind about letting the people go, on that same day, Moses warned them about the upcoming and final<sup>45</sup> plague. Recall that the 9<sup>th</sup> plague was the 3 days of complete darkness. We do not know if there was any warning given to the Egyptians. Then Moses storms out from before

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<sup>45</sup> However, note that Moses never calls this *the final plague*.



Pharaoh, saying, “[You won’t ever see me again.](#)” (Exodus 10:27–29) Later, Moses warns Pharaoh about the next plague (Exodus 11:4–7—it is not really clear exactly who Moses is warning in this chapter until Exodus 11:8b). So, I think that Moses warns Pharaoh about this plague first, *before* storming out. However, because these judgments are presented as disjoint events, it appears as if Moses spoke to Pharaoh on two occasions when it was probably just once.

The text makes it seem as if these plagues are completely and totally disjoint events; and that is not really the case. In a literary sense, It makes much more sense to present the judgments of God in the Scriptures as if they are separate events. However, there are enough clues throughout to tell us that there was some overlap. That is, Pharaoh would not refuse God’s requirements after a plague, and then Moses and Aaron would just stand there dumbfounded, making an excuse to leave so that they could talk to God and then come back and say, “Okay, here is what God is going to do next!” Instead, when Pharaoh reneged on a promise, Moses and Aaron looked Pharaoh right in the eye and told him, “This is what is happening next.” There was no break or regrouping which needed to take place between plagues. Moses and Aaron knew that Pharaoh would make promises and then not deliver on them; therefore, they were generally ready, right then, at his refusal, to pronounce the next judgment.

When the Hebrew people asked the Egyptian people for gold and silver, I believe that they also told their neighbors about what God had warned about the deaths of the firstborn. It seems reasonable that, every Egyptian knew what was happening; perhaps they asked the Hebrew people what was God planning to do next? Furthermore, when they went around and first asked for silver and gold, they may not have been given any—but, with the next plague, some reticent Egyptians may have brought them money with the intention of hoping this would spur them to leave.

Let me suggest that, if a Hebrew woman was going to ask some Egyptian for silver and gold jewelry, they probably did not ask some random person; but if they knew some Egyptians—like those they worked for—they would ask them in particular. And they would share the warning of the final plague as well. Or they might share the warning if asked.



### **The Israelites despoiling the**

**Egyptians** (ancient artwork), from The Golden Haggadah, f. 13, 1325–1349. Taken from [The Torah](#); accessed May 19, 2021.

The page that I took this artwork from goes into great detail about how the King James Version says that the people of Israel *borrowed* from the Egyptians, but did not return what they *borrowed*. The problem here is, the KJV suffers from anachronism. The word *borrow* in King James' English does not mean *to borrow*, but it means *to ask for*. This is one of the reasons that I do not use the KJV. One has to stop at every fifth word and explain what is going on.

I realize that there are King James Bible churches all over the place. The problem is, they will not attract many young members. Furthermore, those who attend the church will sound as if they are speaking a foreign language to everyone else (for all intents and purposes, they are).

The KJV, in its time, was a great and marvelous translation. Today, we have many translations which are just as accurate (the NKJV, the MEV or the NASB), but written in today's English. There is a lot of literary might found in the KJV, but it is too easy to read and misunderstand what is going on.

End tangent.

Once the people of Israel received gold, silver and whatever other articles of value, then they returned to their homes and continued to prepare for the first Passover. On the 10<sup>th</sup>, they were to choose a lamb. Even though the Scriptures are not specific right here, it is likely that the Hebrew families chose a lamb and this was immediately followed by the 3 days of darkness. You will recall that, in Egypt, this was thick, impenetrable darkness in Egypt. There was also darkness in Goshen, but they were able to have working lamps in their homes. That is, in individual homes, they could fire up a lantern and be able to see. This represented the fact that they had light—the truth of God's Word—with them.

I realize that the mixing together of the plagues as I have described herein is rather confusing. It is not important that we know and memorize each individual event and when exactly each part of each judgment took place. I am simply suggesting that these events were not as disjoint as they seem; but recording them in the Scriptures as completely separate events makes the most literary sense. The more I study Moses' 4 books, the more I am amazed by his writing skill and style.

I have previously given the example of one of those *fix up a house and flip it* tv shows where a small group of people will acquire a house, work on it, make it look great, and then sell it—and that is their show every week. However, that is not all what happened to them during that week (or month). During that period of time, they might have acquired 2 or 3 additional houses, to work on as well. They may be working on 2 or 3 houses at the same time. But it is much more palatable if we, as viewers, focus on just one house at a time. Sometimes following events exactly in the order that they occur is more confusing than dividing them into separate digestible portions, organized by subject matter.

## The Tenth Plague: Death of the Firstborn

The final plague is seen as an attack upon all the gods of Egypt; and upon Pharaoh, who was considered to be a deity figure. Pharaoh had sought to kill the male infants of the Israelites, and God would now kill all of the firstborn of all the Egyptians.

This night is both the Passover and the death of the firstborn (those who are not *under the blood*).

Exodus 12:29a *And it came to pass at midnight...*

This literally reads, *And it is, in the middle of the night...* This is another way of saying *This is what took place at midnight...*

At this point, every head of the household has made his decision for his household.

Exodus 12:29b *...that the Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt,...*

At midnight, Y<sup>e</sup>howah-Elohim went throughout the land of Egypt, killing the firstborn of every household where He did not see the blood. This was the blood that was supposed to be placed on the door frames so that the Lord would pass over that house.

Exodus 12:29c *...from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne...*

God killed the firstborn not protected by the blood. He killed Pharaoh's firstborn son.

Exodus 12:29d *...to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon...*

On the other end of the spectrum would be those held captive in prison. Even their firstborn sons were killed by God. No one was missed.

Exodus 12:29a-d *And it came to pass at midnight that the Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon...*

This plague of plagues affected every man and beast in Egypt, from the least to the greatest. This was intended by God to be the devastating plague, the one which caused despair beyond belief throughout the land of Egypt. The Egyptians would have no choice but to completely eject the sons of Israel from their land.

There is a reasonable possibility<sup>46</sup> that we have historical evidence that the son of the Pharaoh of Egypt was slain in this judgement. On the timetable for Israel, the Exodus occurred 480 years prior to the laying of the cornerstone for Solomon's temple

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<sup>46</sup> This is taken from *The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, p. 115

(1Kings 6:1), which occurred four years after Solomon began his reign. If Solomon began his reign in 970 B.C. then this cornerstone would have been laid in 966 B.C. This places the date of the Exodus in 1446–1445 B.C.

With regards to the Egyptian time frame: Thutmose III of the Eighteenth dynasty was likely the Pharaoh of oppression from whom Moses fled in Exodus 2:11–15. He died in 1447 B.C. His son, Amenhotep II became the Pharaoh of the Exodus. He was succeeded by his son, Thutmose IV, who ruled from 1421–1410 B.C. We have either a stone or a pillar which was discovered in the shrine that is connected to the great Sphinx at Gizeh, where Thutmose IV recorded a dream that he had. In this dream, he meets the god Harmakhis-Khepri-Re-Atum, who promises him his kingdom on earth (that is, the rulership of Egypt). There are conditions placed upon this, such as he needed to grab a shovel and remove the sand which stood in the way of the chapel door between the huge paws of the Sphinx. However, this would seem foolish for a *crown prince*, the person next in line for the throne to dream and then record. He is going to be the next in line for the throne anyway, so this would be superfluous *unless* he was not the crown prince, but the next in line after the crown prince. Then a dream like this would be meaningful enough to remember and later to record. This would imply that his older brother met with an untimely death, allowing him to assume the throne over Egypt.

We have to be careful about some extra-Biblical records. Some of them certainly coincide with the Biblical record; but some of them do not. So our faith might be bolstered by a secular record here or there; but we should not depend upon them as *proof* of anything.

Exodus 12:29e ...and all the firstborn of livestock.

God's killing of the firstborn included the firstborn of livestock.

The only explanation that I have here is, this was done so that all of Egypt would suffer loss of some sort.

Exodus 12:29 And it came to pass at midnight that the Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock.

At this point, everyone had been given the opportunity to protect their home and family. Moses warned the elders of what was to come and what they had to do. We are not given any percentages in Scripture, but it appears that 95–100% of the sons of Jacob did what they were supposed to and that 95–100% of the Egyptians ignored this impending judgment until it actually came upon their house.

Despite the official sound percentages above, the Bible does not record any exceptions in Goshen or in Egypt. This does not mean that there were no exceptions in either camp; but none are found in the Biblical record.



There is a *mixed multitude* who will leave Egypt with Israel. We have no idea how large this group was, how they integrated into the Hebrew people, or if they obeyed God's requirements for the Passover. However, if anyone apart from the Hebrew people followed the directions for the Passover, it would seem most likely to be people from this group.

As has already been discussed, the Egyptians could not have followed the exact same timetable that the Hebrew people followed when it came to the Passover. The situations of the Hebrew people and the Egyptians were different regarding the judgments. Therefore, if any Egyptian was offered a way out, it would have been a modified Passover. Logically, this would not have been recorded in Scripture simply because that would be another set of rules which were different than those followed by the Israelites. Potentially, that would have added to the confusion of those wanting to follow the Passover in subsequent years.

**There was weeping** (a graphic); from [Free Bible Images](#); accessed March 10, 2021.

Exodus 12:30a **So Pharaoh rose in the night,**...

I suspect that everyone was on edge. Moses had (sometimes through Aaron) warned Pharaoh and the people of Egypt of what was to come. In this, the 10<sup>th</sup> and final plague, even though many in Egypt did nothing that they were told to do, they were still fully aware of what was happening.



They may have been hard-hearted, but they were still affected by these judgments. I believe that all Egypt knew about this 10<sup>th</sup> plague prior to it happening. However, if they did know about it and expected it, that knowledge is not clearly recorded in the Scriptures.

Exodus 12:30b **...he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians;**...

Pharaoh rose up in the middle of the night, as did all of his servants and all Egypt.

Even though the Egyptians, for the most part, did not believe yet, they still could not sleep. Whether there was any noise to accompany these deaths or not, we are not told. However, there are two reasons that many of these Egyptians would awaken in the middle of the night to find their first-born dead. (1) Even though these are unbelievers who refused to seek God's mercy, they still have seen plague after plague, a revelation of God's power. Many of them perhaps believed the scientists of their day who ascribed all of the plagues to natural phenomena and who asserted that Moses was a lucky prophet who called all the shots right. (2) Secondly, there is often an unexplained almost ethereal bond

between parents and their children and certainly when the first-born in many households died, the parents suddenly found themselves awakened. Whatever sound may have occurred in the deaths of the first-born, this was nothing compared to the sad cry of each Egyptian who had lost a son or daughter.

Exodus 12:30a-b *So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians;...*

We do not know what precautions, if any, Pharaoh took regarding his firstborn son. Neither do we know about his servants. However, what will become clear, they did not perform the ritual which God required, placing the Passover blood on the sills of the door.

Exodus 12:30c *...and there was a great cry in Egypt,...*

Everyone was aware of what was happening; everyone had been warned, and everyone was on edge. But, Egyptians, for the most part, did not do what was required of them, to believe the Revealed God and slaughter a lamb for their home (I have assumed that some were warned and given the solution).

Exodus 12:30d *...for there was not a house where there was not one dead.*

As a result, in Egypt, there was no house that was without a loss of life.

To many, this will seem even beyond cruel. Recall, however, that these Egyptians have seen the hand of God in their lives for the past month or two doing things that have never been seen before throughout all the history of Egypt; in fact, since the foundation of the world. They viewed all of these judgments firsthand. All any Egyptian had to do was go and inquire of the Hebrews how to avoid this plague. Certainly, with what had been occurring, every time Moses spoke to Pharaoh, word of this spread throughout this area nearly as quickly as a modern-day newscast. All they needed to do is to believe Yahweh enough to slaughter a lamb without spot or blemish and to put the blood on the door posts of their home. Certainly, you would think that the life of their son or daughter would be worth that much. At the very worst, they faced the ostracism of their neighbors, friends and relatives if they believed Moses.

As we have studied, when the Hebrew people went out among them to ask for silver and gold, it is very likely that they shared the warning of the Passover at that time. This may have been the one plague where the warning was distributed by the Hebrew people themselves. The witness of the Hebrew people to the Egyptians is an assumption which I have made.

This is no different than salvation—an unbeliever need only believe in Jesus Christ. He does not need to do anything else to be spared eternity in the lake of fire. Very little is required of us by God in order to apprehend salvation other than a small amount of positive volition toward Him. What the unbeliever faces is far worse than the death of their first-born and what is required of them is far less. If you are personally concerned about an



unbeliever, then tell them about God's grace and how little is required to save them from a burning hell.

Exodus 12:30 So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

Most Egyptians, despite all that they had seen, were not willing to believe Moses and the warnings that they had received. We do not know exactly how the warnings of God regarding the firstborn were given. Moses clearly warned Pharaoh and his servants in Exodus 11:4–8. It is my belief that Israelites, when asking for reparations, also warned the Egyptians that they asked from. The sons of Israel had to know what was going on, so that they themselves could protect their own firstborn. It only seems reasonable to me that, discussions took place regarding this final plague as a matter of natural course when the Israelites interacted with the Egyptians.

Exodus 12:30 So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

This seems to indicate that few if any of the Egyptians observed the Passover. Virtually all of them suffered the loss of their firstborn.



**The Firstborn Slain** (Wood engraving by Gustave Doré); from [Media Storehouse](#); accessed March 10, 2021.

Plagues		Gods of Egypt		Interesting Notes
1	WATER TURNED TO BLOOD Exodus 7:14-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Khnum</li> <li>• Hapi</li> <li>• Osiris</li> </ul>	Guardian of river's source. Spirit of the Nile. Nile was his bloodstream.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duplicated by the Egyptians in a limited way.</li> <li>• Occurs in Goshen where Israelites lived.</li> <li>• Dead fish — putrid smell</li> </ul>
2	FROGS Exodus 8:1-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hapi }</li> <li>• Heqt }</li> </ul>	Frog goddess to Egypt. Both related to fertility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duplicated by the Egyptians in a limited way.</li> <li>• Occurs in Goshen where Israelites lived.</li> </ul>
3	LICE Exodus 8:16-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seb</li> </ul>	The earth god of Egypt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not duplicated by the Egyptians</li> <li>• Occurs in Goshen where Israelites lived.</li> <li>• Attributed to the “finger of God.”</li> </ul>
4	FLIES Exodus 8:20-32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uatchit -</li> </ul>	The fly god of Egypt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God now makes a separation between the Egyptians and the Israelites (which continues until the final two plagues).</li> <li>• No more plagues will come upon the Israelites.</li> </ul>
5	DISEASE ON CATTLE Exodus 9:1-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ptah</li> <li>• Mnevis</li> <li>• Hathor</li> <li>• Amon</li> </ul>	Egyptian gods associated with bulls and cows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affects property.</li> <li>• Death of livestock.</li> </ul>
6	BOILS Exodus 9:8-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sekhmet</li> <li>• Serapis }</li> <li>• Imhotep }</li> </ul>	Egyptian goddess of Epidemics Egyptian gods of healing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affects physical bodies.</li> <li>• Pharaoh's magicians cannot even appear in court.</li> </ul>
7	HAIL Exodus 9:13-35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nut</li> <li>• Isis &amp; Seth</li> <li>• Shu -</li> </ul>	Egyptian sky goddess. Egyptian agriculture deities. Egyptian god of the atmosphere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical uniqueness for such a storm in Egypt.</li> <li>• Pharaoh confesses his sin but later changes his mind.</li> </ul>

Plagues		Gods of Egypt		Interesting Notes
8	LOCUSTS Exodus 10:1-20	• Serapia	Egyptian deity protector from Locusts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pharaoh offers a compromise.</li><li>• The compromise is rejected.</li><li>• Pharaoh again confesses his sin.</li></ul>
9	DARKNESS Exodus 10:21-29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Re</li><li>• Amon-re</li><li>• Aten</li><li>• Atum</li><li>• Horus</li></ul>	Egyptian sun gods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dark in Egypt at midday.</li><li>• Although Goshen appears to be darkened, their darkness can be pierced by the light of lamps.</li></ul>
		• Thoth	Egyptian moon god.	
10	DEATH OF FIRSTBORN Exodus 12:29-36	This plague was a judgment on all of Egypt's gods, including Pharaoh himself. In Exodus 1, Pharaoh had killed the sons of Israel. Now the Lord kills the firstborn sons of the Egyptians (Exodus 11-12). Pharaoh will now let Israel go. He will later loose his army when they drown in the Red Sea (Exodus 14:4-31).		

This chart appears to have originally come from Donnie S. Barnes, Th.D (as opposed to Albert Barnes, whom I often quote). This seems to be from <http://www.biblecharts.org/oldtestament/thetenplagues.pdf> (slightly edited)

The death of the firstborn is the final plague. The Egyptians are not willing to fight the God of Israel any longer (although they will have a change of heart in a few days).

## The Exodus

What happened in the 10<sup>th</sup> plague was beyond what anyone could imagine by way of sadness. No one wanted the Hebrew people to remain in Egypt anymore. The Egyptians themselves, along with Pharaoh, will want Moses and Aaron to lead all Israel out of Egypt.

**The Ten Plagues of Egypt** (a chart); from [Medium.com](https://medium.com/), accessed August 20, 2019.



**Waters Turn to Blood**  
Exodus 7:14-25



**Amphibians (Frogs)**  
Exodus 7:26-8:11



**Gnats (Lice)**  
Exodus 8:12-15



**Flies**  
Exodus 8:16-28



**Disease on Livestock**  
Exodus 9:1-7

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# The Ten Plagues of Egypt

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**Unhealable Boils**  
Exodus 9:8-12

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Artwork by Adrian Schwede



**Hail and Fire**  
Exodus 9:13-35



**Locusts**  
Exodus 10:1-20



**Darkness**  
Exodus 10:21-29



**Death of First-Born**  
Exodus 11:1-12:36

Exodus 12:30 So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

At this point in the narrative, the deaths of the firstborn has just taken place. Where a lamb was slaughtered and its blood placed on the doorsill, that house was spared from the judgment of God. It appears from the text that no one in Egypt did this. It also appears as though everyone in Israel so acted.

Now Pharaoh will call for Moses and Aaron again.

Exodus 12:31a Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night,,,.

This was not going to wait. Pharaoh did not decide, "First thing tomorrow morning, I call in Moses and Aaron." He was up in the middle of the night; his firstborn was dead; he was likely aware of staff where the same thing happened. Therefore, he needs to deal with Moses and Aaron and the people of Israel right then and there.

He tells Moses and Aaron what he wanted them to do. "Rise up and leave," he said. This required immediate action.

Exodus 12:31b ...and said, “Rise, go out from among my people,....

You may recall how the sons of Israel were to eat the lamb of sacrifice (for their own household), and they were to be ready to go—loins girded and sandals on their feet. They were going to head out that early morning.

This was an order from the Pharaoh of Egypt. At this point, the Israelites have no choice. They must leave Egypt.

Exodus 12:31c ...both you and the children of Israel.

Everyone was to leave—Moses and Aaron and also, all the children of Israel.

Exodus 12:31d And go, serve the Lord as you have said.

Moses and Aaron, 10 times, have told Pharaoh, “We need to go out from Egypt and worship our God.” Pharaoh now tells them that it is now time for them to go.

Pharaoh has finally given in to the pressure placed upon him by Israel's God. He is allowing them to go into the desert to celebrate their relationship to Yahweh, but he will later put forth a series of actions which will make it impossible for the Hebrews to return to Egypt.

Being Pharaoh, all three verbs are in the Qal imperative—as though he has some control over this matter. God is the One in charge. However, these commands by Pharaoh make it necessary, by national authority, for Israel to leave Egypt. The Hebrew people, at this point, have no choice but to pack up and leave.

It is unclear by the text whether Pharaoh understands this to be permanent or temporary. I take it that his is intended by Pharaoh to be permanent. The children are to leave Egypt forever.

## **Lesson 168: Exodus 12:31–33 Pharaoh and the Egyptian People Tell Israel to Go**

At this point, the death of the firstborn has taken place. Both Pharaoh and his people are beside themselves with grief. They want all Israel to leave Egypt.

Exodus 12:31 Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, “Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the Lord as you have said.

“Right now,” Pharaoh tells Moses and Aaron, “Get up and get out—you and all the sons of Israel.”



Pharaoh did not even wait until morning. He sent for Moses and Aaron that very night. He had suffered loss around midnight, and Pharaoh thought things through and quickly called for Moses and Aaron.

Pharaoh calls to Moses and Aaron. This has gone on long enough. Pharaoh would capitulate in every respect. In fact, this is a clear order from Pharaoh. He is not saying, *you may go as you have previously asked of me*. There are 4 Qal imperatives in this verse. There is no mistaking what Pharaoh is saying.



**Pharaoh tells Moses and Aaron to leave Egypt** (illustration by James Tissot); from Flickr; accessed March 10, 2021.

The people of Egypt would also ask for the sons of Israel to leave. He is telling them to be gone.

Exodus 12:32a **Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said,...**

The last sticking point of negotiations was all about the flocks and herds that belong to

Israel. Pharaoh required that they be left behind (it is my contention that he planned to raid Goshen and take these animals while Israel was out worshiping in the desert).

Exodus 12:32b **...and be gone;...**

This is quite strong. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative of *hâlak*<sup>e</sup> (הלך) [pronounced *haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup>*], which means, *go, come, depart, walk*. Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229. Pharaoh wanted Moses and all Israel gone. He is telling them *depart, go, leave*.

This is an edict of Pharaoh and he says nothing about, “And you are going to return in a week or two, right?” It appears that Moses and his people need to be gone—for good.

Exodus 12:32a-b **Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone;...**

At this point, there are no more conditions that Pharaoh will place upon Moses. “Take your people, your children, your animals, and be gone,” Pharaoh orders. Because this is an order from the highest authority of Egypt, Moses and Aaron must lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. It would be wrong for them not to leave.

Exodus 12:32c **...and bless me also.”**



Interestingly enough, Pharaoh asks for Moses and Aaron to bless him.

This verse has two Qal imperatives. *Bless* is in the Piel perfect; an intensive stem which views the action as a completed result. Although this is not the end of Pharaoh hardening his heart, at this point in time he has unconditionally surrendered. There are no clauses or incentives to return to Egypt once the Hebrews leave. In fact, Pharaoh has told them in these two verses, three times to go (two different words, all in the Qal imperative). He is not requiring them to leave their firstborn, their animals or anything else. We do not know exactly what Pharaoh believes concerning Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Israel. Nevertheless, at this time, he is at his wit's end. He has been beaten down by God and God has allowed him to yield. God will not give him the strength to remain appositional—at least, not yet.

Exodus 12:32c ...and bless me also.”

In the exodus of the Hebrews, Pharaoh says that this would bless even him. What would have been more of a blessing to him would have been to believe in Y<sup>e</sup>howah and to go with them. However, he has chosen to remain an unbeliever (insofar as we know).

This is a surprising thing for Pharaoh to say. He appears to be accepting that Moses represents the true God, or at least a God superior to all Egyptian gods. A blessing from Moses would be a blessing from Moses' God.

Dr. Peter Pett: *[Pharaoh] has come a long way from his sarcastic question, "Who is Yahweh?" (Exodus 5:2). Now he knows and seeks His benediction.*<sup>47</sup>

Exodus 12:32 Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also.”

One of the areas of disagreement was the taking of the flocks and herds. Pharaoh does not simply allow this; he decrees that they will take all of their animals.

Pharaoh allows for the people of Jacob to take everything; all of their flocks. He capitulates completely. All that Moses has asked for, Pharaoh now orders Moses to do.

Pharaoh also asks to be blessed.

Exodus 12:31–32 Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, “Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the Lord as you have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also.”

Altogether there are 6 Qal imperatives in these two verses. These are direct orders from Pharaoh.

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<sup>47</sup> Dr. Peter Pett; *Commentary Series on the Bible*; from e-sword, Exodus 12:31–32.

It was not Pharaoh alone who asked the people of Israel to leave.

Exodus 12:33a *And the Egyptians urged the people,...*

Even though Pharaoh gave Moses a command, there was no need to broadcast this command throughout the land of Egypt. The Egyptians themselves spoke directly to the people (the sons of Israel).

Pharaoh will give the order for all sons of Israel to leave; and the people of Egypt will demand the same.

Exodus 12:33b *...that they might send them out of the land in haste.*

The Egyptians urge the people to leave. They ask them to do this quickly.

This is done alongside Pharaoh. The people of Egypt decide to take matters into their own hands and ask the sons of Israel to leave Egypt as well. They are likely unaware of the decree of Pharaoh.

The people of Egypt are on board with expelling the Hebrews of the land. Everyone has lost a family member; and they do not know how to survive another plague.

Let me suggest that the Egyptians of that area go to the people, and perhaps even bring them silver and gold, and ask them to leave. So, there is not just a decree from Pharaoh, but from the Egyptian people as well.

This indicates to us that the people of Egypt and Pharaoh have been, for the most part, on the same page throughout this series of judgments. That is, certainly there was great judgment on the people of Egypt; but this was not a situation where they disagreed with Pharaoh.

Exodus 12:33c *For they said, "We shall all be dead."*

Every home had a death in it; and those who remained decided that they did not want to be next. They believed that everyone would eventually die if Israel remained. The people of Egypt understood what Moses has been requiring. "God said, 'Let My people go.' " At some point, early on, this certainly got out.

The people of Egypt recognize the power of Israel's God; and they recognize that all of their lives are in danger if Israel does not leave.

The free labor of the Hebrews was no longer important enough to retain them. The Egyptians who sent them out were not necessarily believers. They were not dying. God specifically struck down the first-born exactly as He said He would do. The Hebrews in the land was not in and of itself a curse to them. However, like most people, they perceived what they wanted to perceive. They believe *what they chose* to believe. This is the case

for all systems of belief, be it Christianity, atheism, evolution, socialism, etc. What God had intended to do was clear and specific. Their solution was also clear and specific. What God was not doing was killing them all. However, they had no idea what other plagues might come next. They just knew that they wanted no more judgments from their God. Israel leaving assured them of that.

Exodus 12:33 *And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead."*

This is an excellent sentence which will help us to understand difficult passages of narrative. Just because someone says something, and it is recorded in the Word of God, that does not mean that what they say is a pronouncement of truth. In their own minds, the Egyptians believed that, if the Israelites stayed, the Egyptians would be wiped out (this is potentially true); but it was not going to happen right then and there.

Insofar as the Egyptians were concerned, they might all be killed if the Israelites remained in their territory for even a day longer. The Israelites had to leave immediately.

Bear in mind, any of the Egyptians could have observed the Passover (it is possible that a smattering of them did). God did not limit them in any way. If an Egyptian household took a lamb and offered it up, putting the blood on their door posts, God would have spared that family as well. We have no record one way or the other here. We do have the record that virtually every Egyptian household had a death in it. Nevertheless, we know that God's salvation is provided for and offered to all men.

**Application:** God has a plan for your life, as He does for every other believer. You may have screwed up your own life in a hundred different ways, but God can work through all of that. First thing you need is to use rebound on a regular basis—100x a day if necessary (rebound is naming your sins to God and keeping current with your wrong acts). Then you need to take in Bible doctrine every day. This will turn around the life of any person. So there is no misunderstanding, your life being turned around is not going to occur overnight. But, after a few months of positive volition, you will begin to notice differences.

**Application:** Just as there was salvation and preservation of life for every son of Israel and every Egyptian, so that offer stands for you. God needs for you to take in doctrine on a daily basis, 45 minutes to an hour a day. That is enough, in most cases, to counteract the constant human viewpoint that you hear every day; and it will help to deal with your worry, fears and anxiety. What the world offer will never quell your fears or anxiety.

There is a lot of narrative in the Bible, and you may, from time to time, wonder, "What does this have to do with me? God is leading the children of Israel out of Egypt, and this happened about 3500 years ago—how does that pertain to me?" (1) When taking in Bible doctrine, you do not have to be overly subjective. You do not need to ask, every few minutes, *what does this mean to me?* Take it in, learn it, and you will grow spiritually. Just like the child who looks at his spinach or broccoli or green beans and wants to eat cup cakes all day long. The right food sustains you long term; the other, at best, gives you a

sugar high. (2) A good pastor will, from time to time, make application to you and to your life. A good pastor will, as time allows, chose a recent event in our history and relate it to what is being studied. R. B. Thieme, Jr. found illustrations from life all of the time, including many political and military illustrations. When you take in doctrine, and it begins to take hold, you will find yourself, on many occasions, thinking, “Oh, that’s what that means” or “Now I get it” or “I can see where applying that to my life is going to change a great many things.”

**Application:** I am in a business where it would be very easy to have mental attitude sins towards some of the people that I interact with. There are times where I might be inclined to plot revenge; to think of ways to get back on someone who has wronged me. However, I have found, through learning and applying Bible doctrine, that anger, revenge motivation, and other things of that nature are detrimental to *my life*, not to theirs. As a result, I am one of the happiest, most well-adjusted people I know.

**Application:** In searching my mind, I can come up with 5 things which ought to be permeating my mind, which I ought to be stressing over (and, as I typed that, 2 more things occur to me). I know that I will deal with them as I need to; and being stressed or upset or feeling like an injustice has been done to me—I don’t have to worry about any of those things.

**Application:** You will find this as a believer in Bible class. At the very beginning, you are so subjective and so concerned about your own life that, on many occasions during a Bible class, you will want to take time out and think about yourself and things going on in your life. You just rebound that lack and concentration and concentrate on the teaching. As you grow spiritually, you are going to find that you are able to concentrate more fully on what is being taught; and you will think about yourself a whole lot less.

**Application:** Satan wants you to think about yourself, think about other people, or think about things that you want and about situations that concern you. God wants you to focus on Him and His Word. Satan’s way will lead you into a life of constant subjectivity and instability; God’s way will lead you to a life of happiness and stability.

## Lesson 169: Exodus 12:31–35

## The Israelites Plunder the Egyptians

So far, this is what we have been studying:

Then he [Pharaoh] summoned Moses and Aaron by night and said, "Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as you have said. Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also!" (Exodus 12:31–32)

Pharaoh had lost his firstborn son. Members of his cabinet had suffered the same loss. There was only one way to end these continuous plagues, and that was to send Israel out.

It was not just Pharaoh; the people of Egypt also wanted Israel to exit their land.

The Egyptians were [also] urgent with the people to send them out of the land in haste. For they said [because of the 10<sup>th</sup> plague], "We shall all be dead." (Exodus 12:33, ESV, embellished)

Pharaoh and his people acted independently, but with the same aim—to require that the people of Israel leave Egypt.

Throughout this period of time, Pharaoh and the people of Egypt had been in synch, even if there were no formal conferences or meetings which took place that involved the people of Egypt. Pharaoh, no doubt, met with his cabinet, and there are indications in the narrative that we have studied that there may have been a relatively healthy give and take at those meetings. Pharaoh obviously made all of the final decisions and the Egyptians seem to be in agreement with him throughout this ordeal.

Pharaoh has told Moses to pack up and take his people out of Egypt. The people of Egypt have talked with the people of Israel, and they have also demanded that they leave Egypt.

Exodus 12:34a [So the people took their dough before it was leavened,...](#)

This was the middle of the night, and apparently a great many Egyptians came to the Hebrew people in the middle of the night to ask them to leave. We do not know what conversations took place, but if a Hebrew man said, "We are leaving first thing tomorrow morning," the response would have been, "That is not soon enough."

There are 3 things at play here: (1) Moses has already told the people of Israel to be ready to go at a moment's notice. (2) The Hebrew people themselves, thinking of freedom and thinking about independence from Egypt, wanted themselves to leave—and 1 minute from now was not soon enough. (3) The Egyptians, clearly understand that the death of their loved ones fell upon the shoulders of the God of the sons of Israel, they wanted Israel and her God to be gone immediately. It will be apparent in the next verse that the Egyptians were willing to do virtually anything to speed along the exodus of the Israelites.

Given those 3 factors, which are in complete agreement with one another, leaving right then and there is what is called for. Nobody is going to sleep until daylight and pack up and leave then; no one is going to get up and have a nice, leisurely breakfast, grab their stuff and head out. It was time to go right then; and they did.

Exodus 12:34a [So the people took their dough before it was leavened,...](#)

Egyptians from every direction spoke to the people of Israel and asked them to quickly leave. How exactly did this happen? Recall earlier that God told the people of Israel to speak to their neighbors and ask them for silver and gold. So, either a relationship of sorts already existed (like a master/maid relationship, or even one of friendship); or an

interaction was just established right then and there when a Hebrew man walked up to the door of an Egyptian and said, “We would like some of your silver and gold.”

We can reasonably be assured of several things: (1) at some point, Egyptians did give the Hebrew people silver and gold. It is even possible that Egyptians urging Hebrews to leave brought to them silver and gold jewelry to encourage them to go. (2) The Hebrew people first went out of their way to speak to the Egyptians; and here, Egyptians went out of their way to speak to the Hebrew people. Logically, one contact led to a reciprocal contact. (3) What is described in vv. 31–36 takes place pre-dawn. Egyptian households did not sit around and ponder, “Our firstborn is dead; what should we do?” Immediately, the Egyptians acted. They knew all about everything that had been happening, they went to either a specific Hebrew family or simply to the Hebrew people in general and asked them to leave Egypt. Perhaps they demanded, perhaps they requested; but many brought some or all of their valuables with them.

The whole idea of this verse is, all of this takes place suddenly, during the very night that the firstborn died. If the firstborn died at midnight, by 1 am, Pharaoh told Moses to go; and Egyptians had come into Goshen, asking the Hebrew people to leave.

Exodus 12:34b ...[having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders.](#)

The bread dough was in the kneading bowls, and it was set out to rise; and now, they were being urged to leave. So these bowls of dough were quickly thrown into blankets or makeshift knapsacks, and then placed on the shoulders of various Hebrew people in each family.

Therefore, each family had bread, but it was bread which had not been allowed to rise.

The idea behind the unleavened bread, which we hear about over and over again is, the Hebrews were in such a hurry to leave that they did not have time let their bread rise. However, taking the bread before it was leavened was as much symbolic as it was real. The children of Israel were leaving in a pure state without corruption. God the Holy Spirit points this out to indicate that the Hebrews who left Egypt were saved.

Exodus 12:34 [So the people took their dough before it was leavened, having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders.](#)

The people of Israel (Jacob) are leaving in a hurry, so that they do not even have time to let the dough rise for their bread. This all takes place suddenly. The Egyptians come to them and ask them to leave—immediately.

Their kneading bowls, the bowls which would be used for the rising of their dough, have to be strapped in, bound up with everything else, as they prepare to leave. Just as there was no time to get a good sleep and leave in the am after breakfast; there was no time to allow the dough to rise. We may reasonably assume that the very last act of the Hebrew people on their way out the door was the cooking of their bread. This verse sounds as if



they took the uncooked bread with them (apparently to be baked when they make their first stop).

**Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron** (a graphic); from [St-Takla](http://St-Takla.org); accessed March 10, 2021. I believe that St-Takla produces its own images. I have no idea as to what sort of organization it is.

Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the LORD as you have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also" (Exodus 12:31-32)



Pharaoh specifically tells Moses and Aaron to take the people of Israel to move out.

The people of Egypt then urge the sons of Israel to quickly get out of there, to leave the land, for they said, "We are all dying." (Exodus 12:33)

The people of Egypt come and speak personally to the children of Israel, asking them to leave Egypt.

The people (of Israel) did not have time to let their dough finish rising. It was in their kneading bowls, which were placed in a knapsack on their shoulders. (Exodus 12:34)

The children of Israel moved out immediately.

Exodus 12:35a Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses,...

The people had been told by Moses to make some very specific requests of the Egyptians. All this had been done previously. I have thought it possible that some Israelites may have warned their Egyptian counterparts of the final plague (they would have known as the 10<sup>th</sup> plague).

Moses told the people to ask for jewelry from the Egyptians (Exodus 11:2).

Exodus 12:35b ...and they had asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold,....

The way the verbs are in this passage, it is not clear as to *when* the Israelites asked for gold and silver jewelry. Let me suggest that it occurred at two separate times: (1) some Hebrew people did as God commanded, and they went out at the time that Moses spoke to them, and asked for gold and silver jewelry. (2) Other Hebrew men and women did not have the nerve to go and ask for this silver and gold, so they did not. However, when the Egyptians came to them and said, "You all need to leave Egypt;" and they said, "We will leave but we need some traveling cash." It is also possible that Egyptians showed up in Goshen, with silver and gold (and other valuables), giving them to the Hebrew people and asking them to leave.

The Egyptians knew what the Israelites had been asking for and brought those things with them when they came to implore the Israelites to leave.

Exodus 12:35c *...and clothing.*

Interestingly enough, clothing is not mentioned at the beginning of Exodus 11, but it is here.

Even though only jewelry is mentioned in Exodus 11:2, clothing became a part of this in two possible ways: (1) God also told Moses to tell the people to ask for clothing, but this is not mentioned in Exodus 11:2. Or, (2) God did not tell them to ask for clothing, but they did anyway. I lean towards this second explanation, as the clothing of the sons of Israel did not wear out when they were in the desert. God knew that from eternity past, so God would not have required them to ask for clothing. It is also possible that some Egyptians did not have silver and gold, but they logically figured that they should bring anything of value to the people of Israel, which would have included various skins and fabric (which we will read about later in the book of Exodus).

Exodus 12:35 *Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing.*

The sons of Jacob were told to request items of value from the Egyptians, and these things would be taken as remuneration for their years as slaves.

The record is not specific at what time the gold and silver was given to the sons of Israel. It is my educated guess that, when the Egyptians came to the Hebrew people to urge them to leave, at that time, they would have brought them gold and silver. The Egyptians may have seen it as a bribe to get them to leave.

This verse fulfills Gen. 15:14, wherein God promises to Moses: *"But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve; and afterward, they will come out with many possessions."* There are a combination of two things occurring here. When friends part or when a servant leaves, a gift is in order; however, in some cases, the Egyptian owners were willing to give anything to cause the Hebrews to leave. It seems reasonable that there were both groups, although after the death of their first-born, those who did not follow the Passover

procedure were certainly more embittered toward the Hebrews, even though the loss of their first-born was their own fault.

As had been mentioned, not all Egyptians despised the Hebrews. As in any group of peoples, there were pro-Semites and anti-Semites. God nowhere ordered the execution of the Egyptians. They had not, as a people, reached a point of no-return degeneracy. Some possibly followed the instructions of Yahweh but most did not. After having the Israelites as slaves for a long time, there were certainly Egyptians who looked down upon them and others who looked upon the Hebrews with true affection and respect (we had the same thing when the United States had the institution of slavery; it is just that the latter aspect receives very little attention).



**The people had asked for jewelry** (a graphic); from [St-Takla](http://St-Takla.org); accessed March 10, 2021.

## **Lesson 170: Exodus 12:33–37**

## **Israel Plunder the Egyptians and then Leave**

This is what has happened so far:

Exodus 12:33 **The Egyptians were urgent with the people to send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead."**

The first Passover and the death of the firstborn had just taken place. Both Pharaoh and his citizens were eager to be rid of the Hebrew people, no matter what the demands. Here, the Egyptians actually came directly to the people and asked them to leave.

Exodus 12:34 **So the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading bowls being bound up in their cloaks on their shoulders.**

This was so sudden that the people did not have time to leaven their bread dough. This sounds as if they carried their unbaked bread with them; there is another passage which suggests that they baked the bread and left. It is reasonable to assume that both things happened. Despite all of the build-up, this was sudden to the Israelites.

Exodus 12:35 **The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing.**

When the Egyptians asked the Israelites to leave, many of them brought gold, silver and clothing.

Exodus 12:36a *And the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians,...*

This repeats what was said back in Exodus 11.

We are not given any specifics in this verse how God gave the people *grace in the sight of the Egyptians*. I would say that this is based upon the judgments which God brought against the Egyptians. The end result was, many Egyptians brought their gold and silver jewelry to the sons of Israel, as they also urged them to go. Bringing this treasure would have been the people finding grace in the sight of the Egyptians.

Exodus 12:36b *...so that they granted them what they requested.*

This sounds as if most of the asking (perhaps all of it?) occurred *after* the Egyptians asked them to leave.

This is actually only two words in the Hebrew. We first have the wâw consecutive (which is often not even counted as a word, as it is pretty much a single letter affixed to the word which follows). The *second word* is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix of shâ'al (שָׁאֵל) [pronounced *shaw-AHL*], which means, *to ask [a favor]; to ask for temporary use, to borrow, to lend, to grant; to inquire of*. Because this is the Hiphil (causative) stem, the meanings are: *caused to ask [a favor]; made to ask for temporary use, made to borrow, caused to lend, made to grant; caused to inquire of*. Strong's #7592 BDB #981.

Literally, this can be translated, *and so they were caused to ask them; or, they were made to lend [grant] them*. This either repeats what we read in v. 35 (*they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing*); or it moves the narrative forward to mean, *[the Egyptians] were caused to lend [grant] them [the sons of Israel] [gold, silver and clothing]*.

Exodus 12:36c *Thus they plundered the Egyptians.*

The sons of Israel spoiled Egypt, which means Egypt gave many of their possessions to Israel.

The final verb, nâtsal (נָטַל) [pronounced *naw-TSAHL*], requires some explanation. In the Niphal, it means *to deliver oneself or to be delivered*; in the Hiphil, it means *to snatch away or to deliver*. However, here, it is in the Piel imperfect and it means *to strip off or to spoil*. The imperfect views only a portion of an event, without reference to its completed action, and the Piel is an accomplished act, often expressing intensity. Our concept of *spoiling* is taking wealth by force. This is not what occurred. For much of 400 years, the Hebrews have served the Egyptians as slaves and this is what is due them. They are not being compensated for the centuries of slave labor, but they were requesting back pay and

remuneration for themselves, the ones who actually were slaves during that generation from those who, in that generation, benefitted economically from the slavery. The Hebrews were not blackmailing the Egyptians; they had worked for hundreds of years for the Egyptians and they were requesting a small amount of remuneration as opposed to a few centuries of back pay.

Their enslavement earned this. Furthermore, this is a fulfillment of Gen. 15:14 ([God is speaking to Abraham]: “But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions.”) and of Exodus 3:21–22 ([God is speaking to Moses]: “And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and when you go, you shall not go empty, but each woman shall ask of her neighbor, and any woman who lives in her house, for silver and gold jewelry, and for clothing. You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians.”—ESV).

I believe that most Israelites knew the book of Genesis. I have explained earlier that, when references were made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, no one seemed to ask, “Who are these guys that you keep talking about?” We do not know when Genesis was committed to writing, but it seems logical that either Moses or Joshua did that (it appears that Moses dictated and Joshua wrote).

As I have stated in the study of the book of Genesis, I believed that this book was passed down from memory, and that it was recited at various spiritual functions. Regardless, God made many promises to Abraham and He made some similar promises to Moses. Those promises, listed above, were fulfilled in Exodus 12:35–36.

Regarding Moses and the book of Genesis, Moses spent 40 years in training to become the pharaoh of Egypt, and that would have included an education. I believe that he learned the book of Genesis as a part of his education; and he also learned about his actual racial background. It is even possible that he carried the book of Genesis (in his head) when he fled to Midian and lived there for the next 40 years of his life.

Exodus 12:36 **And the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.**

We need a full understanding all of v. 36. If we only look at this final phrase, it sounds as if the Israelites robbed, stole and plundered the Egyptians. However what comes before this suggests that this was a result of the free will of the Egyptians. They chose to bring these things to the Israelites. Their motivations may have been varied, but the Egyptians operated from their own volition (this may help to explain why God did not simply destroy the Egyptian people and then point the way to Canaan).

You might wonder why all the Egyptians do not despise Moses because of all the plagues and pain he has brought them. Many of them recognize his power under God's hand and, if they do not believe in Y<sup>e</sup>howah is the only God of the universe, they have come to respect Him as the most powerful God of the universe. To some limited extent, some of the Egyptians have come to respect Moses as a servant of the Hebrew God.



The Egyptians know what is occurring. God threatens to bring a plague on Egypt and the Pharaoh is given the chance to submit to God's will, but he does not. The Egyptians in part must recognize that if Pharaoh allows the Hebrews to leave Egypt, then they will no longer suffer these plagues. Given some of the dissension that we heard in Pharaoh's meetings with his cabinet, it is even possible that some Egyptians blame Pharaoh for the plagues (there is no reason to assume that Egyptians had a monolithic opinion about all things). However, most Egyptians probably sided with their king.

Certainly, the Egyptians were strongly divided as to how they felt concerning Moses, Pharaoh and these horrible plagues. Certainly, it would set family member at odds with family member, neighbor against neighbor. However, God has a plan for the Hebrews and they have some cognizance of who is sympathetic and who is not. They know who to go to, to ask for proper remuneration. They are not begging for money nor is their hand out like a man on the street alleging that he will work for food. They are asking for far less than what is rightfully theirs.

In v. 37, the Hebrew people actually pick up and move out:

Exodus 12:37a [Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth,...](#)

The verb here means to pick up stakes and to move out. They began in Rameses (more or less) and moved towards Succoth when leaving.

The Hebrew people first lived in a region of Egypt called Rameses (Gen. 47:11). It also appears that they were also assigned to the land of Goshen (Gen. 45:10 46:28, 34 Exodus 8:22 9:26). So, it is likely that Rameses is a reference to a larger region, and Goshen made up a specific section of this region.

Rameses is very much an Egyptian name, and it is found in the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> dynasties of Egypt. The Hebrew people, as slaves, built a storage city called Rameses, and this is apparently near to Goshen. It is the first place named on their journey away from Egypt.

Rameses (or, Ra'amses<sup>48</sup>) was once the residence of Rameses II, (c. 1290–1234 B.C.). However, some scholars put this date for the Exodus at 1447 B.C. and some believe that Rameses II was the Pharaoh of the Exodus. Out of the eleven Pharaohs named Rameses, not one is mentioned by name in the Bible. This city was very likely known as Rameses as far back as 500 years prior to the Exodus (Gen. 47:11 50:26 Exodus 12:41); it is also that, this is the area where Joseph's family was settled and it was later called Rameses (yet identified by Moses as Rameses so that the reader of that time would know what area that he was speaking of).

There seem to be two differing viewpoints on these dates. The fourth year of Solomon's reign is said to be 480 years after the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt (1 Kings 6:1). I have two dates in my notes at this point: 960 B.C. or 870 B.C. This takes the

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<sup>48</sup> It seems to be assumed that these two different words refer to the same place.



Exodus back to 1440 B.C. or to the end of their 40 year wanderings, or to as late as 1350 B.C. (which could mark the beginning of the Exodus; or the final wandering in the desert prior to entering into the promised land). R. B. Thieme, Jr., who is quite an ancient history scholar, places the exodus as occurring around 1440 B.C.; and this would line up with 960 B.C. as the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Solomon's reign.

Some scholars placing Moses' original flight from Egypt at 1482 B.C. (give or take). He would have been fleeing Thuthmosis III (1482 B.C), whose death is mentioned in Exodus 2:23, making Amenhotep II as the Pharaoh of the Exodus.

However, we have the Hebrews, in Exodus 1:11, building the cities of Pithom and Rameses, the latter capitol, and a project continued by Rameses after having been begun by his father, Seti I. The city was likely named after Rameses II (as Rameses I only reigned for a year). This would place the Exodus after 1300 B.C., and since the Hebrews are spoken of as being in the land around 1220 B.C., the Exodus, by this viewpoint, is likely between 1290-1260 B.C. (see Chronology of the NASB for more details). I think this is all arrived at by accepting certain Egyptian dates as being gospel.

At the point of this writing, I personally have no real preference. I have further notes from Thieme on this in Acts 13. The explanation given to the 1Kings 6:1 passage is that each set of 40 years is approximate, referring to roughly a generation, and twelve generations from Moses to Solomon are spoken of in this dating. I don't know that I buy that yet.

R. B. Thieme, Jr., who had a standing offer at the University of Arizona to teach ancient history, believes the exodus occurred 1441 B.C. or so and that the Pharaoh of Egypt at this time was Amenhotep II. Bob taught that he reigned between 1450–1425 B.C. ([Wikipedia](#) has 1427 to 1401 B.C. instead). His oldest son was killed in the plague of the firstborn; his second son came to the throne as Thutmose IV and reigned 1425–1412 B.C.

Exodus 12:37b ...[about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children.](#)

The number of Hebrews to exodus Egypt were determined in a variety of ways. This listed just the adult males themselves; there would have been an equal number of females and a large number of children; and there would have been some Egyptians who believed in Yahweh. Altogether, this would be approximately 2,000,000.

Here, we find out the population of Israel. There were about 600,000 men who began this journey.

Exodus 12:37 [Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children.](#)

What seems to make the most sense is, the Hebrew people were in Egypt for 430 years, beginning with Joseph moving his family there, and that they left around 1440 B.C. This gives us a set of dates, before and after, which are easy to square with the Biblical text.

The idea that the Hebrew people were in Egypt for only 215 years does not square with their population growth, which is testified to in several places in the Pentateuch.

The number of men descended from Jacob were 600,000. There was probably an equal number of women, and slightly more children. This is where the figure 2 million comes from.

## Lesson 171: Exodus 12:38–39

## The Mixed Multitude

Israeli is leaving out of Egypt. There are some who have come along with them.

Exodus 12:38a *A mixed multitude went up with them also,....*

The phrase *mixed multitude* comes from two Hebrew words:

The first is masculine singular noun 'êreb (עֶרֶב) [pronounced *ĠAY-rehb*]; also spelled 'ereb (עֶרֶב) [pronounced *ĠEH-rehb*]. It means, *mixture, mixed company, mixed people, heterogeneous body attached to a people*. Strong's #6154 BDB #786.

This is modified by the masculine singular adjective rab (רַב) [pronounced *rahv*], which means, *many, much, great* (in the sense of *large* or *significant*, not *acclaimed*). Strong's #7227 BDB #912. This second word indicates that this was quite a large subset of people.

This mixed group would be other slaves, with a variety of backgrounds; as well as Egyptians and other peoples who might be living in Egypt. It would not be out of the realm of possibility for an Egyptian family with slaves to go together with the people of Israel. This group here is a non-Hebrew group of people. They would be coming from all races and all strata of life in Egypt.

People who live in Egypt have observed what was going on for the past 1 or 2 months. They know who Moses is, they know about the God of Israel, they know about the warnings from God, and they have seen how the words of God were fulfilled. Therefore, they used their reason to exercise faith in the Revealed God and to go out with the people of that God.

Also, looking at this from the other side; these people (no matter who they were) would have been aware of the Egyptian gods. They have seen the impotence of the Egyptian gods as opposed to the omnipotence of the God of the Hebrew people. It was logical to them to choose the Hebrew God.

Here is where free will is so apparent. All Egypt saw what happened; everyone was aware of Moses and Aaron; they all, quite obviously, knew who Pharaoh was. They were aware of the Egyptian gods; and they were aware of the God of the Hebrews bringing these plagues upon all Egypt (and, sometimes against the people who chose to believe in the

God of the Hebrews). And every single person in Egypt experienced every plague firsthand. The people have observed the exact same things—yet some chose the God of the Hebrews and some chose against Him. When numbers are given, it appears that every Israelites trusted in their God and every Egyptian did not; but here, we have a mixed multitude.

Exodus 12:38a [A mixed multitude went up with them also,....](#)

These are likely Egyptians and others (including Egyptian slaves who were not Hebrews) who also believed in the Revealed God (Jesus Christ) and who choose at this time to go with the Hebrews. Such an accompaniment should be viewed as a positive thing; however, Scofield believes that the mixed multitude caused trouble (Num. 11:4–6). He is not the only one. A significant number of commentators give these people a really bad rap. The mixed multitude are often made the scapegoat for Israel's apostasy in the desert. The commentators who hold this view are absolutely wrong. It is as if they never read the rest of the Pentateuch. Every time rebellions are recorded and men are disciplined, those men are Hebrews—in many cases, we are given their family line. The problem was not with those who had been evangelized and chose to cast their lot with the Hebrews—the problem was with those who originally followed Moses, but then backslid, so to speak. They did not believe God's Word and rebelled against God's elected leaders (even though these same rebels had believed in the Revealed God). The ethnic origins of these rebels is never presented in the Bible as an issue.

Those in rebellion are the entire generation of Hebrews who are twenty years or older at the time of the first census (which means we are talking about everyone who is in this exodus generation who is roughly eighteen or nineteen or older—let me repeat that, **everyone!**) Sometimes I refer to that generation as Gen X, to distinguish them from their children (whom I have dubbed, *the generation of promise*).

Like the Hebrews, there were certainly those who were positive toward God's Word and those who were not; the latter causing many of the problems. This mixed multitude will include both a younger generation and the adults. Everyone from that mixed multitude who is eighteen or above will die the sin unto death in the desert. Everyone who is a Jew who is eighteen or above will die the sin unto death. There are only a dozen or fewer noted exceptions.

So it is not the problem of the mixed multitude. They will never be mentioned as a separate entity again. In fact, if anything, these of the mixed multitude are to be commended. These are Egyptians (and others) who have forsaken their homeland, have gone against their culture, and have departed to be with God's people. This mixed multitude is not any more a problem to Israel than the Israelites themselves. What appears to be the case is, these people seemed to completely integrate into the Jewish society. Since they are never spoken of separately again, I believe that they became as Jewish as anyone with the actual genes of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They probably intermarried and had sons and daughters who were therefore Jewish in that way as well.

One more thing: throughout the Bible, in the Old and New Testaments, this generation of Israelites—Gen X—are spoken of, and God said, “I loathed that generation!” How anyone could think to blame this mixed multitude for the multitude of negative volition on the part of Gen X, is beyond me.

Exodus 12:38a **A mixed multitude went up with them also,....**

This mixed multitude is never specifically identified. Let me suggest that these were other slaves, as well as Egyptians and non-Egyptians living in Egypt. Since they are not identified specifically, and called a *mixed multitude*, it makes sense that this is not a homogenous group. I would suggest that this group is made up of slaves of other groups and of Egyptians as well. As I suggested on previous occasions, Egyptians and their other slaves saw all that happened. They endured each and every judgment. Some of them finally decided, “I want to cast my lot with the Hebrew people—their God is the most powerful.”

There are even translators who portray these people in a bad light, one called them a *motley bunch* and another calls them a *crowd of riffraff*. There are some commentators who make these out to be the bad guys every time that Israel has a failing. That is simply incorrect. They will, in some way or another, become integrated into the people of Israel. I do not believe that how this occurs is ever specified. The only logical explanation is, people of Egypt—whether Egyptians or other slaves—decided to cast their lot with the Israelites. This would be because of the power of their God. No matter how you look at it, there is no way that we ought to cast these people in a bad light.



**A mixed multitude went up with them** (a graphic); from [Free Daily Bible Study](#); accessed March 9, 2021.

When God judged Egypt, there was often a way out—even when these judgments were upon Egyptian territory exclusively. When a plague could not be avoided, then let me suggest to you that, there was little or no positive volition in Egypt. In other words, Pharaoh's negative volition is not the only factor in God's judgments. Virtually all of Egypt rejected the Revealed God as well (apart from the mixed multitude).

Exodus 12:38b ...and flocks and herds—a great deal of livestock.

You may recall that this was a sticking point with Pharaoh; he did not want the Hebrew people to leave and to take their animals with them. There were two likely reasons for this: Pharaoh wanted assurance that the people would return to Egypt or he wanted his people to plunder the Israelites while they were temporarily gone. Pharaoh wanted his people to take the Israeli livestock (this is logical conjecture on my part). However, after the final plague, Pharaoh was beaten down. He was a defeated man; and he simply let the people go, *with* their children and *with* their livestock.

Although the Hebrew people received things made from gold and silver, as well as clothing; they did not receive animals from the Egyptians, as their livestock has been all but destroyed.

In the ancient world, a family's livestock represented their wealth. Today, this would be like taking one's stock, bond and mutual fund portfolio with them.

The exact route taken by Moses and the Hebrew people is unknown at this time; however, Rameses was certainly going to be near the Great Sea (the Mediterranean Sea), off the Nile. Goshen is South-east of there and the Hebrews seemed to go in a Southeasterly direction toward the Gulf of Suez, called the Red (or, *Reed*) Sea. There are several areas where they may have crossed the Red Sea (or, actually, a tributary thereof). These routes will be discussed at a future time.

Exodus 12:38 A mixed multitude went up with them also, and flocks and herds—a great deal of livestock.

God has told Moses what will occur and Moses has certainly told the elders of Israel. This is an indication that their faith in Y<sup>e</sup>howah still left something to be desired. They were not ready at all for a march across the desert. At the darkness or shortly before, the Hebrews should have been involved in preparing their foodstuffs and packing their things for a trip out of Egypt. However, their faith was not quite that strong.

Exodus 12:39a And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt;...

The Hebrew people had to quickly gather up their things and move out. The dough that they made had not enough time to rise. At some point, it needed to be baked in order for them to have bread to eat.



It is not clear exactly when this bread was baked. In anticipation, a few may have baked the bread during that night. However, it is possible that, after a significant journey (a day or so), that they stopped and made bread and then ate it.

Exodus 12:39b ...for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt...

However, the bread did not have enough time to rise by means of the leaven, as they were driven out of Egypt. Therefore, they ended up with unleavened bread cakes.

In the future, the Hebrew people would have to have unleavened bread each year at this time in order to look back on the circumstances of their leaving Egypt.

After the firstborn died, the Egyptians could not get rid of the Israelites quick enough. they were given whatever they asked for and implored to leave immediately. There's nothing wrong with making up a sandwich when God tells you that you are going on a long trip.

Exodus 12:39c ...and could not wait,...

The Egyptians wanted them to leave Egypt immediately, so they could not simply hang around waiting for their bread to rise.

They had no time to put in the yeast, and then let it rise, and then bake the bread. This is a process which takes an hour or more (for the first rise); and they did not have that amount of time.

Exodus 12:39d ...nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.

I believe the idea of this final phrase is, what they needed for basic provisions could not be properly prepared. There was no time.

It is interesting that we find a reason here for unleavened bread: they did not have time to hang around and let the bread rise. Now, the reason for unleavened bread would later become, the leaven represented the infiltration of false doctrine, but these two reasons are intermingled.

The Hebrews had to separate from Egypt; they could not have simply established their independence there in Goshen—God was taking them into their land, and, in part, to separate them from the leaven of the Egyptian culture and religion. Had they remained for any amount of time, they might have been persuaded to remain in slavery, so they baked bread without leaven so that they could bake it, take it and go.

Exodus 12:39 And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.



It appears that in preparation for their journey, they prepared the bread, but without leaven, because they had no time to allow the bread to rise. It is possible that they stopped along the way to bake bread as well.

They Hebrew people often took specific incidents in their lives, and repeated those incidents in the future ceremonially as a witness to what took place.

## **Lessons 172–173: Exodus 12:40–41      The Length of Time that Israel is in Egypt**

The next two verses launch us into a serious controversy which you may not even realize exists.

Exodus 12:40 *Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years.* (NKJV—which is the translation used throughout, unless otherwise noted)

Believe it or not, this particular verse and the one following has been the focus of one of the most heated debates from the Old Testament. There are two basic views—the sons of Jacob lived in the land of Egypt for 430 years or they lived in the land for 215 years. Reading this and the next verse makes this look like a simple debate to decide.

As has been discussed in previous chapters, there is certainly some disagreement on the amount of time that Israel spent living in Egypt. However, the clearest statements have them living in Egypt for 430 years (there is no verse saying that they lived in Egypt for 215 years—however, a targum contains this point of view).

The NKJV is not always the best translation, but what we have is good enough to relay what it is that we need to know—the amount of time that the Hebrews lived in Egypt. This is emphasized in the next verse. When you see it twice like this (v. 40 and v. 41), you know that this is the exact time period.

Bullinger has something to say about this verse which I do not fully understand.

*Bullinger: There are two reckonings of the sojourning: one starting from the "promise "to Abraham, Exodus 12:40 . Galatians 1:3 , 1:14, 1:17—430 years; the other starting from the recognition of his "seed" (Isaac), Genesis 21:12. See Acts 7:6 and = Gen 15:13400 years. N. B. 450 years to Samuel; 490 to Saul... This dwelling in Egypt was only 215 years...and is to be distinguished from the "sojourning", which was another 215 years.<sup>49</sup>*

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<sup>49</sup> From <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/bul/exodus-12.html> accessed July 14, 2021. Twice, Bullinger references [appendix 60](#), but that deals with God's name. Maybe what was meant was appendix 50, which deals specifically with chronology.

His claim is that this verse does not say that the sons of Israel dwelt in Egypt for 430 years. He, like a few other commentators, reckon this sojourning of 430 years as beginning with Abraham's temporary move to Egypt (or some other starting point). However, when one takes the four generations, the 430 years (both of which are discussed below) along with the 400 years of enslavement) there is no way that this jives with Bullinger's interpretation. I respect Bullinger in the extreme, but I cannot buy into his time table here (yet there are many who have Bullinger's opinion).

As we proceed, I am going to go into great detail on this controversy—the length of time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt. I might go on for too long for your own personal taste. However, because this is a matter of serious controversy—and because I believe that I can resolve this using the Scriptures and reason—I will go into said detail.

Exodus 12:41a *And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years...*

Here, the beginning phrase is, *and so he is* (or, *and so it happens*). So there is a great emphasis, to repeat this phrase within the same thought. This means that something came to pass, something happened, at the end of 430 years.

God gives us this time frame in His Word so we should work with it. This is an exact, literal 430 years. There are two things to be examined here: the time period and the population. Exodus begins by telling us that there were seventy Israelites who came to Egypt at that point in time, seventy-five in all, including Joseph and his entire family (which would have had to include one daughter—Gen. 41:50 46:26–27 Exodus 1:5 Acts 7:14). Exodus 12:37 38:26 and Num. 2:32 tell us that this population grew to 603,550 adult males. It was predicted in Gen. 15:13 that *"Know for certain that your [Abraham's] descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years.*

In modern measuring systems, when we say something measures 14.8 inches, this means that it is closer to 14.8 inches than it is to 14.7 or 14.9 inches. That is, it falls between 14.75 and 14.85 inches. This is how accuracy, precision and significant digits work. When dealing in the hundreds, the number 400 would be closer to 400 than it is to 300 or 500 years. It is an approximation. That is, this falls between 350 and 450 years. This would indicate that Israel was enslaved between 30 and 80 years after Joseph brought his family into the land. Soon, I will be more exact regarding this number.

In the same context, we read, *"Then, in the fourth generation, they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete"* (Gen. 15:16). We already have the time frame here (and from other passages) so this allows us to understand the four generations as it is used here. A man's life, in this era, was around 100 years (despite the Hebrew people being enslaved). So 4 generations, in this sense, would be about 400 years.

We might picture these four generations as those four men who bridged the gap between Levi and Moses. Those four generations are spoken of in Exodus 6:16–26. We begin with the son of Jacob, Levi (v. 16), who is the ancestor of Kohath (v. 16), who is the ancestor

of Amram (v. 18), who is the father of Moses (v. 20). As was mentioned back in Exodus 6:20, these four men are the four generations who bridge the gap between Jacob and Moses; whose ages add up to be approximately 400 years. It is their lives that are spoken of in Gen. 15:16, whose lives bridge the gap from rulership (Joseph, son of Jacob, was the Prime Minister of Egypt); to citizenship (Joseph brought his family to Egypt); to slavery (a pharaoh who did not know Joseph put the Hebrew people into slavery); to the exodus.

Although we are never told this, who knows but that maybe it was these particular men who kept the records which were later organized or copied into the book that we call Genesis, and passed down to the descendant best qualified to guard and protect these Scriptures (I continue to believe that the book of Genesis was passed down orally from generation to generation, but, at some point, someone or some group had to commit it to writing). I do not believe this to necessarily have been Moses.

As an aside, I am continually in awe when I compare Scripture with Scripture to see the complete accuracy with which each verse is recorded, when it is taken in context and compared with passages which modify and explain it. The passages which we are studying are a prime example.

Gal. 3:16 reads: *Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed, He does not say, And to seeds, as referring to many, but rather to one, And to your seed, that is Christ. What I am saying is this: the Law, which came 430 years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.* This tells us that the beginning of this 430 years began with Joseph.<sup>50</sup> Jacob is the last person to whom the promises from God were made prior to the Hebrews' bondage to Egypt (Gen. 28:14 32:12 35:11 46:3 48:4).

Stephen tells us, in Acts 7:6. *"But God spoke to this effect, that his offspring would be aliens in a foreign land, and that they would be enslaved and mistreated for four hundred years."* (See also Gen. 15:13). Because of the phrasing, we may take the 430 years as exact and the 400 years as approximate (the slight difference in the population figures indicates that sometimes numbers are rounded as approximate). God made promises to Abraham and his heirs; specifically to Jacob in Gen. 46:2–4 (see also 48:2–4). The 430 would be the exact amount of time that Israel was in Egypt; and 400 years would be the approximate time that the people were enslaved.

Let's get as specific as we can, now, with the ages of Jacob and Joseph and how those ages relate to the time in Egypt. Jacob enters into Egypt at age 130 (Gen. 47:9) and he dies at age 147, 17 years later (Gen. 47:28). You may recall that Jacob was buried in the land of Canaan and that he was well-beloved by the Egyptians. It was my suggestion that this could be attributed to the teaching (or reading) of the book of Genesis. To be clear, Genesis was not a book on vellum or parchment at this time, but a memorized book which

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<sup>50</sup> Some Biblical scholars begin this 430 years with Abraham when he dwelt in Egypt; however, this does not allow us enough time, in my opinion for a population to grow from 70+ believers into 2,000,000

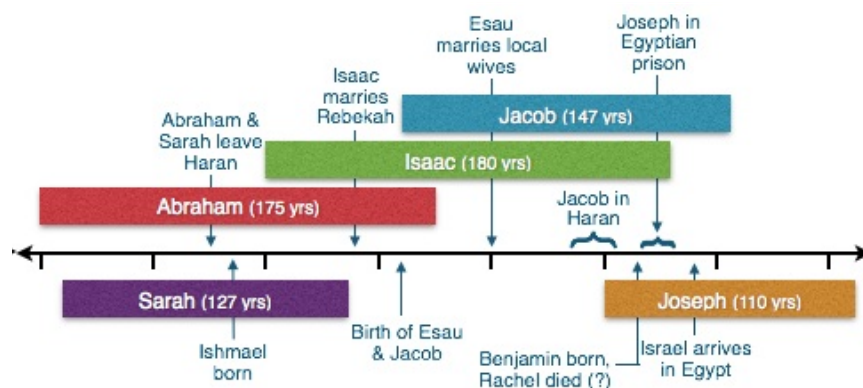
each generation of Hebrews added to. It is my suggestion that, by the reciting of the words of Genesis for 17 years on a variety of occasions, each year brought many Egyptians to the God of the Israelites. This explains *why* Jacob was so beloved by the Egyptian people (quite frankly, when studying Jacob's life, he does not come off as a very loveable person).

As has been discussed previously, Judah, Simeon or Levi, Reuben and Joseph would have all stood up and spoken the words of their own stories, which became a part of the book of Genesis. What they said and repeated on many occasions are the very words which we read today.

Just so you don't think I am overstepping any bounds here, this is *my belief* as to how the book of Genesis was made a part of the souls of the Israelites in Egypt. It is logical to me that the people who experienced these various things stood up and told those in attendance (for whatever celebration was taking place) what happened to them. I believe that the logical outgrowth of this was the synagogue, where various men will stand up and read the Scriptures, one after another, each person reading perhaps 1–10 chapters from a given book (all of the books of the Old Testament would be read in some rotation). I come to this understanding of the preservation of Genesis from logical deduction, but I would be hard-pressed to prove this with a series of Scriptures.

Now let's consider Joseph. He was 17 when sold into slavery; age 30 when he was made prime minister; he presided over 7 years of prosperity followed by 2 years of famine, at which point, he revealed himself to his brothers (this makes Joseph 39). The brothers would have gone home and fetched their father, Jacob, bringing him to Egypt when Joseph is 39 (or 40). To stay with nice even numbers, if Joseph is 40 when his father moves to Egypt, then Jacob was age 90 when he fathered Joseph. Joseph will be 57 when his father Jacob dies. If Joseph dies at age 110 (Gen. 50:22), that is 70 years that he lives in Egypt, after his father moved to Egypt.

Logically, when Jacob (Israel) himself moves to Egypt—bringing with him *all* of his progeny, that starts the clock ticking for the 430 years.



[British Bible School](#) does a nice job on this chronology.

**Timeline Featuring Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph** (a graphic); from [British Bible School](#); accessed July 7, 2021.

The Pharaoh, in Joseph's day, gave the land of Goshen to the Hebrews (Gen. 47:1–6). Therefore, I would place the beginning point of the 430 years at Gen. 46:6. Joseph would have died 70 years after his family moved to Egypt; and 53 years after his father dies. During this 70 years, the sons of Israel were very prosperous and prolific. Joseph had even been around to see three generations of his son's sons (Gen. 50:33). Shortly after Joseph's death, very possibly less than a decade later, there arose a new Pharaoh who did not know Joseph or the history of the Hebrews, other than they were quite numerous and they were not Egyptians. Furthermore, the Hebrew people, during this time in Egypt, remained very separate from the Egyptians. If there was any intermarriage, that is not noted in the Bible.

Regarding the Pharaoh who rises up, who does not know Joseph: my impression is that this would be a young and arrogant Pharaoh who believes that he has all the answers. This Pharaoh enslaved the people of Israel. This would have been 70–100 years after the settling of the Hebrews in Egypt (enough time for at least two or three generations of Hebrews). In fact, if the enslavement of the Hebrew people began 70 years after they entered Egypt, then they would have been enslaved for about 360 years (which is approximately 400 years—remember our discussion about approximations).

Exodus 12:41b ...—on that very same day—...

The emphasis is that this is the very same day.

This verse is one of those places where context is king.

Israel lived in Egypt for 430 years—which is a significant period of time, as the land of Canaan had been given to Abraham. If you studied the book of Genesis with me, you understand that the Jews moving out of Canaan into Egypt was a very big deal. God did this to isolate Israel from the degeneracy of Canaan (which degeneracy would continue and escalate while Israel was in Egypt).

I believe that this very short phrase (...—on that very same day—...) is the deciding factor for me in this controversy. The Hebrew people knew their own history and this particular day—either the day that they left Canaan or the day that they arrived in Egypt—would have been quite significant. This would have stood out in their minds. Amongst themselves, they may have said, “Mark this day” or “Remember this day.”

The other approach to this passage, which claims that Israel was in Egypt for 215 years (or 230 years) then pushes this particular day of 430 years back to a less specific time. When exactly did the 430 years begin and what did that date really signify? No matter how good and clever the arguments for the shortened period of time in Egypt, I have yet to know the exact day the 430 years would go back to and why that day would have been so significant to the Hebrew people that it would have been remembered. But leaving Canaan and entering into Egypt—that would have been a significant day, one quite easy to remember. What could be more important to a people who are given a land by God, and now they are leaving that land?



One thing which stands out about the history of the Jewish people is, God promised them a very specific piece of real estate—it was a specific parcel of land, and it is fought over and died over even up to this day. People may doubt the Old Testament and the events that we are studying, but there is no doubt that the people of Israel are tied to the land of Israel. When a large influx of Israelites returned to this traditional land soon after World War II (after the death camps in Germany and elsewhere), that must have been a remarkable experience. And the history behind it goes back 3500 years.

Exodus 12:41c ...it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.

Although we are laser focused on the time frame that Israel was in Egypt, remember the context of what we are studying. The Jews, under the leadership of Moses, are now packing up and leaving Egypt, following the 10<sup>th</sup> plague, the death of the firstborn.

The ts<sup>e</sup>bâ'ôwth (צְבָאוֹת) [pronounced tz<sup>eb</sup>-vaw-OHTH] of Y<sup>e</sup>howah went out from the land of Egypt. This word means, *armies, hosts; wars*. This word is variously translated, *armies, armed groups, hosts, forces, ranks, military formation, divisions, companies, legions, regiments, tribes, tribal groups, family groups, people*. It is always interesting to compare the translations at this point, because most of them clearly use a word which is a military reference (which would be accurate). However, there are a significant number of translations that use a non-military term here, despite the fact that God the Holy Spirit chose a military term (one which is found over 480 times in the Old Testament). Strong's #6635 BDB #838.

Now, to be fair to the translations which use a non-military term, this people have never been in a war and they have never had military training. However, they will engage in a number of military skirmishes, as we will see.

Exodus 12:41 And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years—on that very same day—it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.

This marks the day, exactly 430 years later, that the people of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the armies of God, exit the land of Egypt.

We are about to embark on one of the great controversies of the Bible. You may or may not find it interesting. You may form an opinion once this has been covered and you may not (or you may already have an opinion). Nevertheless, we will carefully scrutinize all of the relevant passages from the Bible.

Up front, we should know that there are two general interpretations of this time frame: (1) The Hebrew people spend 215 years in Egypt or (2) the Hebrew people spent 430 years in Egypt. As I have presented the material so far, one might think that the first interpretation makes little or no sense. However, that interpretation did not just appear out of nowhere.



View #1 is found in two of the Jewish/Hebrew names' Bible which I use; and when googling this topic, this point of view tends to be the one that comes up the most often. View #2 appears to be more closely aligned to what the clear reading of the text is. In the reading that I have done, I cannot seem to find any extra-Biblical motivation for either point of view; but it would not surprise me if such motivation existed, but simply eluded me. When it comes to *religious* matters, there can be a great deal of dogmatism found in people who have barely scratched the surface when it comes to a topic that they are dogmatic about.

Before we look at the descendants of Israel (Jacob), which include Moses and Aaron, let's look at the time that Jacob and his sons lived in Egypt. The following passages help to inform us:

Gen. 15:13 Then the LORD said to Abram, "Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. (ESV)

Exodus 12:40–41 The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years. At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. (ESV)

We should bear in mind that the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch text reads: **And the sojourning of the children of Israel, while they sojourned in the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass after the four hundred and thirty years, all the forces of the Lord came forth out of the land of Egypt by night.** (The Complete Apostles' Bible; emphasis mine)

What we are studying is based upon the Hebrew manuscripts (but, bear in mind, these Hebrew manuscripts are separated in time by over 1000 years from the original writings). The Complete Apostles' Bible is based upon the Greek LXX text. The Samaritan text is very similar (but not exactly the same). When dealing with any Bible text, at a minimum, hundreds of years stand between the original writing and the texts which we have—no matter what language it is that we are speaking about.

The oldest text that we have is based upon the Dead Sea Scrolls, which come from a very ancient library from around 200 B.C. The text here is very incomplete (blocks of chapters are missing; half of the text is unreadable in some places). How the Dead Sea Scrolls help us is, where the text is readable, the Dead Sea Scrolls reveal few disparities (comparatively speaking) to the accepted Hebrew texts which we have relied upon for hundreds of years. There are problems—as is the case between any set of manuscripts—but these are not problems which would cause us to re-think our entire Old Testament.

Back to the additional text found in the Greek and Samaritan texts: generally speaking, text is more likely to drop out rather than to be added in. However, the few times when we find additional text (and this does occur—not often, but it does occur), the reason for the text is calculated. Whoever added the text (if it is a significant addition) often has a reason for adding this text.

### **A Few Preliminary Observations on the Time Frame of Slavery:**

1. The comments made in 2 of the Jewish Bibles/Hebrew Names Bibles which I consult have the 430 years beginning with the birth of Isaac.
2. Even if we accept the LXX text given above, this view that we should calculate this time frame from the birth of Isaac does not jive with the Greek text.
3. Choosing Isaac's birth, unless specifically mentioned, is a fairly arbitrary starting point.
  - 1) There is no doubt that the birth of Isaac is an important date—but that date is mostly important to Abraham, Sarah and Isaac. It was really not that important to the Hebrew people. How do I know this? Tell me what that day was, and then I will tell you how I know this.
  - 2) Isaac's birth represents the point at which Abraham had the greatest faith in God with the greatest amount of knowledge; and Isaac's birth is a down payment on God's many promises to Abraham.
  - 3) However, despite this being a significant event in Jewish history, that still does not square with the Greek text above.
4. Others date the 430 years back to the first time that Abraham stepped into Egypt, where he and Sarah, apparently, purchased Hagar, an Egyptian slave girl.
  - 1) None of these dates would have been as significant as the day that Jacob led all of his (adult) children out from the land that God promised to him, to his father and to his grandfather; and entered into the land of Egypt.
  - 2) At no time is Abraham's entrance into Egypt presented as a significant event, one that ought to be remembered.
  - 3) Remember the overall context; remember the name of the book that we are studying, for goodness sakes! It is the book of Exodus!
5. Exodus 12:41 seems to be very particular about the day that Israel exited Egypt, that it is an anniversary (that would be the prevalent but not universal interpretation).
  - 1) The day that Abraham entered into Canaan would have been a significant day; and if measuring back to the time the Abraham stepped onto Canaanite ground, that significant date might make some sense. However, no one does this, because the timing would be way off.
  - 2) The birth of Isaac is a significant date and it is reasonable that this date would have been remembered for a time. But it is not really related in any way to the exit from Egypt.
  - 3) The date that Abraham and Sarah entered Egypt would not have been considered a significant date, for the most part.
  - 4) Let me add, given the promises of God, the very date that Jacob (and family) set foot in Egypt would have been a very significant date.
    - (1) Remember, God spoke to Jacob and assured him that going to Egypt was okay for him to do. When God speaks to someone about something, we can rest assured, there is an important reason for that communication.

(2) The fact that Jacob wanted to be buried in Canaan and Joseph wanted his long dead bones carried back to Canaan when God gave that land to the people, further indicates that their walking into Egypt to live was a very significant event.

(3) Bear in mind that, from the beginning, God spoke of giving Canaan to Abraham and his children; so, when Jacob leaves Canaan to live out his life in another country, that act is very significant.

6. Since this passage speaks of 430 years, *to the day*, we would reasonably assume that the 430 years is exact.
7. I believe that it would be impossible to go back to Abraham's entry into Canaan and call that 430 years ago. There are just too many years in that date to the exodus of Egypt.
8. Differences between the Masorite Text (copies of copies of the inspired text of God) and the LXX (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures) are important and need to be considered and investigated. However, we do not simply accept the text of the LXX when it differs from the Hebrew text. Both texts were preserved by different groups of people over a long period of time.
9. **Conclusions:**
  - 1) Accepting the LXX text does not solve any chronological problems. It replaces one set of problems with another set of problems.
  - 2) Going back in time to an arbitrary event during Abraham's life in Canaan—even if that event is somewhat significant—also does not solve any particular chronological problem. Again, it replaces one set of problems with another.
  - 3) It would be much easier to accept the idea that Israel did not spend 430 years in Egypt if there were a clear start date other than their original entry into Egypt (the most logical start date to me, for any interpretation).

Now, let's throw into this mix the reading from the Pseudo-Jonathan targum:

And the days of the dwelling of the sons of Israel in Mizraim were thirty weeks of years, (thirty times seven years,) which is the sum of two hundred and ten years. But the number of four hundred and thirty years (had passed away since) the Lord spake to Abraham, in the hour that He spake with him on the fifteenth of Nisan, between the divided parts, until the day that they went out of Mizraim. And it was at the end of thirty years from the making of this covenant, that Izhak was born; and thence until they went out of Mizraim four hundred (years), on the selfsame day it was that all the hosts of the Lord went forth made free from the land of Mizraim.

This text, which is of Hebrew origin, gives us some motivation for believing that we need to go back and measure to the time of Isaac. It is stated right here (something I do not recall reading elsewhere). It should be quickly pointed out that the targums function very much like commentary and there is a whole lot of excess text found in the commentary. If you have ever read [Kretzmann's commentary](#), it is the KJV interspersed with comments. These comments are separated by the use of differing font characteristics online, but such

things were not in vogue when the targums were written. However, they are very much like reading Kretzmann's commentary, except that, the sacred text is not distinguished from the commentary.

Not all targums are created equal. Not all targums have the same text.

The same passage in the Onkelos targum reads:

And the dwelling of the sons of Israel in their abode in Mizraim (was) four hundred and thirty years. And it was at the end of four hundred and thirty years, in that same day, that all the hosts of the Lord went forth from the land of Mizraim.

The Onkelos targum has about half the text of the Pseudo-Jonathan targum.

My point being is, there is a tradition in the Hebrew thinking, based upon the pseudo-Jonathan targum, to extend this 430 year period of time back to the time of Isaac.

Simply because we have ancient commentary on this period of time does not mean that we must accept that commentary as true and accurate. All Scriptural matters should be solved by examining the Scriptures. If there is additional material which seems to support a Scriptural conclusion, then good. On the other hand, if the Scriptures say one thing, but a commentary—even a really, really good one (or really old one)—says something else, we go with the Scriptures.

There is more to cover on this topic. We will spend one more lesson on it.

#### **Lesson 174: Exodus 12:40–41**

#### **How long the Hebrew People were in Egypt**

So far, we have looked at the idea that the Israelites walked out of Egypt on a very special anniversary. Although there are many people who disagree with the idea that Israel was in Egypt for 430 years; there is considerable disagreement as to what the anniversary is, if not the day that Jacob entered into Egypt. Jacob leading his family into Egypt on a specific date, and that would have been a very significant date, given that God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob include the land of Canaan as central to these promises. Moses leading the children of Israel out of Egypt exactly 430 years later makes perfect sense as a noteworthy anniversary. Israel leaves on the anniversary of them entering into Egypt. Trying to pick another start date for the 430 years is much more difficult to support.

We have considered parallel New Testament passages, and have observed that, even though there are some problems (I think mostly minor) with Israel spending 430 years in Egypt; changing that time period to 215 years (or 230 years) solves virtually nothing, beyond being in agreement with some other texts. However, such a point of view introduces a whole host of additional problems (most of which I have not brought into the discussion).

We have considered a number of ancient manuscripts (including targums) to gain any possible insight as to the length of time Israel was in Egypt. We delve into this topic once again. Key to this final discussion are the many ancient manuscripts which potentially support either of the two views.

All that being said, let's look at the other pertinent verses. These are from the New Testament:

Acts 7:6 And God spoke to this effect—that his offspring would be sojourners in a land belonging to others, who would enslave them and afflict them four hundred years.

Gal. 3:16–17 Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ. This is what I mean: the law, which came 430 years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void.

This is one of the great historical disputes regarding the Bible. How long did the people of Israel remain in Egypt? By these passages, it appears to be 400 or 430 years. However, that is not agreed upon by all.

We are going to discuss the time that the Jews lived in Egypt, because there is a sharp divide here between 215 years and 430 years (and it is not just the outliers who take the former position). Furthermore, this is a very ancient disagreement, possibly even predating Josephus (from the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D.). If this is such an ancient disagreement, then it is possible that text may have been added or removed from the most ancient manuscripts to support the alternative timeline (which would have been a very rare thing indeed to have happened).

In pulling all of this together, I looked at more than a dozen sources. Even though my preference for a 430 year sojourn in Egypt is long-standing, I do not attach any emotional attachment to that view.

For many of the scholarly works which I read, in many cases, I felt like I was being *sold* something. That is, there were many places where they carefully stacked their own references in one direction only. For example:

Rohl (quoted by Kyle Butt) writes: *The Septuagint was first written down in the time of Ptolemy I during the third century B.C. and the earliest surviving manuscript is again much older than the earliest surviving Masoretic copy. The Samaritan version of the first five books of the Old Testament (the Pentateuch) is also considerably more ancient than the Masoretic scriptures and it too retains the longer rendition of the passage on the length of the Sojourn. Thus, **three out of four sources for the book of Exodus** state that the four-hundred-and-thirty-year interval represents the whole period from*

*Abraham's descent into Canaan all the way down to the Exodus of Moses and the Israelites from Egypt (1995, p. 331).*<sup>51</sup>

Then Kyle Butt draws the [inescapable, in his opinion] conclusion: *If Josephus, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the Septuagint are correct (and there is good evidence to indicate that they are) in stating that "the sojourning of the children of Israel and of their fathers, which they sojourned in the land of Canaan AND in the land of Egypt was 430 years," then the alleged contradiction between Exodus 12:40-41 and Galatians 3:17 evaporates into thin air, and the 215-year figure for the Israelites' sojourn in Egypt can be accepted quite easily as both credible and scriptural.*<sup>52</sup>

The way that this is written really stacks the deck. When a person claims, *3 out of 4 references agree with me* and he chooses the 4 references, that statement is far less impressive than it appears to be on first read. Rohl is almost exactly my age, so he knows that the Dead Sea Scrolls lacks the text in question (the text which agrees with his point of view), as does the MT. The Dead Sea Scrolls is the most ancient text which we have and it confirms the Masoretic text. So, at bare minimum, Rohl *should* have said, *3 of 5 sources for the book of Exodus...and those 3 sources which agree are not consistent with one another.* But Butt did not write that, I did.

The lack of consistency (to be discussed) is quite important, as is the lack of agreement with the Dead Sea Scrolls. I do not find those points being made on Kyle Butt's page. When dealing with a controversy, it is often a good idea to present both sides of the issue in their best light. And only then, if possible, draw a conclusion.

When reading opinion pieces on Scripture which go against orthodoxy, the believer needs to be carefully critical of what is written.

First thing is to consider is various ancient texts. This is Exodus 12:40–41 that we are examining. It would be a good idea to look at as many ancient texts as possible, and to view them critically.

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

The [time of] habitation of the sons of Israel when they lived in Egypt [was] 430 years. It was, at the end of 430 years, [in fact,] on the very same day, the armies of Y<sup>e</sup>howah have gone out from the land of Egypt. (Kukis moderately literal)

Hebrew text translation (Sigalov)

Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, [was] four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty

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<sup>51</sup> [Apologetics Press](#); accessed April 6, 2017; emphasis *mine*.

<sup>52</sup> [Apologetics Press](#); accessed April 6, 2017; emphasis *mine*.



The Samaritan Pentateuch

years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. Now the sojourning of the children of Israel and fathers of them, who dwelt in Canaan and in Egypt, [was] four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Yahuah went out from the land of Egypt.

Dead Sea Scrolls

[Now the time t]hat the children of Israel [dwel]t in *the land of E[gy]pt* was four hundred and thirty years. Then at the end of [four hundred and] thirty years, on the very [day,] all the h[ost]s of the LORD went out from the land of E[gyp]t. What is in brackets is not actually preserved in the Dead Sea Scrolls, but determined by comparing the readable text with other ancient texts. The size of the gap of unreadable text is also a factor. The Dead Sea Scrolls represents the most ancient text in our possession (which does *not* automatically make it the best text). The footnote here reads 4QExod<sup>c</sup>, *in Egypt MT. in the land of Canaan and in the land of Egypt Samaritan Pentateuch. in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan LXX.*<sup>53</sup>

Although this is the most ancient text in our possession, that does not guarantee its accuracy. However, the more ancient the witness, the greater its importance (generally speaking).

There may be disagreement even in the Samaritan text. The words *in the land of Canaan and* appear to be found in Sigalov's website (see the [Interlinear Pentateuch](#)). However, another [version](#) placed three dots there (...) where the disputed text would be (and changing the options of what to view could eliminate the three dots). Even though the original text of the Samaritan Pentateuch can be found online; I could only find one English translation of it.

Now, let's examine several ancient translations of this text:

Targum (Onkelos)

And the dwelling of the sons of Israel in their abode in Mizraim (was) four hundred and thirty years. And it was at the end of four hundred and thirty years, in that same day, that all the hosts of the Lord went forth from the land of Mizraim. .

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<sup>53</sup> *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*; translation and commentary by Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint and Eugene Ulrich; Harper SF, ©1999, p. 44.

Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And the days of the dwelling of the sons of Israel in Mizraim were thirty weeks of years, (thirty times seven years,) which is the sum of two hundred and ten years. But the number of four hundred and thirty years (had passed away since) the Lord spake to Abraham, in the hour that He spake with him on the fifteenth of Nisan, between the divided parts, until the day that they went out of Mizraim. And it was at the end of thirty years from the making of this covenant, that Izhak was born; and thence until they went out of Mizraim four hundred (years), on the selfsame day it was that all the hosts of the Lord went forth made free from the land of Mizraim.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	And the abode of the children of Israel that they made in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. Which being expired, the same day all the army of the Lord went forth out of the land of Egypt.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	Now the time that the B'nai Yisrael lived in Egypt was four hundred thirty years. It happened at the end of four hundred thirty years, even the same day it happened, that all the armies of Mar-Yah went out from the land of Egypt.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years. on this very day that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.
New Brenton (Septuagint)	And the sojourning of the children of Israel, while they sojourned in the land of Egypt <u>and the land of Chanaan</u> , was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass after the four hundred and thirty years, all the forces of the Lord came forth out of the land of Egypt by night.

Note, that of these 9 (or 10) ancient texts, only the Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch have *and in the land of Canaan*; and notice that this text is not found in exactly the same place in these two texts. Also note that there are many other ancient witnesses which do not agree with those texts. Although one targum is sort of in agreement with the Greek text, it says something completely different. It is possibly that the targum text could have actually led to this controversy, and caused the insertion of text into the Samaritan and Greek manuscripts (I am not saying that it did, but the ancient targum, which is a mixture of translation and commentary, *may* have been what started this whole thing).

This is a much better sampling of ancient texts than is found on Butt's webpage, and a clear majority lacks the words, *and in Canaan*.

The case will be made that text either dropped out of the Hebrew or was edited out. However, if the most ancient text properly contains these additional words, we might expect some consistency as to where these words are found.

Note the Inconsistencies	
Text	English Translation
The Samaritan Pentateuch	Now the sojourning of the children of Israel and fathers of them, who dwelt in <b>Canaan and</b> in Egypt, [was] four hundred and thirty years.
New Brenton (Septuagint)	And the sojourning of the children of Israel, while they sojourned in the land of Egypt <b>and the land of Chanaan</b> , was four hundred and thirty years.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And the days of the dwelling of the sons of Israel in Mizraim were thirty weeks of years, (thirty times seven years,) <b>which is the sum of two hundred and ten years</b> . But the number of four hundred and thirty years (had passed away since) the Lord spake to Abraham, in the hour that He spake with him on the fifteenth of Nisan, between the divided parts, until the day that they went out of Mizraim.

I should point out that a targum is very much like a translation and a commentary combined into one. This is why the various targums are so inconsistent with one another. One targum originator may include a lot of additional text; and another may not.

My point here is, it is not impossible or unheard of for text to have been dropped out of the original Hebrew. However, in the ancient manuscripts where that text was most carefully preserved, we would expect some consistency. What we clearly have is consistency with the MT as it has been preserved (and an argument could be made claiming that this consistency is based upon very early corruption of the MT manuscripts).

In other words, although this does not, by itself, prove anything; proponents of the 215 year opinion would have had much more compelling evidence if these 3 ancient manuscripts agreed with one another in the actual text—but they do not. That is a very big deal. The difference in the texts suggests that these 3 ancient texts do not represent an accurate recording of the original text (because they all disagree with one another).

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In the time that I have studied the Word of God, I have found one *significant* instance where the MT was probably wrong<sup>54</sup> and it made a big difference. David (if memory serves—but maybe it was Saul) calls for the Ark of God in the MT, whereas, it appears that he actually wanted the sacred Ephod (the words *Ark* and *Ephod* are very similar in the Hebrew). A king would call for the ephod in order to gain some prophetic guidance; a king would not call for the Ark of God in the same way.

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The point that I am trying to make is, fundamental problems with the Masoretic text are rare and they really stand out to a person who examines that text word-by-word (as I do).

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In most other areas of dispute that I have come across, textual differences nearly always involve insignificant or unimportant differences. Exodus 12:40 would be a very important instance where the text is in question. It is one of the few places where disagreements as to the original text is quite important (which is out of the ordinary).

There is certainly more that could be said on this subject. However, I have probably overdone it as it is. My opinion as to the final conclusion is, the Masoretic text (which does not include the word *Canaan*) is very likely the correct text.

### **Lesson 175: Exodus 12:33–42    An Overview Which Includes the Text in Question**

We have just focused on 2 verses and have come to a conclusion. Now, how does that sit with the rest of the surrounding text? Many a cult has begun based upon the false interpretation of a passage taken out of context. So let's take a look at this passage in context.

This is what we have been studying:

Exodus 12:40–41 *The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years. At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. (ESV)*

It is very easy to get totally caught up in details. Why would this passage in Exodus make a big deal of exactly 430 years *to the very day*? This means that we are matching up a significant starting date with the day that they exit Egypt. That starting date is logically the day that Jacob (the father of all Jews) stepped over the Egyptian border—Jacob to whom the promises were made (God successively gave promises to Abraham, Isaac, and then Jacob). It does not make sense that there is some other corresponding date related to Canaan.

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<sup>54</sup> At this point in time, I have worked my way through over half of the text between Genesis and 1 Kings 8, word-by-word. So, given that I have carefully studied the text of perhaps a quarter of the Old Testament and have come up with two very important textual problems, that would tend to give the MT a great deal of credence.

R. B. Thieme, Jr. was a brilliant student of ancient history. He had a standing offer at the University of Arizona to teach ancient history. His view was, Israel spent 430 years in Egypt.

Thirdly, the population growth which took Israel from 75 to 2 million fits with a 430 year timeline. This is a very healthy population growth, but not a miraculous one. That same growth over 215 years would have involved families who, on average, had about 10–15 children each, who also went on to have that same sized family. We actually know the family sizes of most of those who entered the land of Egypt; and we know Moses and Aaron's family size (as examples of families leaving Egypt). Whereas, one might assume, with females, that a couple of Jacob's sons may have come close to that amount (when females are included), but the 10–15 children per family was not typical.

Let's put all of the context in here, and I will go with the assumption that the descendants of Abraham lived in Egypt for 430 years, from the time that Jacob, the patriarch entered with his sons; to the this point in time in the narrative where Moses is about to lead the people out of Egypt.

Exodus 12:33 [The Egyptians were urgent with the people to send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead."](#)

The Passover has taken place. Those who took a lamb or a goat and properly smeared its blood on their door frame were spared the death of their firstborn (this apparently is all Israel). Those who did not do this lost their firstborn child and their firstborn animals, which was the 10<sup>th</sup> plague (this is apparently all Egypt). If there were exceptions, they are not recorded in Scripture.

The Egyptians, now fearing for their lives, want the people of Israel to leave Egypt, worried that their God would kill all the Egyptians if they remained. All Egyptians (not just Pharaoh) want the Hebrew people gone immediately.

Exodus 12:34 [So the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading bowls being bound up in their cloaks on their shoulders.](#)

There was no time for the Israelites to finish letting their bread rise. They put it in their kneading bowls and left, as the Egyptians had insisted.

Exodus 12:35 [The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing.](#)

The Israelites received gold, silver and/or clothing prior to this final day or on this final day (these things were brought in connection to asking Israel to leave the land of Egypt). The Israelites did have a lot of Egyptian jewelry, both silver and gold; and nice clothing. It is very possible that some of them received this on their very last day in Egypt.

Exodus 12:36 And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.

God gave the people grace in the sight of the Egyptians. I would assume that God did not go into the volitions of the various Egyptians and change their minds. My assumption would be that, various circumstances and events caused each Egyptian family to bring some of their valuables to the Hebrew people. In some cases, these could have been all of a family's valuables.

I suspect that there were a number of different motivations involved. For instance, some may have felt guilt and believed that giving the Israelites some (or all) of their gold and silver was reasonable, as they has been slaves to Egypt for hundreds of years. Other Egyptians may have brought gold and silver to them as an incentive (bribe) to get them to leave Egypt.

Exodus 12:37 And the people of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children.

The people of Israel leave Egypt, journeying from Rameses to Succoth. There are about 2 million Hebrew people altogether.

Exodus 12:38 A mixed multitude also went up with them, and very much livestock, both flocks and herds.

Although much is made of this mixed multitude, I see this as simply non-Hebrew people. Since their background or nationality is not given, we would assume Egyptians and non-Egyptians, free and slave, have joined up with the Israelites. The great deeds of Y<sup>e</sup>howah made it clear that the Hebrew people were closely related to the Revealed God.

There is no reason to assume that this multitude can be blamed for anything which takes place in Israel. When Israel goes wrong, specific people from this or that tribe of Israel will be named in the Torah account. This mixed multitude, insofar as I can remember, will never be mentioned in association with any of the rebellions which take place.

Exodus 12:39 And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough that they had brought out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves.

The Death Avenger went through Egypt at midnight; and the people of Egypt came to Goshen to urge the Israelites to leave right away.

It sounds here as if they baked their bread after leaving Egypt, but that this was done without having time to let the dough rise. Some may have baked some bread in Egypt, but without it having time to rise as well.

Exodus 12:40 The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years.



I believe this to be the accurate reading. Saying that Israel lived in both Canaan and in Egypt for 430 years simply does not make a lot of sense. What should be important, at this point in the narrative, is the amount of time spent in Egypt. The time spent in Canaan, given the context of Exodus 12, seems irrelevant to me.

Exodus 12:41 *At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.* (ESV)

The way that all of this is written seems to emphasize Egypt and Egypt alone. They entered Egypt on a particular day and they exited on that same day, 430 years later. Both days would have been very significant; and even more so in the context of the book of Exodus (bear in mind, everything that we have studied in Exodus 1–12 is all about Israel being taken out of Egypt by God).

This verse loses its power if this refers back to some obscure day in Canaan. There is no agreement of the adherents to the shorter period of time as to what that particular day would be, if not the day the Israelites entered Egypt.

Exodus 12:42a *It is a night of solemn observance to the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt.*

The *night of solemn observance to the Lord* is the Passover. It is because of this very night that the people of Israel will be brought out of the land of Egypt, led by Moses, but based upon a series of events brought upon Egypt by the Lord of Hosts.

One could understand that God is carefully watching over all that takes place at this time. It is the night that they were sent out of the land of Egypt. Now, quite obviously, God does not pay more attention to this night, as compared to the previous night; this is an anthropopathism. It is a very important night to the people of Israel; so these words make it sound important to God enough for Him to carefully observe the proceedings. It is a night of great beginnings.

Exodus 12:42a *It is a night of solemn observance to the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt.*

V. 42a is a title of sorts, or an introductory sentence concerning the Passover. The actual translation is a bit difficult. It begins with the nominative masculine singular construct of *night* and nominative masculine plural of *shimmur* (שִׁמּוּר) [pronounced *shim-MOOR*] which occurs but once in the entire Old Testament (right here). The feminine of this noun occurs one time also, in Psalm 77:4 and a similar word occurs in Psalm 141:3. The only reason that we know these words have something to do with a *watch* is they are closely related to the verb for *watch, keep, preserve*. The NASB renders this word *to be observed* and notes it should possibly be *of vigil*. Rotherham calls it *of solemn observation*. The Bible in Basic English: *...a watch-night to the Lord...* The Names of God Bible: *That night Yahweh kept watch...* The Common English Bible: *...a night of intent watching...* A Translation for Translators: *...a night when Yahweh ◀protected/guarded over▶ them...*

Many translators had *a night of vigil* (Awful Scroll Bible, Holman Christian Standard, Lexham Bible, New English Bible). The Complete Tanach had perhaps the most interesting take: *It is a night of anticipation for the Lord...*

God watched over Israel during this night. He protected them as they left; He saw to it that the people of Egypt would bring them gold, silver and clothing while preparing to exit Egypt.

Exodus 12:42b *This is that night of the Lord,...*

The death of the first-born in Egypt occurred one time and this is a noun to accompany this one-time event. The masculine singular pronoun refers back to this *night of watching* and a verb is implied but not stated (as is often the case when we find a loose pronoun); and to this is added the lamed preposition and Yahweh.

Then we have the lamed prefixed preposition again with the Hiphil infinitive construct of *bring* with the masculine plural suffix. The Hiphil is causative. The second phrase is similar to the first except that it has the masculine demonstrative zeh (זֶה) [pronounced *zeh*] which means *this, here*. The masculine singular pronoun is found again, implying the verb *to be*.

Exodus 12:42b *This is that night of the Lord,...*

This is a night of Y<sup>e</sup>howah; a night which He was aware of in eternity past. It is the culmination of a series of events brought to pass by the Lord, as well as the beginning of a great adventure for the people of Israel. They will leave Egypt; they will go into the desert-wilderness and be tested; they will receive the Ten Commandments; and they will eventually march into the land of promise and take it.

Exodus 12:42c *...a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.*

This night would be a solemn observance for the people of Israel; and it would also be a time observed by many future generations of Israelites.

Perhaps Moses put down the pen in v. 41 and picked it up again here, in v. 42; or, before he distanced himself too far from the Passover. At this point, there will be more of what God had spoken to him concerning this ritual which was to be perpetuated. This was just the most logical place to include this information. Had he a word processor, Moses may have done things differently; however, this fit with his personal way of organizing his thoughts, with his style of writing, and the order or organization does not appear to have any real affect upon the meaning.

The Passover looks forward as well as backward. The Passover, as a lamb without spot or blemish being slaughtered, is a picture of Jesus Christ dying on the cross for our sins. To be clear, Moses, the priests and Israel did not understand this. They did this ritual for

hundreds of years, but there is no indication that they understood that this was connected directly to their Messiah-Savior.

The people of Israel were very aware that this ceremony looks backward to the deliverance of Israel through the death of the firstborn. However, this is also a picture of Jesus Christ dying for our sins. When God saw the blood of the Passover lamb, He passed over the home which had been "washed" in the blood. This grand religious ceremony is fraught with great meaning. When God looks at us, He sees the *blood* of His Son, which is why we have access to God.

## Lesson 176: Exodus 12:42–44

## Passover Regulations Part I

Exodus 12:42 *It is a night of solemn observance to the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of the Lord, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.*

This *night of solemn observance* is the *Passover* (today called the *Seder*, although the terms are certainly not synonymous).

The people of Israel keep this night of solemn observance on this night and for many years into the future. Even today, there is a Jewish observance of this day—called the *Seder*—but it is not really true to the day which God originally designed.

Before covering more regulations for the Passover, let's get an idea as to what the *Seder* is.

The modern-day celebration of the Passover is called the *Seder*, and it is barely a shadow of what the original Passover celebration was.

### The Seder (from Wikipedia and YouTube)

There is a brief 4 minute video on [YouTube](#) which discusses the various ways *Seder* is celebrated today. What ought to stand out is, this seems to bear no resemblance to the Passover which we are studying.

The table setting is a screenshot from the YouTube video. The foods which are presented here are not universal, but then, very little in Judaism is. Do you see what is missing? Lamb. What is the most fundamental element of the Passover? The lamb. What does the lamb represent?



## The Seder (from Wikipedia and YouTube)

Jesus Christ paying for our sins on the Roman cross. So what is fundamentally missing from Judaism? Their Savior.

Wikipedia: Seder customs include telling the story, discussing the story, drinking four cups of wine, eating matza, partaking of symbolic foods placed on the Passover Seder plate, and reclining in celebration of freedom. The Seder is the most commonly celebrated Jewish ritual, performed by Jews all over the world.

Observed by Jews, Samaritans, other groups claiming affiliation with Israelites

Significance: To retell the story of the Exodus from Egypt

Celebrations In Jewish practice, one or two festive Seder meals on the first two nights

Date 15th day of Nisan

Related to Three Pilgrimage Festivals (particularly Shavuot which follows 49 days from the second night of Passover)

**Table set for the Passover Seder** (a photograph); from [Wikipedia](#).



From [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passover\\_Seder](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passover_Seder) accessed July 8, 2021.

See also: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzsuL9U1a\\_k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzsuL9U1a_k)

My point here is, we do not have two religions—Christianity and Judaism—which have their basis in the Old Testament. There are few celebrations or customs which are more important than the Passover; and yet, the popular celebration of this evening meal in Judaism today bears little resemblance to the customs clearly defined in the Old Testament.

Please do not think that this is some sort of antisemitic viewpoint. It is simply a fact that modern-day Jews, who observe the tenets of Judaism, do not fully embrace the teachings which we are studying. What takes place today in the faithful Jewish home bears little resemblance to the rituals as described in the Scriptures.

Part of what we are learning is, Judaism as practiced today, is not an adherence to the Old Testament (and a rejection of the New Testament). Judaism today is a celebration and an observation of the teachings of rabbis over a very long period of time. It is not a faithful practice of the Mosaic teachings which we are studying.

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As an aside: this does not mean that a form of Judaism will not crop up, more faithful to the original text of the Old Testament. There is always the possibility that some form of *Judaism* will arise that is much more faithful to Moses than the many forms of Judaism observed today.

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It would not surprise me in the least that the Temple is rebuilt, at some point in time, and many of the historic traditions which we are studying, reinstated. I am not saying that this is going to happen; I am simply saying that it could.

Exodus 12:42 *It is a night of solemn observance to the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of the Lord, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.* (NKJV)

There are actually 2 ways of interpreting Exodus 12:42. *GOD kept watch all night, watching over the Israelites as he brought them out of Egypt. Because GOD kept watch, all Israel for all generations will honor GOD by keeping watch this night—a watchnight.* (The Message)

A number of other translations are similar to the Message.

The Lord kept vigil for the Israelites on the night that they left Egypt—a time when they were at their most vulnerable. Therefore, God looks to them to keep a vigil when it comes to their observing this time.

The idea behind this anthropopathism is, Israel is taking a great step of faith at this point, gathering everything up which they can reasonably carry and leaving Egypt. That God is keeping a vigil and protecting Israel seems appropriate.

Because the Lord kept watch over Israel this night; it is only logical that God expects Israel to keep a watch in future commemorations of this time.

The Passover was designed to teach the people about Jesus Christ. However, even those who have rejected the Lord still, to some degree, follow this ritual today. Although the matzah is a pretty common element, the lamb itself is not. It is almost as if they recognize that, such a celebration might result in their sons and daughters seeking out the Christian fulfillment of the Passover.

## **Passover Regulations**

These are the regulations for Passover celebrations for the future. This is progressive revelation. We have been given some of the information earlier; and now we are getting some additional details, which will apply to future Passovers. These regulations will close out this very long and very important chapter.

Exodus 12:43a *And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron,....*



We do not know any of the details on how and when God chose to speak to Moses and Aaron, which is not unusual. I would assume that this contact is initiated by God. It is likely that Moses was in the pre-Tabernacle (the tent which was used by Moses for religious purposes until the actual Tabernacle is built (which construction will take place Exodus 40)).

Exodus 12:43b ...[“This is the ordinance of the Passover:...](#)

God is going to set up a set of rules or laws concerning the observance of the Passover. These rules/laws will continue throughout the remainder of this chapter. The regulations spoken of in vv. 43–48 will focus on foreigners in the land of Canaan, when Israel observes the Passover there. There will be more regulations in the next chapter.

Exodus 12:43c ...[No foreigner shall eat it.](#)

Foreigners are not allowed to partake of the Passover.

We often haul our unbelieving friends and relatives to our church, often without giving them the gospel first. Under certain circumstances, Islam typically forces its beliefs and traditional acts on others. Once they establish dominance in a region, they then simultaneously harm other groups who believe differently and encourage others in this region to go along with their celebrations and rituals. Judaism, Y<sup>e</sup>howah worship and Christianity do not do this. The few examples of Catholicism forcing itself on others is exceptional, and not consistently practiced.

The way of Y<sup>e</sup>howah (a better designation of pre-Christianity than *Judaism*) is very cognizant of free will. At some point, the Israelites would outnumber their foreign population once settled in Canaan. Nevertheless, they were specifically mandated by God not to force immigrants to accept their faith and practices.

Exodus 12:43 [And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it.](#)

The Passover was never meant to be some empty ritual that everyone participates in. People did not participate simply because they were living in Israel for a time. It was not a matter of, *when in Rome, do what the Romans do*.

Only when a person understood and agreed to the ceremony, could he take part. In most cases, this required that person become a Hebrew. Becoming a Hebrew meant a fundamental adherence to the God of the Hebrews. It also meant circumcision (for males only, of course). Such a person was not saved by being circumcised; but the circumcision would have been a demonstration of their faith.

Exodus 12:44a [But every man’s servant who is bought for money,...](#)



Slaves were also not allowed to participate in the Passover. If they were to participate, then there would be certain requirements laid upon them first.

Exodus 12:44b ...when you have circumcised him, then he may eat it.

When a slave or foreigner chose to be circumcised, which would have been their profession of faith in the God of the Hebrews, then they could participate in the Passover.

The servant who has been bought and circumcised is a picture of one who has apprehended the salvation of the Revealed God and that is one who may partake in the Passover. The Passover is meaningful to those who are true Israel, who are the spiritual seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Those who have followed them in regeneration—they may observe the Passover.

Exodus 12:44 But every man's servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then he may eat it.

There must be a relationship established in order that someone outside of the Hebrew line could observe the Passover. This relationship is established by circumcision. Circumcision represents the new birth. Circumcision represents the spiritual birth. Circumcision indicates their dedication to their new God; to the Revealed God of Israel. The circumcised person is one who has fully trusted in the God of the Israelites. This is a person who now has a relationship with the God of Israel.

## Lesson 177: Exodus 12:45–48

## Passover Regulations Part II

We are studying the regulations associated with the Passover. The primary focus is upon those people in the land of promise who are not Hebrews.

Exodus 12:45 A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it.

The Passover was not simply a ritual for anyone to join in. The Hebrew people were not to *enforce* Y<sup>e</sup>howah worship over their minority populations. There had to be a relationship established between the person and the Revealed God before participation in these rituals would be allowed. The Passover has a meaning. People not raised up as Hebrews need to choose to participate; indicating that they must believe in the Revealed God and understand the meaning of the ritual (s).

Some of these people would form a more permanent relationship with Israel and with their God. At that point, they could join in their worship. As with the servant, often circumcision would be required.

Exodus 12:45 A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it.

The only ones to partake of the Passover were to be Hebrews or those who have given allegiance to the Hebrew people and to their God.

We may reasonably assume that, based upon the previous passage, that they could be circumcised and participate just like anyone else. It should be obvious that no one would really want to participate here in a superficial way.

The stranger is not allowed to participate. This is someone who has come through and possibly stopped with the Israelites for a meal. Maybe he will live and work in Israel for a time. This speaks of an unregenerate person who is not been cleansed with the blood. In being there, he is able to see what occurs and is evangelized by watching the Passover. If he has not believed in the God of Israel, then he is not to take part in the ceremony. This is no different than our Lord's Supper, the Eucharist. It is not a ceremony designed for unbelievers (however, no local church should practice a *closed communion*, meaning closed to *non-members* of that local church).

Some additional regulations for the Passover are added. We have already studied the observation of the first Passover. These regulations are for subsequent Passovers in the land of Canaan.

Exodus 12:46a *In one house it shall be eaten;...*

The meat from the Passover would be eaten in each of the individual homes. Two families might combine into one; but, for the most part, everything is to occur in one house per family.

Exodus 12:46b *...you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house,...*

If two families combine, the meat is not carried from one house to another. The meat of the lamb is not to be taken outside. If two houses combined, then this took place in one house or the other.

In the first Passover, remaining inside the house was remaining *under the blood* (the blood which had been smeared on the doorsill).

The conversion to faith in the Revealed God takes place, fundamentally, in one's soul. There is not to be any corruption from outside elements.

Exodus 12:46c *...nor shall you break one of its bones.*

The lamb is not to have any bones broken. The lamb represents Jesus Christ, and no bones would be broken in the LORD's body when on the cross.

Since the Passover lamb (or goat) speaks of Jesus Christ on the cross, God knew in the past that He would not suffer any broken bones on the cross; therefore, to retain the type, God told the sons of Israel not to break any bones of the Passover lamb. Jesus Christ

would die for our sins inside Israel—inside the house of Israel, if you will. Jesus Christ is the only Savior; there is no one from outside the house of Israel who qualifies as our savior.

Exodus 12:46 *In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break one of its bones.*

The eating of the flesh represented believing in Jesus Christ. Remaining inside of the house was remaining under God's protection (the people in the original Passover remained inside their houses as the Destroyer went through the land to kill the firstborn of those who did not put the blood on their door posts).

None of the bones of the sacrifice were to be broken, which is one of the many prophecies of the Messiah.

Psalm 34:20 reads: *He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.* These passages and Num. 9:12 are fulfilled in John 19:32–36, which reads: *The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man, and of the other man who was crucified with Him; but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs...For these things came to pass, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "Not a bone of Him shall be broken."* (Exodus 12:46; Psalm 34:20)

Jesus is our Passover lamb, as Paul writes in 1Cor. 5:7b: *For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.*

Psalm 34:20 *He keeps all His bones; not one of them is broken.* (ESV; capitalized)

A portion of Psalm 34 looked forward to Jesus, the Messiah of Israel.

Exodus 12:47 *All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.*

What the congregation of Israel is *keeping* is the Passover ritual. The Passover observation was to be done by all of the people of Israel. It signified a special relationship between them and God.

Quite obviously, the Passover represents the substitutionary death of our Lord for our sins.

This is a ritual, with great meaning, to be kept by Israel until the end of their dispensation. It is through this ritual which the gospel of Jesus Christ is learned.

In this verse, as well as twice in v. 48, we have the verb 'âsâh (עָשָׂה), which means *to do, to make*. It is the verb used in creation to make something out of something. It is our concept of the word *Passover* which makes this word difficult to translate. It literally means *to do, to make, or to perform the Passover*. However, we do not do it any injustice to translate this *to keep or to observe the Passover*.

Exodus 12:48a *And when a stranger dwells with you...*

There will be other people besides than Israelites in the land. The relationship between Israel and their God would attract people to Israel (as their nation would reflect God's wisdom).

When those in a relationship with God gather in large numbers in any geographical region, that region is blessed by God. This attracts others to that region. When R. B. Thieme, Jr. was teaching in Houston, they needed to expand the church, apparently. Bob took his congregation out to what was considered the outskirts of Houston. Apparently, many members of the congregation were upset to be taken so far outside of the city (today, this new location would be known as being *outside the loop*). Today, the place where the church sits is one of the most valuable properties in all of Houston. Houston has been a boom town since I moved here (1978) and it was a boomtown long before I moved here. It continues to have one of the strongest economies in the nation (there are at least 3 doctrinal churches which have been established in the general Houston area).

My point here is, where believers congregate, there is great blessing. This is a point of continuity between the Age of Israel and the Church Age.

Exodus 12:48b *...and wants to keep the Passover to the Lord,...*

People are attracted to the Hebrew people for a number of reasons; but some might be drawn to them because of their God. Or, when living among them, they develop an appreciation for the wisdom of their society and want to worship with the Hebrew people. Many people would be attracted to the Hebrew people simply because they were civilized.

Some would be attracted to Israel and to their God; and those with positive volition would want to celebrate the Passover.

The verb 'âsâh in this verse is in the Qal perfect (completed action<sup>55</sup>) and a wish or desire is expressed (as per NRSV or *The Emphasized Bible*). This is a non-Jew who desires to observe the Passover rite; therefore, God must set up some rules pertaining to him. A person, in order to celebrate the Passover, which is celebrating the deliverance of Israel by the Savior from Egypt, must be a believer.

Exodus 12:48c *...let all his males be circumcised,...*

In order for anyone, in the ceremony, to participate, they must be circumcised. No uncircumcised person could participate. Circumcision represents the new birth; or life being born out of death (after Abraham was circumcised, he was able to produce children again at age 100).

Anyone who participated in the Passover must be circumcised (males only, of course).

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<sup>55</sup> Not always the meaning of the perfect tense.

Exodus 12:48d ...and then let him come near and keep it;...

The believer comes near or approaches God. His intention is to celebrate the Passover.

Exodus 12:48e ...and he shall be as a native of the land.

There is no difference between the nonresident and the Hebrew; they will worship God in the same way. But, this requires the free will choice of the nonresident. They did not simply participate because that was the tradition.

The *way of Y<sup>e</sup>howah* in the Old Testament is very much based upon human volition. The idea of forcing Y<sup>e</sup>howah worship on anyone was abhorrent to the Hebrew mind.

Exodus 12:48f For no uncircumcised person shall eat it.

In order to celebrate the Passover, all males must be circumcised. Circumcision represents the new birth.

The Hebrews are being taken from the land of the unregenerate to the land of the regenerate, just as we believers are taken out from the world and regenerated at salvation.

The eating of the Passover lamb represents salvation from God's perspective just as circumcision represents salvation (but from the perspective of regeneration). Therefore, the analogy would be meaningless to have unsaved acting as though they were saved. It is the same with the Eucharist—the ritual loses its reality when an unbeliever partakes of it. Anyone can be saved, even one who is not an Israelite, which is why a foreign guest may take part. However, in the Age of Israel, one who has believed in Israel's Revealed God often became an Israelite. They would be circumcised, which represents regeneration (or being born-again).

## Lesson 178: Exodus 12:47–51

## Passover Regulations Part III

We will complete chapter 12 and the Passover regulations in this lesson.

Exodus 12:48 And when a stranger dwells with you and wants to keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it.

This provides the steps necessary for a person outside of Israel to observe the Passover along with the people of Israel. These rites were not to be imposed upon anyone. Those who wanted to worship the God of the Hebrews must choose to do so from their own volition.

Fundamental to Christianity (NT) and to the Way of Y<sup>e</sup>howah (OT) is free will. The Bible asserts that man both has free will and that God allows the function of man's free will. The

exercise of man's free will is fundamental to the human race. This is why governments which are against God (those which are Islamic or socialistic) are also against man's individual free will. In those societies, the collective is everything, and man's individual freedoms count for nothing. Islam and socialism are, at their heart, opposed to God.

When modern nations align with one another (as trading partners or in preparation for war), socialist nations and Islamic government nations nearly always become allies. Their thinking is very similar.

Exodus 12:49 *One law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who dwells among you."*

The word *law* is the feminine singular noun *tôwrah* (תּוֹרָה or הֲרֹט) [pronounced *TOH-rah*], which means, *instruction, doctrine; [human and divine] law, direction, regulations, protocol; custom*. It is transliterated *Torah*. Strong's #8451 and #8452 BDB #435.

There was a specific *protocol* to be followed for the Passover. It was not to be watered down or changed (in order to make it palatable) for the stranger.

Those who wanted to participate were not treated differently; they were not to receive a watered-down version of the Passover; nor were they to be somehow separated from the congregation of Israel.

There is not another system of religious doctrine for those living among the Hebrew people. Temporary residents were not to be viewed as second class citizens. If they were interested in the Hebrew God, then there were to be no barriers to them. They would be allowed and expected to worship just as a native Israelite would.

The question arises: *If there is such importance placed upon the genetics of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, how can a foreigner or any sort become a part?* (1) If a foreigner chooses to worship the God of Israel, the genetic relationship is superceded; and (2) given a little bit of time, those foreign to Israel would enter in to Israel and be assimilated through marriage. The stranger would soon lose their national identify entirely.

At the same time, there was never any requirement from non-Israelites to participate in anything related to the Israelite faith.

Just as there is one salvation, one Savior and one means of salvation, those who lived among the Hebrews were taught this symbolically through their rituals. This means that there will be only one way to observe the Passover. Furthermore, the Passover is much more than a nice little ritual that a foreigner participates in, out of politeness to the family with whom he resides. It is a solemn ritual which explains the most important thing to any unbeliever, which is, salvation and the deliverance by God. This is not to be taken lightly. When one wants to participate, and he finds out that circumcision is involved, then he may reconsider. Only a person highly motivated and positive toward the God of the Universe

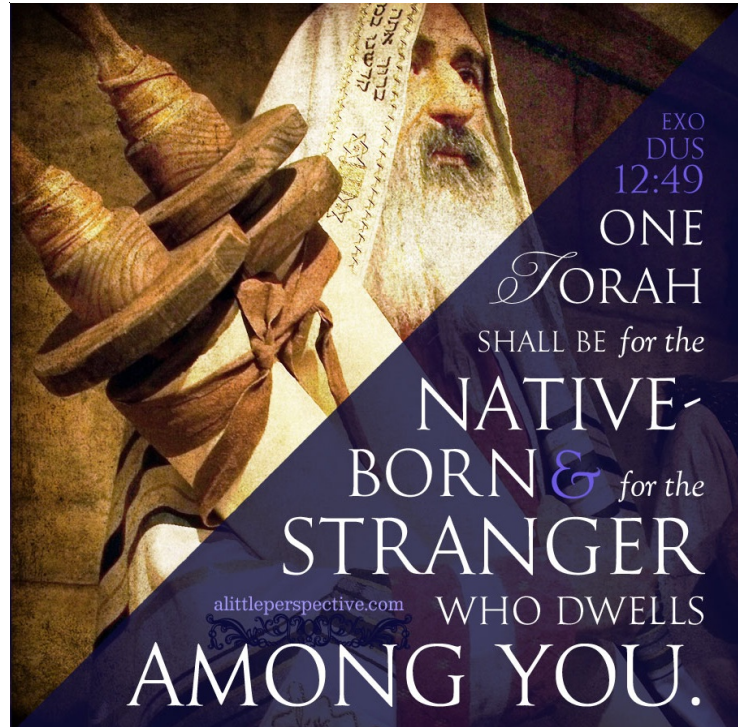


would submit to circumcision in order to observe the Passover. In this way, the reality and the importance of this ritual is maintained.

**One Torah for the native-born and the stranger** (Exodus 12:49 graphic); from [A Little Perspective](http://alittleperspective.com); accessed March 10, 2021.

This passage, from vv. 43–49, looks forward in time; when the sons of Israel would observe the Passover in the future. We know this because of the references to slaves that the Hebrews may own, hired servants, or strangers who might want to participate.

Vv. 50–51 act as a summation; after which, in Exodus 13, we return to the narrative (these rules were likely given within the narrative; but they looked forward in time to Israel being in the land).



Exodus 12:50a **Thus all the children of Israel did;**...

God has given a set of commandments to Israel were obeyed by Israel.

Exodus 12:50b **...as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.**

Whatever Y<sup>e</sup>howah commanded Moses and Aaron, the people of Israel did just that. There were times when the Exodus generation went along with divine protocol.

God set up the Passover to illustrate salvation, and to act as a memorial to one of the greatest events in history wherein the God of Israel revealed Himself as the God of the Universe and identified Himself with the Hebrew people.

Exodus 12:50 **Thus all the children of Israel did; as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.**

All of Israel followed the first Passover ritual. They also did exactly as Moses and Aaron commanded them with regards to the other things (such as, asking for jewelry from the Egyptian people). This indicates that all of Israel believed in the Revealed God and they trusted Moses' words which were representative of Him.

This blanket statement may possibly look into the future at future Passovers, if Moses is recording this information a few years in the future from this narrative. However, my guess would be that they are not included here. God gave directions for the Passover; He gave some guidance for future Passovers; but the obedience of Israel here simply refers to their obedience for the first Passover. Obviously, they had to obey Moses' instructions closely for the first Passover, or they would lose their firstborn.

Exodus 12:50 Thus all the children of Israel did; as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

Interestingly enough, up to this point in time, the phrase *Moses and Aaron* occur 23 times since Aaron was brought on board. This phrase will only occur 4 more times in the book of Exodus (16:2, 6 24:9 40:31). Despite the fact that Aaron will be integral to the leadership of Israel, Moses will clearly be the leader of Israel as well as the chief mediator between man and God from this point on. Aaron will play an important part as a leader (he will be in charge when Moses is not there) and later as the High Priest. However, Aaron will also fail spectacularly in Exodus 32, leading the people in worship of the golden calf.

Exodus 12:51 And it came to pass, on that very same day, that the Lord brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt according to their armies.

This verse sums up the action of this chapter, that this was the day that Y<sup>e</sup>howah brought the people of Israel out of Egypt. It is suggested here that these are organized into groups—I would guess by tribes. Here, they are called *armies*.

This is the masculine plural noun ts<sup>e</sup>bâ'ôwth (תְּצַבֹּאוֹת) [pronounced tz<sup>eb</sup>-vaw-OHTH], which means, *armies, hosts; wars*. Strong's #6635 BDB #838. At this point, the people of Israel did not see themselves as members of any army. They had no training with weapons. However, it is clear that they are organized by families when they move and when they camp.

The last phrase means that they moved out in an organized fashion. When they participated in the Passover, it was organized and when they left Egypt it was organized. When they both camp and move throughout the desert-wilderness, they will be organized. Y<sup>e</sup>howah is not a God of confusion or disorganization (1Cor. 14:33).

*That very same day* refers to the anniversary of Israel entering into Egypt. By my understanding, that was *exactly* 430 years ago, when Jacob stepped onto Egyptian soil, along with his entire family. So, the 15<sup>th</sup> of this first month, they will exodus from Egypt; and 430 years ago, Jacob and his sons were welcomed by Pharaoh into his land, and granted temporary citizenship (Gen. 46:28–47:12).

There would be a time that Israel would function as an army; however, at this point, it simply means that they were organized by tribes and families. Despite them leaving suddenly, God did not simply have them meander aimlessly in the same direction.

**Abstract representation of the Passover** (a graphic); from [Full of Eyes](#); accessed March 10, 2021. He titles it *Exodus 12:46 + John 19:36*.

Exodus 12 was quite a chapter! I think that it is best for us to take a look at this entire chapter once again, but to try to summarize all that we have studied. I will use the World English Bible (WEB) throughout this chapter analysis.

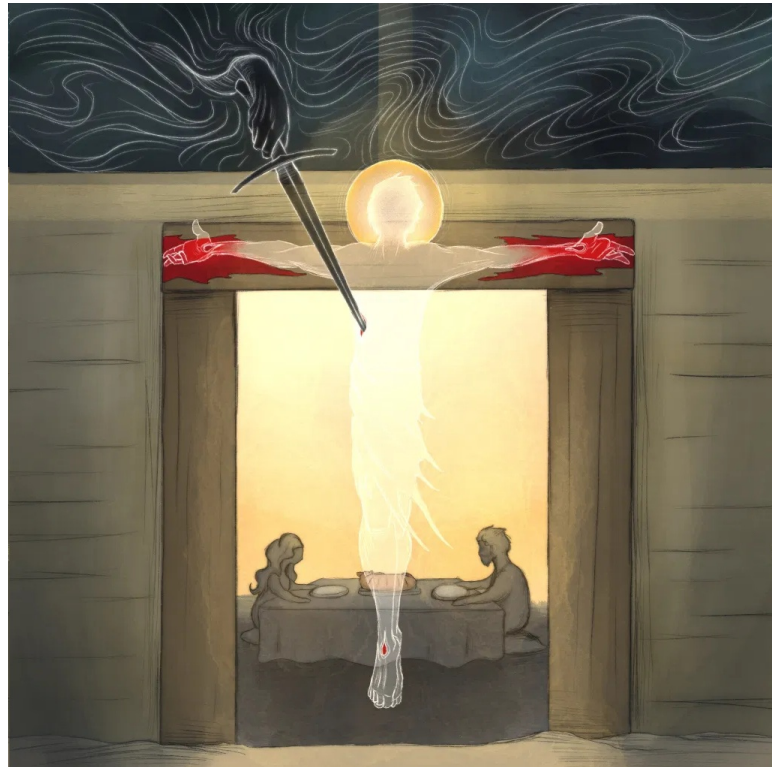
The first thing that we need to do is to establish time and place. The people of Israel are in Goshen, which is a large subsection of Egypt. The Hebrew people appear to be intentionally isolated from Egypt.

When Joseph was prime minister of Egypt, and he brought his family there, he worked things out to keep Israel separate from the rest of Egypt. They lived as a nation within a nation.

God has, to this point in time (Exodus 7–11), inflicted 9 judgments against Egypt (most often referred to as plagues). Some of the first judgments affected Israel, but, for the most part, these judgments were put on Egypt alone. This physical separation between the people of Israel and the people of Egypt from the very beginning, has allowed for God to target the Egyptians and to spare the Israelites.

In Exodus 11, a very short chapter, Moses speaks directly to Pharaoh, giving him one final warning about the 10<sup>th</sup> plague. The chapter begins with God speaking to Moses, but it quickly segues into Moses speaking to Pharaoh. There was great anger in this final meeting when Moses finally went out from a recalcitrant Pharaoh.

As we discussed on several occasions, all of these conversations and events were not neatly divided into disjoint segments of time. Nor is everything in perfect chronological order (although, generally speaking, the book of Exodus moves forward in time). Moses, as he recounts these events, completely separates these judgments from one another.



Most of the time, it *appears* as if God calls Moses in, tells him about the next plague; then Moses goes before Pharaoh and tells him about that plague. Often, Moses says, “This is what God requires, and there will be no plague.” Pharaoh says, “No way.” Moses leaves, the plague happens. Pharaoh calls upon Moses to stop the plague and often makes promises to Moses. Moses goes back and the plague is stopped. Pharaoh says, “I know I promised you X, Y and Z, but now I am only offering you X.” Moses then says, “Not good enough.” Moses storms out and the process begins again. That *appears* to be the process of events for each plague, but that is actually Moses’ editing style. He records each plague as disjoint from the others.

What actually takes place is more complex than this, and when Pharaoh balks at giving the people of Israel what God demands, Moses often is *locked and loaded* with the next plague (or with the warning for the next plague). That is, once a plague is over, but Pharaoh refuses to accede to God’s demands, Moses does not need to quickly run to God to find out what to do next. He is ready with the warning of the next plague. This is my opinion; but which is not specifically expressed this way in the text. Having this sort of overlap would have made for a very confusing narrative, but it would have been the natural progression of events.

The other remarkable aspect to this section of Exodus is, there is very little repetition. God tells Moses what to say to Pharaoh and then Moses goes to Pharaoh and says exactly that. However, in almost every case, we segue from what God is telling Moses to what Moses says to Pharaoh, without any repetition.

In Exodus 11, the 9<sup>th</sup> plague has happened, but Pharaoh remains Incalcitrant. Therefore, God conveys, through Moses, the 10<sup>th</sup> judgment:

Exo 11:1 Yahweh said to Moses, “I will bring yet one more plague on Pharaoh, and on Egypt; afterwards he will let you go. When he lets you go, he will surely thrust you out altogether.”

Exodus 11:4–6 Moses said [to Pharaoh], “This is what Yahweh says: ‘About midnight I will go out into the middle of Egypt, and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of livestock. There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been, nor shall be any more.’”

This was the warning delivered by Moses to Pharaoh. After which, Moses *went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.* (Exodus 11:8e)

The final two verses of Exodus 11 are:

Exodus 11:9 Yahweh said to Moses, “Pharaoh won’t listen to you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.”



Exodus 11:10 Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and Yahweh hardened [or, *strengthened*] Pharaoh's heart, and he didn't let the children of Israel go out of his land.

What is being spoken of are judgments 1–9. Despite these great judgments, Pharaoh continued to refuse to send the children of Israel out of Egypt.

Interestingly enough, Exodus 12 will begin and end with Passover regulations.

Vv. 1–13	<a href="#"><u>God tells Israel how to prepare for the 10<sup>th</sup> plague</u></a>
Vv. 14–20	<a href="#"><u>Passover regulations for future Passovers (which will memorialize this event)</u></a>
Vv. 21–23	<a href="#"><u>Moses gives the immediate requirements to the elders of Israel</u></a>
Vv. 24–27	<a href="#"><u>Moses speaks of future Passovers to the elders</u></a>
V. 28	<a href="#"><u>The people of Israel follow God's instructions for the first Passover</u></a>
Vv. 29–30	<a href="#"><u>The 10<sup>th</sup> plague—the death of the firstborn</u></a>
Vv. 31–32	<a href="#"><u>Pharaoh tells Moses and Aaron to take the people of Israel out of Egypt</u></a>
Vv. 33–39	<a href="#"><u>The people of Israel pack up and leave hurriedly</u></a>
Vv. 40–41	<a href="#"><u>The people of Israel were in Egypt for 430 years</u></a>
V. 42	<a href="#"><u>This night is to be memorialized by Israel</u></a>
Vv. 43–49	<a href="#"><u>Foreigners and hired help were not to celebrate the Passover with Israel</u></a>
Vv. 50–51	<a href="#"><u>Israel obeys God; God leads Israel out of Egypt</u></a>

It is remarkable as to just how little time is given over to 10<sup>th</sup> plague in this very lengthy chapter.

## **The Passover**

Exodus 12:1–2 Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, "This month shall be to you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year to you.

There are no chapter breaks in the original text. However, this is an abrupt change of pace. In chapter 11, Moses has left Pharaoh in anger; and then there is somewhat of a summarization of the plagues in the final verses of Exodus 11.

Exodus 12 begins with God giving Moses instructions for the first Passover, which instructions will prevent Israel from enduring the same judgment that Egypt faces.

God not only looks to the events of the near future, but He prepares Moses for future celebrations of the Passover. The night of the first Passover is going to be a very solemn event; but future Passovers will be celebrations.

Exodus 12:3–4 Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth day of this month, they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household; and if the household is too little for a lamb, then he and his neighbor

next to his house shall take one according to the number of the souls; according to what everyone can eat you shall make your count for the lamb.

God describes to Moses what the Passover is, how and when it will take place, and how it will be observed in the future.

This conversation pretty much had to take place *before* the 3 days of darkness (plague #9). There are specific dates and times given. They were likely adhered to by Israel, in part, during the plague of darkness (it was not light in Goshen, but the lamps of the Israelites worked).

These 3 days of darkness in the land parallel the thick darkness over the Golgotha for the 3 hours during which Jesus endured the punishment for our sins. The lamb slaughtered for the 10<sup>th</sup> plague also speaks of Jesus dying for our sins.

Exodus 12:5–6 *Your lamb shall be without defect, a male a year old. You shall take it from the sheep, or from the goats: and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at evening.*

The Passover lamb, as described, is a picture of Jesus Christ, Who will be our Passover Lamb. The lamb must be without defect, just as Jesus would be without sin.

The people of Israel did not make that connection between this lamb which they slaughtered (in each household) and their Messiah (which concept has already been revealed to the people of God, but with little detail).

God has designed the history of Israel, the events recalled in Scripture, as a map, as a guide, to make it possible for the man who knows Scripture to recognize their Messiah when He comes and presents Himself to Israel. The idea is, when Jesus presents Himself to Israel, everyone in Israel should be able to recognize Him. Their history and their rituals are intertwined with the promise of a future Savior.

Let me carefully explain something here: no one in Israel fully understood the few things which I have explained to you about vv. 5–6. They did not know that the lamb represents the Savior to come; they did not know that the lack of defect in the lamb foretold the lack of defect in their Savior. Everything that Israel did as a nation looked forward to and describe in shadow form their Savior. Yet Israelites were still able to be saved. Before Jesus came to Israel and offered Himself to them as their Light and Savior, God revealed Himself to Israel. At some point in a person's life, an Israelite would believe in God as He revealed Himself, and he would be saved. As a result, he would continue to follow the guidance given to him in the Scriptures and continue to learn more and more about this God Who saved him. The Revealed God is Jesus; but, prior to the incarnation, that was just a common Hebrew name (the Greek name *Jesus* corresponds to the Hebrew name *Joshua*).



A person may place his trust in the Revealed God at age 4 or 5; and he may not until age 20; and some might not trust in the God of the Hebrews until they are on their deathbed. Nevertheless, every son of Israel was saved like his father Abraham. **He believed God and that faith was credited to him as righteousness.** (Gen. 15:6).

Back to our narrative. A lamb without defect has been selected for each house and **all Israel has risen up to kill it.**

Exodus 12:7 **They shall take some of the blood, and put it on the two door posts and on the lintel, on the houses in which they shall eat it.**

The blood speaks of both death and judgment, which are necessary in order for us to be saved. Our sins must be judged and the sentence of death must be passed in order for us to be saved.

The blood is to be painted onto the doorsill in such a way as to suggest a Roman cross. The blood would have also dripped down upon the doorsill. These four places where the blood would be seen represent the four places from which the Lord bled (from His head, His hands and His feet).

So that there is no confusion, the blood is representative, tying the sacrifices of these animals to the sacrifice of Jesus. Obviously, the blood of the lamb being sacrificed and the blood emanating from the wounds of Jesus was real. However, the blood itself is not efficacious. Jesus did not bleed to death; nor is His physical blood tied to our salvation in some mystical way. His blood was not carried into heaven in some ancient bowl. There is no fountain anywhere filled with Immanuel's blood. The grape juice that we drink at Passover (and, in some cases, the wine<sup>56</sup>) is not somehow the real blood of Christ.

The punishment for our sins was poured out upon Jesus, which is something that no one was able to see (as God covered the region of Golgotha with a thick darkness when He put upon Jesus our sins). God the Father judged God the Son for all sins committed, past, present and future, for all mankind, those who will believe and those who will not.



Every person who believes in Jesus—even if they were at the foot of the cross—has to take God's judgment of His Son by faith. God did not allow anyone on Golgotha to see Jesus take upon Himself our sins on His Own body on the wood.

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<sup>56</sup> It is not supposed to be, but sometimes it is.

**Christ, Our Passover—Blood on the Door Frame** (a graphic); from [In God's Image](#); accessed July 28, 2021.

Exodus 12:8 They shall eat the meat in that night, roasted with fire, and unleavened bread. They shall eat it with bitter herbs.

The meat here is the meat of the lamb. The lamb, of course, represents Jesus Christ. Eating the meat represents exercising faith in Jesus Christ. The fire represents judgment. The unleavened bread is all about there being no distortion of the truth. The bitter herbs are our sins being placed upon the Lord. Jesus being associated with our sins is a bitter association. God the Father having to judge His Son was a bitter experience.

Exodus 12:9 Don't eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted with fire; with its head, its legs and its inner parts.

The meat was not to be eaten raw. The Lord must be judged in order for us to have a relationship with God. Therefore, there must be fire applied to the sacrifice. The fire represents (God's) judgment; boiling water does not.

Jesus was judged in His body on the tree; His body parts were not separated.

Exodus 12:10 You shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; but that which remains of it until the morning you shall burn with fire.

Everyone in the family was to partake of the lamb. None of it was to remain the next day. Jesus fully offered Himself at one time for all mankind for all time.

Exodus 12:11 This is how you shall eat it: with your belt on your waist, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste: it is Yahweh's Passover.

For the first Passover, Israel was to be ready to go. Their actions were indicative of their faith in the words of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

Furthermore, accepting the Passover was a sign of salvation, and the saved Israelite was to be ready to represent Y<sup>e</sup>howah at that point.

**The Jews' Passover, by James Tissot** (before 1902) (a graphic); from [Wikipedia](#); accessed July 28, 2021. I have no explanation for those hats that Tissot designed for them.



Exodus 12:12 For I will go through the land of Egypt in that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and animal. Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am Yahweh.

God would exercise judgment against Egypt, killing the firstborn of man and animal (so that every household in Egypt suffered loss).

The key to the killing of the firstborn is this: God would offer up His firstborn (Jesus) on our behalf; therefore, our firstborn belong to Him.

Exodus 12:13 The blood shall be to you for a token on the houses where you are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no plague be on you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

The blood on the doorsill was a reminder to God not to enter that house. That house was covered/protected by the blood.

Bear in mind that Jesus did not bleed to death for our sins. Nor were the beatings that He received prior to the cross in some way efficacious for our sins. Nor did the physical punishment which He endured on the cross provide a partial or full payment for our sins. Nor was the Lord's physical death the payment for our sins.

When Jesus was on the cross, there were 3 hours during which God the Father poured out on Him our sins and then God the Father judged those sins in the Lord's body on the tree. That is where our sins were paid for and that is why we have access to God.

The blood *represents* this spiritual death, which was far more painful than anything that we could ever imagine in this life.

I had a wonderful friend of mine who went through excruciating pain during the final years of her life. She even remarked to me that she found out that, "You can't die from pain." The pain she felt was, I have no doubt, far greater than most of us will experience in our lives. The pain that the Lord endured was unimaginable to any person. The physical pain which He endured on the cross was representative of the intense judgment which the Lord received. The judgment of God upon Him is what redeems us.

Jesus could have endured the judgment for our sins at any point in time. God used the Roman crucifixion as illustrative of what was to take place. We have, through various descriptions, have some concept of the physical pain that Jesus endured. However, all of this physical pain was nothing compared to bearing the punishment for our sins. God did it that way, so that we might better understand what was done in order for God to provide us with salvation.

Exodus 12:14 This day shall be to you for a memorial, and you shall keep it a feast to Yahweh: throughout your generations you shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever.

The Passover was to be celebrated throughout the rest of Israel's history. Although some Jews celebrate it today (it is called the Seder), it bears only a thin resemblance to what God herein requires. And, it is not as if the Jews of today lost the requirements for the Passover. They are right here. They are what we are studying right now. Those Jews who consider themselves to be fundamentalists—they need to be following the dictates of the Scriptures. Even the most orthodox Jews are not keeping the Passover as described in this chapter.<sup>57</sup> As you will find out, as we go through the books of Moses, that Judaism today bears little resemblance to Y<sup>e</sup>howah worship as presented by God through Moses.

Exodus 12:15 “Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; even the first day you shall put away yeast out of your houses, for whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.

The Passover began a 7-day feast, known as the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The unleavened bread looked back to the people leaving Egypt suddenly, without time to let their bread rise. Symbolically, the lack of leaven was indicative of pure doctrine without mixture of false systems of thinking.

Exodus 12:16 In the first day there shall be to you a holy convocation, and in the seventh day a holy convocation; no kind of work shall be done in them, except that which every man must eat, that only may be done by you.

The 7<sup>th</sup> day was a Sabbath and a time of gathering. There was some food preparation which had to be done, and God allowed for that.

Exodus 12:17 You shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this same day I have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations by an ordinance forever.

Israel is to remember God taking them out of Egypt by observing the Feast of the Unleavened Bread.

Exodus 12:18 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty first day of the month at evening.

The time frame for eating unleavened bread is specified, from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of Abib (the first month of the Hebrew calendar). The evening marked the end of the day.

Exodus 12:19 There shall be no yeast found in your houses for seven days, for whoever eats that which is leavened, that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a foreigner, or one who is born in the land.

Yeast would not be allowed in any of the houses. Whether this meant that it was well-hidden and not used, or taken outside, I don't know. In any case, it was not to be seen.

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<sup>57</sup> There may be a handful who do; but orthodox Jews today do not follow the dictates of Scripture.

Exodus 12:20 You shall eat nothing leavened. In all your habitations you shall eat unleavened bread.”

For a week, only unleavened bread would be allowed.

Vv. 21–23 is strictly concerns itself with what is about to take place right then. These are the instructions for the Passover, which takes place during the final evening that the Jews are in Egypt.

In the narrative, we are in the beginning of the first Passover.

Exodus 12:21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said to them, “Draw out, and take lambs according to your families, and kill the Passover.

What Moses requires here appears to be specifically for this Passover (see v. 23).

The Passover is a masculine singular noun with a definite article. It refers to the various lambs, one per household. However, these instructions treat the Passover as if it is one lamb.

The people of Israel would kill these lambs just as they would kill the Lord of Glory on the cross. Once the lamb for each household has been killed, the Israelites then do this:

Exodus 12:22 You shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two door posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.

On this Passover, the blood of the lamb would be painted onto the doorframe in 3 places: on both sides and at the very top of the doorframe.

Exodus 12:23 For Yahweh will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when he sees the blood on the lintel, and on the two door posts, Yahweh will pass over the door, and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to strike you.

The Egyptians who did not have a Passover lamb (all or most of them) would be struck by God. The Israelites, who did have the Passover lamb and the blood on the doorframe, would not be harmed by the Lord.

Exodus 12:24 You shall observe this thing for an ordinance to you and to your sons forever.

The Israelites were to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which would be preceded by the Passover, for the rest of their lives; and for generations into the future.

Exodus 12:25 It shall happen when you have come to the land which Yahweh will give you, according as he has promised, that you shall keep this service.



God promises to Israel to give them the land of promise. While in the land, they are to keep this feast exactly as described.

God is careful to associated this exact moment in time with a celebration of this day in the future when the Hebrew people are in the land.

Exodus 12:26 It will happen, when your children ask you, 'What do you mean by this service?'...

The children will ask, "Why are we celebrating these days as we do?"

Exodus 12:27 ...that you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of Yahweh's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He struck the Egyptians, and spared our houses.'" The people bowed their heads and worshiped.

The people of Israel are to explain to them the historical events which led to their leaving Egypt.

Having taken in all of these instructions from Moses, the people bowed their heads in worship.

Exodus 12:28 The children of Israel went and did so; as Yahweh had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

The people of Israel did just as Moses asked. In the immediate future, the people, household by household, collected a lamb (or young goat) and watched it for several days; and then killed it, applying the blood around the door frame as instructed by God.

### **The Tenth Plague: Death of the Firstborn**

Vv. 29–32 is the historical record of the actual plague.

Exodus 12:29 At midnight, Yahweh struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of livestock.

Those in Egypt who did not protect themselves with the blood (apparently all or nearly all of them) suffered loss in their homes. This was true of all economic stations.

I have assumed that the killing of the firstborn of livestock was done so that every household suffered some sort of loss. What happened needed to affect all Egypt. No household which rejected God's protection (via the sacrificed lamb) would go without loss.

When God gave a sign, it was something that needed to impact all those it was intended to impact. If only a firstborn son was taken, then not every household would be impacted by this judgment.



Exodus 12:30 Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

Even Pharaoh's firstborn was killed. This is what was required for Pharaoh to submit completely to the requirements of God.

Exodus 12:31 He called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise up, get out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel; and go, serve Yahweh, as you have said!

Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and told them to leave and serve their God.

Exodus 12:32 Take both your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also!"

Pharaoh tells them to lead all of the people out of Egypt. There is no expectation at this time that they will return.

Pharaoh, interestingly enough, calls upon Moses to bless him as well.

## **The Exodus**

The people of God pack up some of their belongings and leave Egypt.

Despite the glorious name of the book that we are studying, the actual exodus from Egypt takes place in vv. 33–39.

Exodus 12:33 The Egyptians were urgent with the people, to send them out of the land in haste, for they said, "We are all dead men."

The Egyptian people also went to the Israelites and requested that they leave urgently. There had been a death in every single household. The Egyptians came to Goshen directly, and asked the Hebrew people to leave. It is likely that some of these Egyptians brought with them valuables, which they gave to the Israelites.

Exodus 12:34 The people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes on their shoulders.

There was no time for them to even allow their bread to rise. The Israelites left Egypt right then and there. They gathered all that they needed and were ready to move out.

Exodus 12:35 The children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they asked of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and clothing.

At some point, the people of Israel asked for jewelry and clothing. I think that this occurred on several occasions; and that they received delivery of these items on several occasions.

What is suggested here is, when the Egyptians came to them and asked them to leave, many of those Egyptians brought gold, silver and clothing. The idea was, to encourage the people to leave as quickly as possible.

Exodus 12:36 [Yahweh gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. They plundered the Egyptians.](#)

Due to all that happened, the Egyptians brought to the Israelites great wealth to take with them. There would have been a variety of motivations. Some might bring wealth to the Israelites out of guilt; some may have brought it as an incentive for them to leave Egypt.

Exodus 12:37 [The children of Israel traveled from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot who were men, in addition to children.](#)

600,000 men left Egypt, traveling to Succoth. There were women and children besides, which is where we get our figure of approximately 2 million.

Today, based upon what we read in Exodus (and Numbers), we can only guess the route that Israel took. Even until today, there are fundamental disagreements about this route.

Exodus 12:38 [A mixed multitude went up also with them, with flocks, herds, and even very much livestock.](#)

Non-Israelites also went with them. Some of those would have likely been Egyptians. It would be logical that some non-Hebrew slaves took this as their escape from slavery and went with them.

A number of commentators blame this mixed multitude for rebellions which take place later on. However, there is no indication that these additional people specifically caused any problems. In fact, in some of the rebellions, the perpetrators are specifically identified and none of them come from this mixed multitude.

Exodus 12:39 [They baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought out of Egypt; for it wasn't leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt, and couldn't wait, and they had not prepared any food for themselves.](#)

There was no time to bake their normal breads and cakes, so they were made without leavening, which cut the length of this process down considerably.

Exodus 12:40 [Now the time that the children of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred thirty years.](#)

Israel's entire time in Egypt was 430 years.

Exodus 12:41 At the end of four hundred thirty years, to the day, all of Yahweh's armies went out from the land of Egypt.

Israel left Egypt on the 430<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the time that they entered into this country. I would understand this to be the time that Jacob entered the country, as he was the named heir to the promises of God. All Israel came from Jacob (the mixed multitude would have intermarried with the people of Israel and be subsumed into Israel in that way).

Exodus 12:42 It is a night to be much observed to Yahweh for bringing them out from the land of Egypt. This is that night of Yahweh, to be much observed of all the children of Israel throughout their generations.

Based upon all that happened, Israel continued to observe the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread throughout all of its history in the land. Essentially, these observances continued up until A.D. 70, when Rome destroyed Jerusalem and killed nearly 1 million Jews.

The Jewish holidays which were observed subsequent from this moved further and further away from their descriptions in the Scriptures.

### **Institution of the Passover**

Exodus 12:43–44 Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover. No foreigner shall eat of it, but every man's servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then shall he eat of it.

There were some additional constraints put on this celebration.

Foreign people were not to be forced to partake of this ceremony. In fact, any non-Israelites would have to be circumcised before taking part.

Exodus 12:45 A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat of it.

Foreigners and hired servants were treated the same way. No one was ever forced to observe the feasts of the Hebrew people.

Exodus 12:46 It must be eaten in one house. You shall not carry any of the meat outside of the house. Do not break any of its bones.

Each home celebrated as a unit. They did not take any of the meat of the lamb outside. They did not break the bones of the animal.

Exodus 12:47 All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.

All Israel was to observe this ceremony.

Exodus 12:48 When a stranger shall live as a foreigner with you, and will keep the Passover to Yahweh, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one who is born in the land: but no uncircumcised person shall eat of it.

Those outside of Israel could observe these days, but they had to become circumcised in order to do so.

Exodus 12:49 One law shall be to him who is born at home, and to the stranger who lives as a foreigner among you.”

The same ceremonies would be followed, whether a family of Israelites or a family or hired workers, temporary residents or slaves.

Exodus 12:50 All the children of Israel did so. As Yahweh commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

These Israelites did just as Moses and Aaron and required.

Exodus 12:51 That same day, Yahweh brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies. (WEB, used throughout this entire summary; I capitalized at least one pronoun in their translation)

All of Israel was thus brought out of the land of Egypt by God, at the hand of Moses.

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## Lesson 182: Exodus 13:1

## Introduction to Exodus 13

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### The Firstborn Consecrated

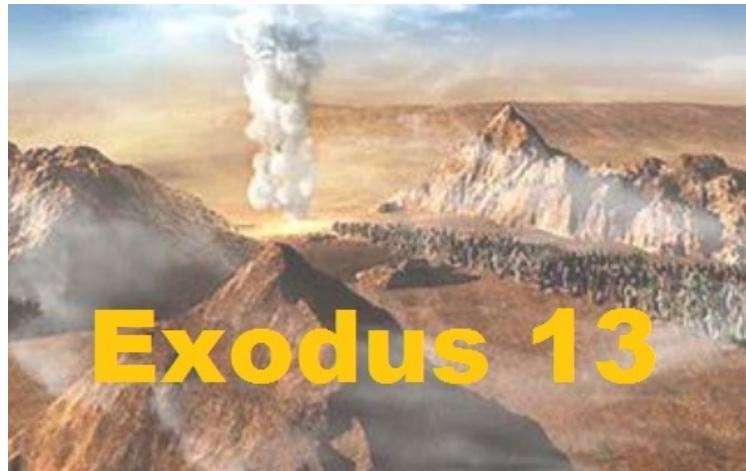
Exodus 13 might appear to the reader to go off on an odd tangent. Israel has seemingly escaped from Egypt—the people of Egypt demanded that they leave (Exodus 12:31–36) following the 10<sup>th</sup> plague, which was the death of the firstborn. (Exodus 12:29–30). However, the regulations for the Passover are given at the end of Exodus 12 (vv. 43–51); and we simply have more regulations given to the people.

As we will find out, Israel is not yet fully safe from Egypt; but God is already giving them Bible doctrine. God does not wait for them to arrive to Mount Sinai before He begins the spiritual education as His people.

**Exodus 13** (a graphic); underlying graphic from [Levin Baptist Church](#); accessed April 14, 2021.

The words which we read in this chapter are first spoken by God to Moses; and then Moses teaches the people.

Already, God is looking forward to yearly observances of the Passover, and this is covered, along with the redemption of the firstborn.



Exodus 13 should seem easy and short by comparison to Exodus 12. It is half as long and deals with fewer topics. Moses expands upon what God had told him concerning the Feast of the Unleavened Bread. Also, the Hebrews are to tell their sons about the exodus and what God had done for them and that this was to be passed on for generations.

It is wrong to think that everything was passed on orally for hundreds of years, and then committed to writing. Everything that we study points to a traditions developed side-by-side the historical incidents they represent, recorded in God's Word, which, at that time, was the Torah (the 4 books of Moses + Genesis<sup>58</sup>).

Today, the Bible is found in hundreds of versions, in every book store, on thousands of websites, on CD ROM's, on computer programs, etc. However, it is God's method for His Word to be communicated orally by a well-prepared pastor who recognizes the ultimate importance of the Bible. God desires for His Word to be deposited in your soul. In the Church Age, this primarily takes place at the local church.

It is fine if you feel a need to carefully check out your pastor-teacher to be certain that he is teaching you accurately. In fact, at first, you should be quite careful of that. However, only those who are pastor-teachers and have similar teaching gifts need to be examining the Word personally. There is nothing which indicates that the common Christian is to go to the Word and dig out everything for himself. That is the job of the pastor-teacher, which he then passes along orally to his congregation.

Similarly, every father and mother has a solemn responsibility to teach their own children; a responsibility which is more important than any other. If someone, after years of study under a good pastor teacher, is motivated to dig into the Word, this is fine. However, it is often that cults along with bits and pieces of false doctrine result from various people's self study (often people who were too arrogant to learn under a pastor teacher). They tend to take one or two verses out of context; they magnify these verses beyond all the others in

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<sup>58</sup> And possibly Job.

the Bible; and then they distort the rest of Scripture to fit in with their pet doctrines, developed out of the Scriptures which they took out of context in the first place. Such people do not teach the entire Word of God verse by verse, line by line, in context, in order. If they did, too many people in their congregation would see their flaws. They would constantly have to explain that this passage does not mean what it seems to mean.

I have had experience with the cult the Jehovah's Witnesses early on in my Christian life. What I discovered then was, even their experts have a razor-thin understanding of the Scriptures, which is informed by their peculiar doctrines.

The first people from the Jehovah's Witnesses who I talked to, when I held them to the passage in John 1, they held to the JW party line, to the point of explaining the Greek to me. So, I showed them this verse in the Greek, I said, "This is exactly what you are talking about" (which was the lack of a definite article before the word Theos—God). Then I said, "Let's take this little theory of yours and apply it in other passages." Well, they had not seen that done before. And they did not know the Greek at all. So they asked, "Can we bring someone with a greater understanding back and discuss this further." I agreed. However, their expert had the exact razor-thin explanation, where he told me about the Greek, and then I did the same thing to him. He did not know the Greek; but he knew the JW explanation for that passage. Exactly the same as the people who appealed to him to give me a *better* explanation. When they offered to bring in an even greater expert, I declined. The point I am making is, they have the view that Jesus is not truly God, and then they have to somehow explain away all of the passages which tell us that He is God. This all goes back to the original founder (s) of the JW's took a few passages from the Bible, and elevated them over all other passages, giving them some of their distinctive (and false) doctrines. And then everything has to be twisted in order to fit their set of doctrines (which is apparently the thrust of the teaching at a JW church<sup>59</sup>).

I believe that one of the things which we learn from this chapter is, Pharaoh did not let the sons of Israel go and then, 5 minutes later, saddle up an army to go after them. Pharaoh and the people of Egypt were devastated at losing their firstborn and they were no doubt in shock for a day or two (or more). Meanwhile, there is movement by the sons of Israel under the guidance of God, which is described at the end of this chapter.

The outline for this chapter is fairly simple and almost universally recognized.

### Outline of Exodus 13

1. In Exodus 13:1–16, God will be giving Moses more guidance when it comes to the laws of Israel.
  - 1) Consecration of the firstborn introduced in vv. 1–2
  - 2) The Feast of the Unleavened Bread is explained in vv. 3–10

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<sup>59</sup> I base this upon the field worker and the "expert" has having essentially the same degree of knowledge on the same passage. The *expert* did not have a deeper understanding or a more full understanding. He understood what the JW doctrines were, and he knew how to justify them and explain the *problem* passages.



## Outline of Exodus 13

- 3) Consecration of the firstborn in the land of Canaan in vv. 11–16
2. God, as a Pillar of Cloud, leads Israel in the day and as a Pillar of Fire in the night. The people of Israel do not go directly towards Palestine. Exodus 13:17–22

The bulk of this chapter is instruction by God. However, God taught Moses and Moses taught the people.

Like many chapters, the division between Exodus 12 and 13 is rather arbitrary, and hard to explain. Exodus 12 is quite lengthy and Exodus 13 is relatively short. Moving the final 9 verses from Exodus 12 to 13 makes a great deal of sense. If this were done, the final 3 verses of Exodus 12 would be: *The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years. At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. It was a night of watching by the LORD, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; so this same night is a night of watching kept to the LORD by all the people of Israel throughout their generations.* (Exodus 12:40–42).

With such a change, Exodus 13 would have begun with God speaking to Moses about observing the Passover (taken from Exodus 12), then God speaks to Moses about the firstborn; then Moses tells the people about the Feast of Unleavened Bread (both of which topics are in Exodus 13).

What I have just described is an extremely logical approach to dividing up these chapters. However, that will never be the case. Interestingly enough, there have been hundreds of different translations made of the Bible and billions of Bibles printed, and easily thousands of men have noted this odd break in the chapters. Nevertheless, I am not aware of any translation which does what I suggested above. And remember, the chapter and verse divisions are not divinely inspired. They were added to the text hundreds (and even thousands) of years after the Scriptures were originally committed to some sort of writing medium. So, making such a change would violate absolutely nothing. Yet, I can personally guarantee you that it will never be revised on a large scale. Maybe some Bible translation will do this, but I doubt it.

As an aside, there is a good reason to leave things as they are, and that would be vv. 50–51 (*All the people of Israel did just as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron. And on that very day the LORD brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.*—ESV). Clearly, that is a good ending to chapter 12.

There is one more thing to say, as we move forward to verse 1: we need to consider the principles of law versus narrative. Or the description of things to be built as over against the action of moving forward in the desert-wilderness. The law, the regulations, and the design of the Tabernacle, the priestly clothing, etc. can get rather repetitious and even tedious. Recognizing this, I will try not to get bogged down in those sections.

Exodus 13:1 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,...

Again, many of these talks do not have a complete context. God spoke to Moses on many occasions. We do not know exactly how many times God spoke to Moses. Much of the previous few chapters were spoken to Moses all at once, although it was separated into three plagues and it appeared as though God had spoken to Moses several times. This appears as though God is speaking to Moses for the first time as the Hebrews leave on their exodus from Egypt.

Moses does not demonstrate the lack of confidence that he did originally. He is no longer going to God and asking that Aaron speak to the Israelites or that Aaron lead the Israelites. At this point, Moses' confidence level in God is strong and he clearly understands that God has chosen him to lead the Hebrews. At this point, Moses no longer seems to have any misgivings about God's role for him in this life.

Based upon a later passage in the Torah, Moses would go into a particular tent—I would understand this to be the *pre-Tabernacle*; and in that tent, speak to God. This appears to begin early in Exodus (but we don't know when exactly); and it appears to continue until the completion of the Tabernacle in Exodus 40 (which is the final chapter of the book of Exodus). At that point, this previous *tent of meeting* is set aside for God's Tabernacle. It appears that God spoke to Abraham twice on top of Mount Sinai, and on many occasions in this pre-Tabernacle.

There is very little said about this pre-Tabernacle. We read enough to know that it exists, but we do not read, every chapter or two, *And Moses went off to a special tent wherein he would speak to God*. There is a lot happening in the book of Exodus; and adding to the confusion is not something that Moses, as the human author, wants to do (nor would God the Holy Spirit want to confuse us).

What we do not have in the book of Exodus is this: God spoke to Moses and said, "X, Y and Z;" and then Moses goes to the elders of Israel, telling them "X, Y and Z." And then the elders gathered groups of Israelites and taught them "X, Y and Z." We know for certain that God speaks directly to Moses, in some manner or fashion, as we are told right here in v. 1. We know that, in some way, Moses spoke to the people (v. 3).

Did Moses speak to elders and they then spoke to the people; did Moses speak to various groups of Israelites, telling them what God said? We really do not know exactly how that information was disseminated. For all we know, Moses may have even spoken to all of the people, and his words were amplified supernaturally (although we have no verse or passage which would support that view; nor is this something which I believed happened). Somehow, God spoke to Moses and Moses taught this to the people (precisely how this was done is not really an issue, but a matter of speculation). I believe that this is shorthand for Moses teaching Aaron and the elders, who then went and taught the same material to the people.

What we do not have, for the most part, is a repetition of these words. God's words are presented generally in two ways: (1) God speaks to Moses and (2) Moses speaks to the people. Moses, the writer of Exodus through Deuteronomy, saw no reason to repeat these words when recording them in Scripture (which would make perfect sense). What God says will generally be found once, presented in one of those two forms. There are some exceptions to this, but not many.

However, there will be some repetition in this way: God speaks of the Feast of Unleavened Bread in this chapter. He will, in subsequent chapters, also speak of this same feast (in a variety of contexts). I believe that this is how God taught this information to Moses. He got a little bit of information here; then some more information on the same topic later on; and then, on another occasion, more information on the same topic.

When I was a math teacher, I might teach the concept of fractions to a fundamentals of math students (high school students who would graduate knowing a limited amount of mathematics). However, in Algebra II (several courses later), I would teach the concept of rational expressions, which is dealing with more complex fractional expressions. In Pre-Calculus, I would teach infinite series, which often involved adding up an infinite sequence of fractions.

Now, when a child is first introduced to fractions (I think for me, it was somewhere between 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades), we are not given every bit of mathematical information on fractions that there is. We instead establish the concept of fractions, what the numerator is and what the denominator is, and then we have some very concrete examples (for instance, this is what a cup of water is; here is what half a cup of water looks like, etc.).

So, God's presentation of a particular topic several times throughout the Law is not an unusual way to teach a concept or a practice. We do this all of the time in school.

Let me give you a very concrete example that you will understand and agree on: God taught the Ten Commandments all at once, including the commandment, *you will not murder*. God did not stop at the point, look at Moses and say, "Take out your notes; we are going to study the doctrine of murder." God simply went on to the next commandment. Subsequently in the Law, God taught what would be considered murder and God taught what would be considered a legitimate taking of life (the organized state of Israel was to *execute* any person guilty of murder). God also taught Moses about involuntary manslaughter, and what that means and how it should be dealt with. It makes perfect sense for God to prohibit murder in the Ten Commandments; and then later, to give some concrete examples of what is considered murder, what is considered involuntary manslaughter; and how does an organized state deal with these similar situations.

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**Lesson 183: Exodus 13:1–2****Sanctification**

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The beginning of this chapter might catch you off guard. And by *beginning*, I mean the first two thirds of this chapter (up to v. 16). The first portion of this chapter deals with the

consecration of the firstborn and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. There will be some forward movement of Israel, but not until we are at the last third of the chapter (vv. 17–22).

In the previous chapter, there was a lot going on, which included the movement of the sons of Israel out of Egypt. There was some teaching, but it was directly related to the events taking place at that time (the 10<sup>th</sup> plague and Israel leaving Egypt).

The assumption that I will operate under is, this information was given to Moses during this same time period, and that Moses will teach these things to the people along the trip.

This chapter's beginning almost appears to be God saying, "This is your lesson plan to teach the people for the next week."

Exodus 13:1 *Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,...*

Along this route out of Egypt and eventually to Mount Sinai, there is going to be a considerable amount of teaching which takes place.

Exodus 13:2a *...“Consecrate to Me all the firstborn,..."*

The firstborn would be dedicated to God among all Israel.

The firstborn child, by God's design, belonged to Him. The idea is, the Lord's Firstborn, Jesus Christ, is given on our behalf. This is the big picture; it will be given in further detail later in the chapter.

Exodus 13:2b *...whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine."*

God is setting apart His firstborn to himself. The word used here is the Piel imperative, second masculine singular of qâdash (קִדַּשׁ) [pronounced *kaw-DAHSH*], which means to *make clean, to pronounce clean, to hallow or dedicate, to set apart for divine use, to be shielded from profane use* Strong's #6942 BDB #872. It is a separation away from the profane and given (in some way) unto God. People or things are set aside or set apart for use in the worship of God. The Piel is an intensification of the Qal stem. This is most often found in the second person and here it is directed toward the head of the household, the male. This is spoken to Moses, but, by application, it applies to every male head of the household.

Obviously, Moses himself cannot sanctify the firstborn to God; God is telling him to mandate that his people of Israel sanctify their firstborn. This is a metonymy where the action is put in instead of what is supposed to be said to be done. A fuller translation, with this nuance, would be: *Speak to the sons of Israel and tell them to sanctify to Me every firstborn...*

Most of these requirements look backwards into time, and look forward into time as well.

God has redeemed the firstborn of Israel during the 10<sup>th</sup> judgment. All of the firstborn in Egypt died that these might live. Therefore, the firstborn of Israel are to live to God.

There is a clear analogy here. Israel was delivered from bondage, from slavery, through the death of the firstborn, just as we were delivered from the slave market of sin through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, God the Father's Firstborn. Since their firstborn were redeemed (or, *paid for*), they were to live unto God, just as we are to live unto God because we have been paid for. Rom. 6:22: **But now that you have been freed from sin and have become God's slaves, the benefit you reap is sanctification, and the result is eternal life.** (ISV) Titus 2:13–14 (which quotes Psalm 130:8): **Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.** (Webster) Rom. 6:6: **We know that our old self was [figuratively] crucified with Christ, in order that the body of sin [i.e., our whole life of sin] might be destroyed [i.e., become powerless to control our actions and thoughts], so that we should not be enslaved to the practice of sin any longer.** (AUV) Heb. 13:12: **Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered outside of the gate.** (WEB) Heb. 10:10: **And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.** (ESV) Again, *sanctify* means to set something aside and dedicate it to God.

**Exodus 13:2 (God's Word™)** (a graphic); photo from [Country Living](#); accessed April 14, 2021.



Exodus 13:1–2 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine.”

We have already covered the abbreviated doctrine of Sanctification back in Gen. 17, but let's view this most abbreviated version of that doctrine:

There are a lot of words which get thrown around in Christian theology, so let's define this particular word, as it is a frequent theme in Scripture:

### The Mini-Abbreviated Doctrine of Sanctification

1. General definition: *sanctify* means to set apart [for/to God]. *Sanctification* is both the act and the process which sets us apart to God.



## The Mini-Abbreviated Doctrine of Sanctification

2. For man, sanctification to God is a 3-step process:
  - 1) Salvation is phase I sanctification. It is also called *positional sanctification*: we are set apart to God at salvation. We believe in Jesus Christ and God sanctifies us; we are made holy; we are set apart to God at the moment of salvation. This does not mean that there are any observable changes in our lives or behavior. A person can be saved, set apart to God, and exhibit nothing which suggests that they have changed in any way. However, such a person is set apart to God forever. Phase I sanctification cannot be undone. Once a person has been set-apart by God, this position is eternal.
  - 2) *Experiential sanctification* is also called *phase II sanctification*; and also called *progressive sanctification*. Phase II sanctification describes the believer in time. Ideally speaking, the believer grows by means of Bible doctrine learned while being filled with the Spirit (which requires the confession of sin). When he exercises faith in Bible doctrine, his experiential righteousness is advanced. However, so that there is no confusion about this, his positional sanctification remains unchanged. So, whether we advance in the spiritual life or retrogress, we always have our original position in Christ. We cannot lose that position.
  - 3) Ultimate (phase III) sanctification: the believer is transferred from time to eternity and cleansed of his sin nature. Phase II sanctification ends with death (or the rapture); and phase III sanctification begins in our resurrection bodies.
3. The Bible uses the vocabulary above to speak of all 3 stages of sanctification.
  - 1) Phase I sanctification: **By this will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all** (Heb. 10:10). **For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are sanctified** (Heb. 10:14). See also 1Cor. 1:2, 20 6:11.
  - 2) Phase II sanctification: **As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it stands written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."** (1Peter 1:14–16; Leviticus 20:7). Jesus prayed to God the Father that we would be sanctified in Bible doctrine: **Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth** (John 17:17–19). Being sanctified in truth, means to learn and believe Bible doctrine; and thereby grow spiritually.
  - 3) Phase III sanctification: **...so that He might present it to Himself, the glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and unblemished** (Eph. 5:27). **He [God the Father] has chosen us in Him [God the Son] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him** (Eph. 1:4b). See also Col. 1:22 1Thess. 3:13 5:23 Jude 24–25.



More information on this topic may be found here:

<https://www2.gracenotes.info/topics/sanctification.pdf>

<http://www.spokanebiblechurch.com/sanctification>

<https://www.thoughtco.com/the-doctrine-of-sanctification-363379>

<https://www.theopedia.com/sanctification>

Exodus 13:1–2 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine.”

Jesus Christ has purchased all mankind. This is illustrated by the concept of God requiring the consecration of the firstborn to Him.

This passage is spoken of in relation to the LORD in the book of Luke:

Luke 2:21–23 And at the end of eight days, when He was circumcised, He was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") (ESV; capitalized)

The passage in Luke speaks of the birth of the humanity of Jesus Christ. He was circumcised, representing the new birth, and then brought to Jerusalem. He was Mary's firstborn, and the firstborn was dedicated to God.

## **Lesson 184: Exodus 13:3–4**

## **Feast of Unleavened Bread**

### **The Feast of Unleavened Bread**

In Exodus 12:1–13, our Lord explained the Passover to Moses and Aaron. In Exodus 12:14–20, He explained the Feast of the Unleavened Bread to them. Moses has explained to the Hebrews the Passover (Exodus 12:21–27). Now He will convey to them the Feast of the Unleavened Bread. These two celebrations occur together; the Passover comes first and the Feast of Unleavened Bread is the week which follows.

These combined holidays, if your will, are designed for the Hebrew people to remember their leaving Egypt (and later for their descendants to remember that their ancestors left Egypt). These celebrations had two sets of meanings. One set of meanings looked forward into the future; the other looked backward.

The Exodus itself was a parallel set of events (as are many of the historic events of the Old Testament). Just as the Lord by the strength of His hand delivered the Hebrews out of slavery to Egypt, so Jesus, our Lord, in His strength, endured the judgement for our sins and thereby delivered us from slavery to our old sin nature.

Notice how God speaks to Moses in vv. 1–2; and then Moses speaks to the people in vv. 3–17. This does not mean that God spoke only those words in vv. 1–2, and then Moses said, “Okay, God, I gotcha; I can take it from here.”

God laid out all of the instructions to Moses—we do not know in how many *sittings* this occurred—and then Moses either heard and memorized them, and spoke them to the people; or Moses wrote them down and spoke them to the people.

Moses receives these specific instructions from God, and then goes to the elders and repeats. Moses certainly has the mental capability of hearing, remembering and repeating these instructions. In fact, much of the remainder of Exodus (and much of Leviticus) will be Moses telling what instructions God has given to this people.

Exodus 13:3a *And Moses said to the people: “Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt,...*

Just as we do not know the exact circumstances of God speaking to Moses; we do not know the exact circumstances here. Were the people lined up and ready to go, and Moses stands in front of them and says these words? Has he called in the elders and said, “Repeat these things to your people. Tell them that Moses says these things.” Exactly how this is organized is only implied (several times, we will read that Moses speaks to the elders).

Much of the spiritual life occurs in our thinking. Moses wants these people to focus in on this day, the day that they are leaving Egypt. He tells them, “I want you to think about these things as you move out.”

When in the moment, few people have the wherewithal to fully appreciate the historicity of any particular event. This day that the Israelites leave Egypt is a great and important day. This is a defining moment in Israel’s history. There will be times in the narrative of the Exodus generation and God where we will wonder, *do they not really get what has taken place and what God has done for them?*

We continue with Moses’ instructions to the people.

Exodus 13:3b *...out of the house of bondage;...*

The Hebrew people have been in bondage, and God is freeing them.

Egypt is the *house of bondage*; and God brought the Israelite slaves out of Egypt and, therefore, out of their bondage.

Also, there is an analogy to be drawn here. We are, as unbelievers, in the slave market of sin. We cannot buy ourselves, we cannot deliver ourselves, we have no authority over our own bodies. But, when we hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, we believe in Him then we are released from slavery. It is Jesus Christ Who has purchased us from the slave market

of sin; He takes us out of bondage with His mighty hand. Jesus provides the purchase price to pay to remove us from slavery to sin, a purchase price which we do not have.

Throughout the Scriptures, there are analogies to be made between the real events which are recorded and the salvation provided for us by Christ Jesus. We call these things types. That is, what is recorded—God bringing Israel out of slavery into freedom—is a type. It is an actual historic event; but it also has a parallel to what will take place in the future. The past event is called a type; what it represents is called an antitype. What Jesus does on the cross, by buying our freedom from slavery to sin—is the antitype.

We will study the articles of furniture and the Tabernacle, later on in the book of Exodus. All of these things are typical of Jesus Christ and what He does on our behalf.



**Exodus 13:3a-b (NKJV)** (a graphic); from [Daily Bible Verse](http://www.Daily-Bible-Verse.net); accessed April 14, 2021. Throughout the Old Testament, we should continue to witness these marvelous parallels to what we enjoy in the new era.

Exodus 13:3c ...for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out of this place.

Yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH] is found twice in this verse. It means *go out, come out*. Strong's #3318 BDB #422. The Greek translation of this word is *exerchomai* (ἐξέρχομαι) [pronounced ex-ER-khom-ai]. Strong's #1831.<sup>60</sup> A noun cognate for this verb is *ἐξοδος*, which we write as *Exodus*. Strong's #1841.

Yâtsâ' is found first in the Qal perfect, referring to their departure from Egypt as a completed action. They will be remembering and looking back on this. This verb is later found in the Hiphil perfect where God caused them to be brought out of Egypt (as the Hiphil stem is the causative stem).

The hand is an anthropomorphism. God, being a Spirit, does not have a hand. But the hand represents what God does. God, by His great power, brings Israel out of Egypt.

Moses tells the people to remember all that is happening. It is God, by His great signs and wonders, Who has brought the people out of Egypt; out from this place. It is God's strength and His direction and guidance that allows this generation of Hebrews to put Egypt in their review mirror.

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<sup>60</sup> Strong numbered the Hebrew words found in the OT and the Greek words found in the NT.

Exodus 13:3d [No leavened bread shall be eaten.](#)

Moses is preparing the people for the Feast of the Unleavened Bread. Not eating leavened bread was a recognition that they had to leave Egypt so quickly that, there was no time to allow their bread to rise.

In thinking about all of these things during the feast, the Hebrews were not to eat leavened bread (bread with yeast). They are to remember these hours, how God delivered them, and how they did not have time to let their bread rise. When it was time to move out, they had to move out.

Exodus 13:3 [And Moses said to the people: “Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out of this place. No leavened bread shall be eaten.](#)

In vv. 3–10, Moses will explain the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the people of Israel (which are instructions which he apparently got directly from God—v. 1). During this week, the people of Israel will celebrate God taking them out of slavery and giving them freedom (which celebration begins with the Passover).

Continually, we see God presenting various celebrations which correspond with particular historical events, in such a way that the ceremonies and the event being commemorated are intertwined.

Throughout the Bible, there are multiple witnesses given to a variety of events. At this point, nothing has been written down; but Moses is telling the people to commemorate this day by *not* eating leavened bread. So this is a practice which they observe for many centuries even to today. Matzos or matzah bread is unleavened bread available in most supermarkets specifically made for the Jewish community.

The Hebrew people were to teach their children these practices and they tell the children *why* they do what they do for each celebration—which goes right back to this day. Later, the Scriptures would be written by Moses and preserved by the people with these same practices defined; and even, this moment remembered.

I have never been to a Seder myself, which is what the first night of the Passover celebration is called, but on a television show, [Sports Night](#),<sup>61</sup> I recall a Seder dinner being celebrated when one of the characters explains why they celebrate and why they remember this day. I have no doubt that, in many households, on a particular day, Seder is observed and someone at the table explains why it is being observed and what it means.

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<sup>61</sup> There is a reason why I make these references. Sometimes, a pop culture reference or an application to current day politics helps you to remember what is happening here in this narrative; and helps you to connect this ancient practice begun approximately in 1445 B.C. which is still practiced today.

There are 3 witnesses for this celebration: (1) the feast itself and the rituals which are observed; (2) the elder who, during Seder, tells the people there what his father once said, who told the people what his father once said—which is the witness of many generations. And (3) the witness of the Scriptures themselves. In fact, there are at least 6 Old Testament passages which specifically speak to the Feast of the Unleavened Bread.

**Exodus 13:3** (a graphic); from [A Little Perspective](#); accessed April 14, 2021.

Exodus 13:4 *On this day you are going out, in the month Abib.*

The Hebrew people were to think about what was happening to them and to remember that this is taking place in the month of Abib.

This feast will be celebrated annually, just at the time that the Hebrew people walked out of Egypt. They left Egypt on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Abib, exactly 430 years after Jacob entered into the land of Egypt, along with his entire family.



What was occurring to the Hebrews was doctrine to them. God was doing something so historic and so important that this would be one of the most well-known events, if not the most well-known event, of that millennium. The Exodus declared the power and purpose of God. It sets the Jewish race apart from all others. None of us has ever lived through an event which was that spectacular and that important, but we experience certain things in our lives which affect the entire direction of our lives (often, at the time, they appear to be rather unextraordinary occurrences). The Hebrews here are in the midst of something significant beyond their comprehension. Moses is telling them to put the events of this day (and of the previous two months) deep into their souls. For us, it is like learning an important piece of doctrine. It sustains and guides and orients us. This event would do the same for them if they would keep it deep within their souls.

## Lesson 185: Exodus 13:5

## Hebrew customs in the Church Age

There is the mistaken notion that present-day religious Jews follow the Old Testament while present-day Christians follow the New. This is a serious misconception. One can



see some vague similarities between Judaistic practices today as compared to the practices outlined for them in the Old Testament, but their religious practices today are Jewish traditions; modern-day Jewish practices do not come from the Old Testament. About the only actual continuity that I can come up with is, infant boys are circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day. Apart from that, an Old Testament Hebrew watching any contemporary Jewish celebration would be flummoxed, and unable to connect it to the rituals which he has learned.

Exodus 13:5a *And it shall be, when the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites...*

Throughout this verse, Moses is speaking to individuals. We find the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular used throughout. Moses is putting the responsibility upon all individuals here. Furthermore, this captures the attention of his audience.

This is a common trick used by teachers all of the time. They are giving this lecture, and, at some point (or at many points), they personalize it. “And that is the Pythagorean theorem, something which Charley thinks about all the time. And you will remember this for the quiz tomorrow, right, Lucy?  $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ .”

In other words, Moses is placing the onus of responsibility is not on the overall nation of Israel, but on the specific people in his audience. Each one is individually responsible to carry out what Moses is teaching.

This sentence is rather long, but we may connect the beginning with the end: *And it is [then] that Y<sup>e</sup>howah will bring you into the land of the Canaanite,...[where] you will observe this service [of Unleavened Bread and the Passover] in this month.* So, the Hebrew people are not to simply forget what has transpired, but to remember it and to memorialize it with a set of feast days and celebration, similar to what they have done to this day (although the modern-day observation of Passover is a far cry from what God required of them).

It is Y<sup>e</sup>howah’s mighty arm which brings the people out of Egypt and brings them to this great land (Exodus 6:6 15:16). The word *arm* focuses upon God’s strength. The focus of the Hebrew people is to be on the power and providence of God.

*Canaanite* is used as both a general term for the people living in the land of Canaan; but they are also a specific people, descended from Canaan (the son of Ham). The Canaanites are one of the largest of the early peoples (Gen. 9:18).

Exodus 13:5b *...and the Hittites...*

The Hittites are descended from Heth, a son of Canaan (Gen. 10:15). They are an important offshoot of the Canaanites (and considered separate from them). Historical *experts* for many years doubted their existence or doubted their existence as found in Scripture. I don’t believe that is the case any more.

Exodus 13:5c *...and the Amorites...*



This is a term both used for a specific people and as a general term for the people of the land. We do not know their exact origin. James Hastings first refers to them as being of the same race as the Canaanites (which means, descended ultimately from Ham); but later, he calls them a part of the Semitic wave of immigration into Babylon<sup>62</sup> (which would make them descended from Shem, Ham's brother). This means that, we do not have a very good handle on their origins (it is certainly possible that they can be descended from both sets of people, as when two families decide to unite<sup>63</sup>).

Gen. 10:15–16 tells us that the Amorites are descended from Canaan. It is certainly possible that some intermixing could have occurred later.

Exodus 13:5d ...and the Hivites...

This Hivites will trick the Hebrew people into allowing them to continue living in the land. They recognized the strength and power of the Hebrew people; but they did not fully appreciate their God.

The Hivites, like all of the peoples named here, are descended ultimately from Canaan (Gen. 10:16–17).

Exodus 13:5e ...and the Jebusites,...

The Jebusites lived on the mountain where Jerusalem was founded. They will hold onto this portion of Canaan until David becomes king (circa 950 B.C.), and David will take it from them.

The Jebusites are descended from Canaan (Gen. 10:15–17).

Exodus 13:5a-e And it shall be, when the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Hivites and the Jebusites,...

This land that the Hebrews were to enter was controlled by Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites and Jebusites. The Israelites would take this land and Moses is telling them that they must continue to keep the Passover in the land of Canaan.

Exodus 13:5f ...which [land] He swore to your fathers to give you,...

Notice how this is stated; God made the promises to the fathers of the Israelites (the Israelites to whom Moses is speaking). The fathers are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the 12 (actually 13) patriarchs. The people to whom Moses is speaking are the ones who should take the land that God is giving them.

Exodus 13:5g ...a land flowing with milk and honey,...

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<sup>62</sup> From Dictionary of the Bible Edited by James Hastings; ©1909; taken from E-sword. Topic: Amorites.

<sup>63</sup> Two families or two tribes uniting was something which did take place in the ancient world.

This set of words is found throughout the Bible describing the land of Canaan, and it simply indicates that this is an abundant and fertile land.

God has long-promised this land to the Hebrew people, going back hundreds of years to Abraham, their father. God promised that this land would be a beautiful, productive and prosperous land. Throughout Israel's history, as they drew nearer to God, their personal prosperity became greater.

Exodus 13:5h ...that you shall keep this service in this month.

What Moses is telling them is, they will observe the Unleavened Bread Feast and the Passover. They are to consider all that God has done; and then to memorialize it in their celebrations.

This celebration commemorates not just the time that God took Israel out of Egypt, but it looks back to the time that God promised the land of Canaan to the people of Israel.

What is being said here is meaningful to the Hebrew people because they knew their Scriptures. They knew about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; they knew about the land of promise; they knew that this was a long-standing promise first delivered to Abraham their father (all of these things are recorded in the book of Genesis). In other words, the Hebrew people knew the book of Genesis.<sup>64</sup>

Exodus 13:5 And it shall be, when the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall keep this service in this month.

In some ways, this—the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread—is going to begin to seem very repetitive, but God is making certain that the Hebrew people do not see this as a celebration which they can opt out of. It is their foundational feast and celebration.

What is celebrated here is almost the very definition of being a Hebrew. One of the historic events that unbelievers despise the most (apart from the cross of Christ) is the Exodus of Israel from Egypt.

Moses, as he has been guided by God, is connecting the ritual with its meaning. God has never given us a ritual without it being fraught with meaning. Nor does God require a celebration without plainly stating its meaning. The Hebrews are being delivered from slavery by God's hand. God is establishing, through Moses, a solemn celebration to commemorate this day. Moses, as this day is occurring, tells them what the rites will be so that the celebration in the future will be firmly connected to the event that it signifies.

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<sup>64</sup> At this point in time, we do not know if the book of Genesis existed in written form. Given that Egypt had developed writing materials, it would be reasonable that Genesis was now in written form (besides being transmitted orally).

## Understanding Hebrew customs in the Church Age:

It is important to note that, some events and celebrations mean one thing to the Hebrew people; but to us, believers in the Church Age, there is often a more expanded meaning. This meaning is understood and expressed by God the Holy Spirit, but not necessarily fully understood or fully appreciated by the Hebrew people who first observed these things.

For instance, the unleavened bread, to the Hebrews, represented the fact that they could not get out of Egypt fast enough. When the Egyptian people told them to get out, and when Pharaoh ordered them to get out; they had to leave immediately. As a result, their bread for that day did not have enough time to rise.

The appended meaning to leaven is the idea that leaven infects and pollutes everything; and that we are not to allow our souls or the doctrines of God will become leavened (polluted). The same is true of the gospel (good news) of Jesus Christ; there is to be no leaven of distortion when understanding the gospel of Jesus Christ. Once the gospel is distorted, all of Christianity is distorted (which is what the religious hierarchy of Jerusalem did to the Old Testament teachings).

To the Hebrew people, the Passover spoke of God coming and executing the final act of judgment against the Egyptian people and against whomever did not heed God's requirements to slap the lamb's blood on the door frame. However, in this era, we further understand the Passover to incorporate the concept of God's judgment of the Passover lamb in our stead, just as He judged His Son on the cross in our stead. The Hebrew people did not have a full understanding that this is the true meaning of the Passover lamb. When Jesus came to this earth; and when He died for our sins, then the Hebrew people were supposed to put together the Passover lamb with our true Passover Lamb. They were supposed to see the parallels which God had established 1400 years previous. John the Herald was the first to state this publically, when he proclaimed, as Jesus approached them, "**Behold, the Lamb of God comes.**"

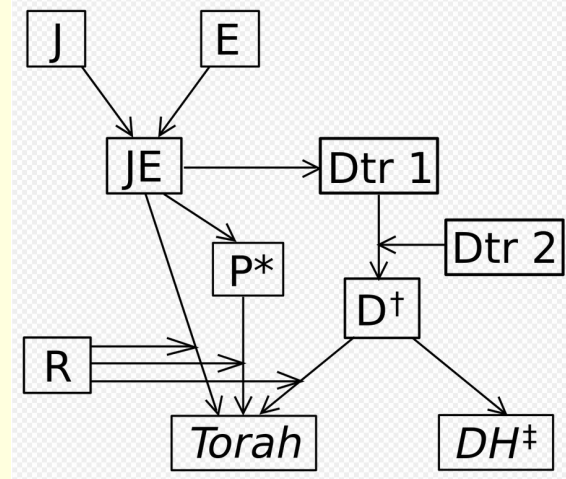
The overall celebration of Unleavened Bread and the Passover commemorates God leading Israel out of bondage, out of slavery and out of Egypt. Without Jesus Christ, we would remain in bondage to the world and to our old sin nature. When we believe in God's Passover Lamb—Jesus Christ—we are purchased by God the Son, taking us out of slavery and giving us freedom (although, we continue to possess a sin nature until ultimate sanctification).

It is quite an amazing thing that God not only provided Israel with a series of celebrations which commemorated their history; but God also designed for these same celebrations to have meaning to the Christian believer today (be he Jewish or gentile in origin).

## The JEPD theory or documentary hypothesis.

This is a false theory of authorship of the books of Moses.

From Wikipedia: *The documentary hypothesis is one of the models used by biblical scholars to explain the origins and composition of the Torah. A version of the documentary hypothesis, frequently identified with the German scholar Julius Wellhausen, was almost universally accepted for most of the 20th century.*<sup>65</sup>



**The JEPD chart** (a graphic); from [Wikipedia](#); accessed October 13, 2021.

The general explanation of what they believe is summarized by Wikipedia:

*J: Yahwist (10th–9th century BCE)[1][2]*

*E: Elohist (9th century BCE)[1]*

*Dtr1: early (7th century BCE) Deuteronomist historian*

*Dtr2: later (6th century BCE) Deuteronomist historian*

*P\*: Priestly (6th–5th century BCE)[3][2]*

*D†: Deuteronomist*

*R: redactor*

*DH: Deuteronomistic history (books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings).*<sup>66</sup>

This is where the Bible came from—in particular, the books of Moses—according to those who believe in documentary hypothesis. It is one of the weirdest theories that I am aware of, and I was exposed to it first through the 2<sup>nd</sup> *Evidence Which Requires a Verdict* by Josh McDowell. I will admit, when reading this section, I kept saying to myself, *what is he going on and on about?* Come to find, years later, that this is commonly believed by and taught in many (most) seminaries throughout the United States.

<sup>65</sup> From [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary\\_hypothesis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary_hypothesis) accessed October 13, 2021.

<sup>66</sup> From [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary\\_hypothesis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary_hypothesis) accessed October 13, 2021.

What makes far more sense is, this history found in the Bible takes place side-by-side the historical observations (celebrations, feast days) demanded by God. This is extremely important and is a foundational tenet of the Scriptures.

Liberal theologians try to convince us that the books of Moses were written by several sources over a period of many centuries, long after the purported Moses was to have existed. What this would mean is, at some point in time, a group of priests and Levites (who would have been undefined up to that point, as there was no book of Leviticus), would suddenly say, “Hey, we have this book that God gave to us 500 years ago (or whatever) which we need to obey.” So, somehow, these people somehow seize religious authority by suddenly producing books which give them this religious authority. Then these books tell about the feasts which have been celebrated all the way back to the founding of nation Israel. What I am describing to you should not make logical sense, yet it is taught in most seminaries.

Let’s approach this from another direction: if the books of Moses did not already exist, then where did the feasts and the Levites come from? Is Israel’s history suddenly made up (or made up over a period of hundreds of years), and then this is somehow sold to millions of people? “Hey, we have these books—we have had them all along—and this is where our authority comes from to tell you about these books. From hereon in, these are your laws, because they have always been your laws!” Or so would the Levites claim, according to the liberal theologians. Do you see how little sense this makes?

And if this priestly class developed a set of books which gave them authority; why not seize more authority? When people desire authority, they rarely look to self-regulate. Did all of these priests get together and say, “We want to have a well-defined, *but very limited*, authority”? Their authority in Scriptures is far from absolute, and there are many black marks against the Aaronic priesthood in these records.

However, this is what we know: the ultimate authority rests in the written Word of God; not in the Aaronic priesthood. The priests of Israel are not always presented in a favorable light in the Scriptures. If this is made-up history written by the priests, or exaggerated history written by the priests, why don’t they come off better as historical figures? The first two sons of Aaron—who would become the first priests after Aaron—will die the sin unto death. That is not a very stellar beginning for the Old Testament priesthood. Aaron himself, as we will soon study, will do something deserving of death.

This interpretation of Israel’s history, that the books of Moses were not written by Moses, has absolutely no historical foundation. Their chief *evidence* is the observation that the two primary names for God are not evenly distributed in every chapter of the books of Moses. Sometimes Moses used the name *Y<sup>h</sup>owah* more than *Elohim*; and sometimes it is the other way around. This is the proof given by liberal theologians that the books written by Moses were written by two different people, and then woven together at a later date by a third party.

This explanation subjects us to this whole chicken versus egg beginning. What is there first? The Scriptures or the complex system of the Hebrew faith? When we accept a false theory, then the chicken-egg problem immediately presents itself. Were the people already engaged in these practices? Well, if they were, why did they need *Scriptures*? And if these complex practices had not existed until these Scriptures suddenly show up on the scene, just how exactly do you get virtually the entire nation to follow what is written?

The same thing is true of evolution. This is a false theory presented by *so-called scientists*; but their fundamental problem has always been, which came first, the chicken or the egg?

It makes very little sense to have hundreds of traditions and celebrations and systems of religious authority, to essentially come from nowhere (according to liberal theologians). But later, hundreds of years later, the authority for those things, which Israel observes, somehow is written and produced; or someone claims to have found it. But, it is not necessarily found, because, these books were written by Moses and engraved on rocks hundreds of years prior to them being discovered. This liberal view is very illogical, and yet it is taught in seminaries.

It cannot be overemphasized just how prevalent and widespread the observation of these Old Testament Scriptures were in the Hebrew culture. Today, in the United States, perhaps 50% of the population believe in God and possibly in Jesus; and some of these people attend church regularly and some do not. The Hebrew culture was not like that. Their God and their relationship to their God was fundamental in their culture. God chose Abraham; God chose Isaac, God chose Jacob; God led the people into Egypt; God led the people out of Egypt; God gave the land of Canaan to the Hebrew people. These concepts are foundational to nation Israel and the people all understood and knew—for 2000 years or so—all of these concepts.

Today, in the United States, most Christians do not know the most fundamental procedures of the Christian life (such as, how to get in and out of fellowship; or our relationship to the Holy Spirit).

Now, thinking about Israel, does it make sense that, half way through their existence as a people, all of this stuff was suddenly introduced? Or somehow for some reason these things were practiced, but then, it was somehow codified and/or modified by Scriptures which did not begin to exist until hundreds of years after these events. How does that make any logical sense?

This would be analogous to a religious cult, in 2021 America, suddenly appearing (or maybe they have been around for awhile), and they have these Scriptures, these words from God—but they claim to have actually had these Scriptures for hundreds of years, but are just now going public...and these are a list of the celebrations and religious hierarchy that everyone in the United States should be following (because, we are already following these things). And then, suddenly, all of America—or all of the Christians in



America—suddenly begin following these new Scriptures. Does that make any sort of sense to you? Certainly, if you are not very smart, you might think something like this could occur and that, all Christians could somehow be convinced of all this—but that would mean that you have never argued with a Christian about his faith before. Or witnessed a Protestant and a Catholic disagree about the fundamentals of their faiths. Christians cannot be fed some line of bull, and, then, suddenly, they are converted to some cult. Yes, of course, some people can be convinced. There are the Mormons; there are those of the Jones' cult; there are the JW's. Some phony set of Scriptures can be produced and a small percentage of people—including Christians—can be peeled off and led astray. But all Christians? That is absurd! It is even more absurd to suggest that this happened to the Hebrew people.

Yet that is what is being taught by liberal theologians about the writings of Moses. They teach that Moses did not write these books and that they appeared hundreds of years later, as the work of many contributors (which contributors do not actually exist in any record of Israel's history).

Could new *traditions* have been foisted on the Jews? Could you foist a whole complex set of *traditions* suddenly upon the American people? Of course you couldn't! Neither could this have been done to the Hebrew people at some point in their culture.

I hope that you understand that, the liberal view of this—that Moses did not write these books—is not logical. The Hebrew people came from a very complex tradition involving the entire nation of Israel. You simply cannot foist that upon a national entity hundreds of years after the fact. What makes far more sense is, Moses spoke these words to the people, after God spoke the words to him. All of the Hebrew traditions and celebrations began simultaneously with the historical events that we are studying. At the same time, Moses was teaching the things that he heard from God. And, at the same time, Moses was writing of these books (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy).

The people of Jacob actually experienced these things. They heard Moses speak the Word of God to them; they later saw and heard the Scriptures which Moses wrote (they would be engraved on a set of rocks upon their taking the land of Canaan). And the generation of Hebrew people that we are studying actually experienced all of this firsthand (the generation of promise did; Gen X did not); and their sons and daughters experienced the same traditions in the next generation.

Moses has authority by the power of God. This hardheaded people recognize Moses' authority because of God's power and because of what they have all experienced. Nevertheless, even back then, about half of them resisted Moses; and about half of them accepted his authority.

Back to the narrative; this is what we have been studying:

Exodus 13:3–5 And Moses said to the people, Remember this day, in which you (pl) came out from Egypt, out of the house of slaves; for by strength of hand YHWH brought you (pl) out from this place: there shall be no leavened bread eaten. This day you (pl) go out in the month Abib. And it shall be, when YHWH shall bring you into the land of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall keep this service in this month. (CGV; capitalized)

You will note that, in vv. 3–4, Moses uses the plural in reference to the Israelites; but with v. 5, He begins to use the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular. In vv. 3–4, Moses is telling them about what God did for them; and what God was going to do for them. With v. 5, Moses begins to make this very personalized, so that he is speaking to each person individually. God's gift of this land was to every individual of Israel.

In vv. 6–7, he continues with the use of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular. Moses is speaking to the people, but addressing them as individuals. Everything which he expects is not a generalized, more or less everyone does this; but Moses expects each and every person to follow his directions exactly. Each and every person is thereby made responsible.

Exodus 13:6a Seven days you [individually] shall eat unleavened bread,...

What is being given here is specific directions for observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the land of promise (that is, in Canaan).

Exodus 13:6b ...and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the Lord.

Moses is laying out the exact specifics for the celebration of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Moses is now telling the elders how the Feast of the Unleavened Bread will be done. As we have seen, God gave this information to Moses in Exodus 12 and now Moses is relaying it to the people.

Exodus 13:6 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the Lord.

When the sons of Jacob left Egypt, they were in such a hurry that, there was not enough time to let their bread rise. So they had to prepare unleavened bread (bread without yeast). It is possible that the bread was originally prepared with yeast, but there was no time to allow it to rise. They would commemorate this with the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Moses has been teaching about the Feast of Unleavened Bread:

Exodus 13:3 Then Moses said to the people, "Remember this day in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery, for by a strong hand the LORD brought you out from this place. No leavened bread shall be eaten.

It appears that, prior to leaving Egypt (or while the people are walking out of Egypt), Moses continues to teach them.

Exodus 13:4 Today, in the month of Abib, you are going out.

Israel had a calendar; and this celebration was to be added to it.

Exodus 13:5 And when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, you shall keep this service in this month.

God would bring the people of Israel into the land of promise; and they were to continue to follow these ceremonies in the land of Canaan.

Exodus 13:6 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the LORD. (ESV; capitalized)

The feast affixed to the Passover was the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Exodus 13:7a Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days.

The Hebrew word for *unleavened bread* is *matstsâh* (מַצֶּה) [pronounced *mahts-TSAWH*]. It is from this word used 3500 years ago that we get the modern words matzos and matzah.

Unleavened bread would be all that the Hebrew people allowed for this celebration. This represents the fact that the Hebrews, when they left Egypt, had no time to allow their bread to rise.

Leaven is a picture of corruption of what is pure and true. This does not mean that there is anything inherently evil about yeast or leaven or that it is somehow unclean. Leaven is merely a symbol of corruption. Moses is speaking to the people repeating the mandates which God set up (each of which has specific meaning and purpose).

Exodus 13:7b And no leavened bread shall be seen among you,...

They were not to have leavened bread anywhere to be seen.

Just so you know, it is okay for us to eat and enjoy French bread. If you enjoy croissants, you are not countermanding God's laws. However, for the Eucharist, we are only allowed bread that was not been changed by leaven (yeast). This is why most churches use wafers or crackers of some sort.

This is also the reason that most churches do not use wine, as it is fermented (that is, *leavened*) grape juice. With the advent of covid, many churches use this individual wafer and *grape juice* combination which is a single package deal with both of them. I would have bet good money that this purple juice is that we partake of for communion is related to grape juice only in color; however, some manufacturers do claim that this really is grape juice. We should not be using fermented elements when observing the Eucharist during the Church Age. Apart from this specific limitation, our observation of the Eucharist is given to us in fairly simplistic terms. However, in the Age of Israel, what took place for each feast day was very detailed and particular.

**Prefilled Communion Cups - Wheat Wafer & Juice Sets** (a graphic); from [Concordia Supply](#); accessed September 15, 2021.

Exodus 13:7c *...nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters.*

No one was to see any leaven throughout Israel (remember, this is what Israel was supposed to do after entering into the Land of Promise).

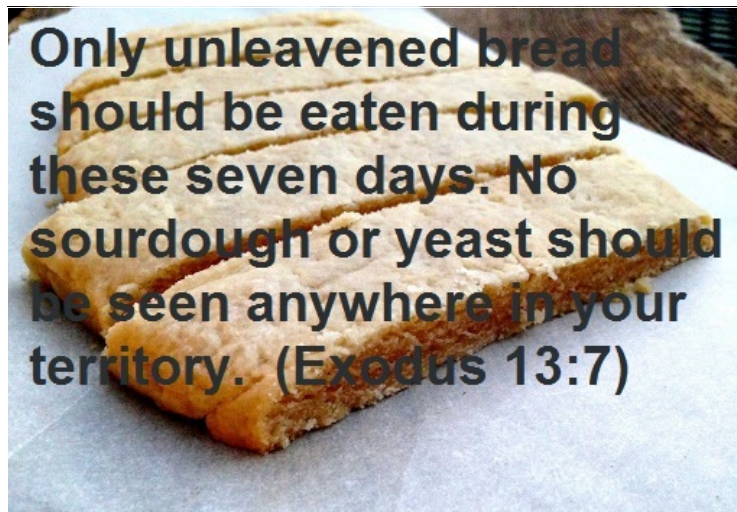
I don't believe that this means, everyone had to throw their leaven out or carry it outside the borders; but it should not be readily seen by anyone. It seems most practical to me that all yeast and leaven was simply well-hidden and completely out of sight.

Exodus 13:7 *Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters.*

The leaven has two meanings. First, it is the sort of bread which the Hebrew people prepared when they left Egypt; and secondly, leaven represents corruption. Both the Passover (for the church) and the Feast of the Unleavened Bread (for Israel) were to be celebrated without corruption.

*In all your quarters* could also mean *in all your borders*. No one is to see any leaven; no one is to see and leavened bread or cakes. Each and every person was responsible to obey this mandate. This was not a general command, given to the people at large; but it was given to every individual (2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix).





**Exodus 13:7 (God's Word™)** (a graphic); photo from [Dallas Duo Bakes](#); accessed April 14, 2021.

Exodus 13:8a [And you shall tell your son in that day...](#)

This is put to a very personal level. These people to whom Moses is speaking will walk into the Land of Promise and they will have children born there. They will speak to their children about these celebrations.

Exodus 13:8b [...saying, 'This is done because of what the Lord did for me when I came up from Egypt.'](#)

The parent in the new land will tell their sons about the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Passover. This is made very personal; Moses continues to use the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular throughout. "You [individually] will do this..." is what he is saying.

This is a part of the famous oral tradition. It would be 1500 or more years before there would be a completed canon of Scripture where everything that we need to know is in the written word. Also, getting one's hands on a manuscript of the writings of Moses would have been difficult. Therefore, until the canon was complete and until manuscripts became more readily available, God had to teach by other and different means. In that day there were rituals and feasts and sacrifices and priests to teach God's Word to the people. All these things had meaning and a parent then, as he is today, was obligated to teach his son(s) (and daughters) what life is really about.

Unfortunately, this bit of training has all but left our homes. In modern times, Men and women read books and follow all these methods prior to birth and during birth in insure that they will have a healthy baby. How many women do you know who abstain from alcohol during pregnancy? Or, at least reduce their alcohol intake? Despite the prenatal care, so many parents then neglect the most important thing a child has—his soul. There is nothing more important to God on this earth than the proper training of the little ones. They need to know from the very beginning what is the foundation for their life.

We no longer have these feasts and other training aides, so, if anything, this increases the importance of properly training a child. However—and this is where many go awry—a strong oral tradition does not preclude written documents and records; specifically, God's Word. Oral teaching and written information are not mutually exclusive. In fact, if anything, they go hand-in-hand. God's command here was to be carried out as long as the son of

a son of a son of one in the exodus generation knows enough to explain what had occurred and what God did on their behalf.

In the Age of Israel, there were a great many feast days and traditions, each passed along from generation to generation. In the Church Age, there are only one or two actual ceremonies spoken of (the Eucharist and baptism—and some dispute the latter ceremony). One of the reasons for this is the completed canon of Scripture, an event every bit as important and dramatic as the Exodus. The completed canon of Scripture explains a lot of things. For instance, why do we have a specialized priesthood in the Old Testament (but not in the New)? Priests, in the Old Testament, represented man to God through their continual animal sacrifices. These sacrifices all pointed forward to the death of our Lord. However, these sacrifices in and of themselves, did nothing on behalf of the Israelites in terms of actual cleansing. These sacrifices were training aides. They are not unlike a first grade reader. "See Jane run and see Dick play" is of very limited cultural and intellectual value; however, on the first grade level, it is of utmost importance, an important step in the literacy of any child. The sacrifices were as important and the priests were involved in these as well as with all aspects of tabernacle (and later, temple) worship (things which also spoke of Jesus Christ).

Today, with the completed canon of Scripture, we have believers who have spent their lives developing lexicons for the Hebrew and the Greek (this particular gift is not found in any New Testament list). Tens of thousands have worked on translations, textual criticism, and explored a variety of Biblical topics (again, gifts not named in the NT). There are a vast array of people whose names most Christians do not even know upon whose shoulders I and every other teacher of God's Word stand and that without whom our work would be trivial and almost devoid of scholarship. No one had a clue, even during the close of the first century, that not only would these gifts be given by God the Holy Spirit, but that they would be some of the most important gifts given out by God the Holy Spirit. It requires great dedication and strength of character to pursue such thankless professions and avocations. These scholars of phenomenal intellectual capabilities are led by the Holy Spirit and lead lives almost bereft of human adoration and encouragement to develop tools of study that pastors find invaluable (those pastors who really teach the Word). These books and writings are tools which have a great deal to do with your spiritual growth—yet how many Christians even have a clue as to what textual criticism is? Throughout the ages, many thousands of believers have worked in thankless avenues of Biblical scholarship. As I gaze at my library about me, the books which required, in many cases, the better part of a lifetime of some person whose name is completely unknown to you. Yet, these books are absolutely invaluable to me in my study of God's Word (as are similar books for your pastor-teacher). There are perhaps twenty or thirty of these that, without which, I could do little or nothing in the pursuit of God's Truth.

Also, in order for me to grow spiritually, I required a pastor whose tireless dedication was often unknown and taken for granted. He stood upon the shoulders of dozens (if not hundreds) of theologians and Biblical scholars (who they themselves stood on the shoulders of the ones who came before them).



It is just as Paul describes it in 1Cor. 14 where we are all part of the same body and that one part of the body cannot function apart from the other parts of the body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you." Therefore, every gift and every life is important and meaningful and is fraught with divine direction.

## Lesson 188: Exodus 13:8–9

## A Sign on One's Hand or on One's Forehead

We continue with Moses teaching the people about Feast of Unleavened Bread. :

Exodus 13:8 *And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, 'This is done because of what the Lord did for me when I came up from Egypt.'*

The people were always to explain to their children why they were doing this or that. They were never supposed to just have a festival or a celebration for the sake of getting the family together. During these feast days, the parents were to explain their purpose and meaning to their children, who would later explain it to their children. For the Hebrew people, this would always be about the historical significance of what they are doing.

This celebration of unleavened bread is based upon what God did for the Hebrew people when they came up out of Egypt. The idea was, there was not simply a celebration for no reason.

This is lost to many of us in the United States regarding our own celebrations. We see them as 3-day weekends or a time to meet with family and friends; but how many children today are instructed as to the meaning of Thanksgiving, Christmas or the 4<sup>th</sup> of July?

Before we begin with v. 9, let's take a look at a specific word and a new phrase in this verse. This phrase is not found anywhere previous and this word is only used twice before. Tōwrah (תּוֹרָה or הֲרֹט) [pronounced *TOH-rah*] means *instruction, direction, law*; so far, it has only been seen in Gen. 26:5 (the verse which indicates that there were some clear laws or instructions given by God prior to Exodus) and Exodus 12:49. This is the first occasion in the Bible of the phrase, *Law of Y<sup>e</sup>howah*. So far, God's Laws were not a list of things which the Hebrews were not supposed to do, but a ceremonial organization designed to teach the crucifixion of our Lord almost 1500 years prior to its occurrence in history.

Literally, this next verse begins with, *and he is to you for* or *and it is to you for...* This is not some indefinite, uncertain *it* to which this verse refers. We are talking about the Feast of Unleavened Bread (which includes the Passover). That is the *it* that Moses is talking about. A handful of translations will insert this (correct) meaning. Understanding this clears up a great deal of misunderstanding about this verse.

Exodus 13:9a *It [the Feast of Unleavened Bread] shall be as a sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes,...*

At first, this verse can seem to be confusing. What has been discussed is the feast of the unleavened bread and eating bread which has not been leavened. Then we appear to be talking about signs on the hands and something placed between the eyes. Where did those things come from?

The key is this: *it* here is a reference to the feast which they are to celebrate. It is the feast itself which is a sign to the sons of Israel over the next 1500 years. This is not a new topic, but just a continuation of what Moses has been talking about.

Although this verse has been taken very literally by the Hebrew people, what is the sign for them is the feast, the festival; that things which are done during the Feast of the Unleavened Bread; during the observance of the Passover. It will be *as if* these words have been written on their hand. The ceremony and their meanings will be in their thinking—that is, between their eyes.

Let me give you a better understanding what of is being said here. The mothers and fathers of Israel are to make the meaning and history of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread perspicuous to their children. The child should know not just the ceremony, but what the history is behind it. They should understand these words of Moses *as if* they were written down on their hand; *as if* this information was right there before their eyes. Their understanding should never be tentative or incomplete. It was the job of the parents to make certain that all of this information was fully understood by their children. This information would be a generational witness, from one generation to the next, to be perpetuated for as long as God worked through nation Israel.

**Application:** In the Age of Israel, the fundamental teachers of God's truth was to come from the parents. There was no other organization found in the Bible dedicated to the spiritual education of young people. The same thing is true in this dispensation, the Church Age. Christians who have children have the responsibility to teach them about Jesus.

What is *not* being taught here? The people of Israel are not supposed to make some kind of weird glove for their hand, where they might write Scriptures. This passage is *not* telling them to make these boxes to somehow attach to their foreheads, and to put verses inside of those boxes. That is not just my interpretation of this passage; I am teaching exactly what this passage means and does not mean.

How do I know that my interpretation is correct, and any other is wrong? Look at the next part of this verse:

Exodus 13:9b ...that the Lord's law may be in your mouth;...

Does this mean that someone is supposed to roll up a portion of the law and carry it around as if a cigar or a cigarette? Of course not! This is not to be taken literally, just like v. 9a was not to be taken literally.

Here is what is supposed to happen: the parents of the young Hebrew sons and daughters were to explain this ceremony to them, and all that it represents; and what the history is behind it. As a result, the Torah (law) of God would be in their mouth. That means that the young people, after a certain point, would be able to explain what each feast is all about.

Now, remember, the context: not only are they being told how to observe the feast, but they will explain these things to their sons—in that way, the Torah of God will be on their lips. That is, each year, the father explains this to his son until his son is able to explain the same thing to his own son.

It appears that there would be words written to remind them of what was being done. Perhaps these very words that we are reading right here.

This is an interesting statement as well, as there has not been the Torah given to the Hebrew people (in one sense, we would consider Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy to be the *Torah*). However, in this context, *Torah* refers to a specific set of information from God for the people of Israel.

Exodus 13:9c ...for with a strong hand the Lord has brought you out of Egypt.

V. 9c continues what the father is supposed to tell the son. All of this celebration was about the fact that God, with His omnipotence, brought the sons of Israel out of Egypt. He brought them all out of bondage. The testimony of the father to the son is, God, with a strong hand, brought them all out of Egypt.

Deut. 6:6-9 has more of what Moses said here: "All these words which I am commanding you today shall be on your heart and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead [lit., *between your eyes*]. And you will write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." [emphasis mine] Even the most hardened of believers should be able to read that and get a clear picture as to how important God's Word was at that time. Also, it should be clear that these are not directions to design some new, oddball clothing for the hand and nose.

By the way, note again Deut. 6:6a: "All these words which I am commanding you today shall be on your heart..." Is this a command for the people of Israel to write down some holy words and somehow attach them to their chest and walk around like that? Or were they to have an operation when someone opens them up and carefully carves certain words onto their physical heart? Of course not!

When it comes to religion, people get goofy, confused and legalistic. There is a denomination which teaches that, when you celebrate the Eucharist, the grape juice that you are drinking mystically turns into Jesus' actual blood, and the bread also mystically turns into the Lord's body. That just is not true, and when Jesus said, "This is My body,

which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." (in reference to the bread which he had just divided into smaller pieces) (Luke 22:19b; ESV; capitalized), He was speaking metaphorically. Bullinger, in his marvelous book, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* spends two pages just talking about metaphors, saying early on, *Few figures [of speech] are more misunderstood than the metaphor.*<sup>67</sup> Then Bullinger follows this up with 7 pages of examples of metaphors found throughout the Bible (he pretty much sticks with a couple of specific psalms and passages from the New Testament). Bullinger does not even give an exhaustive list of metaphors in the Bible, because that probably would have added 20–50 more pages to his 1000+ page book.

A metaphor is often expressed as “X is Y;” when X is not actually the same thing as Y. This phrase often means, X is like Y, X is similar to Y, X illustrates Y, or X is explained by Y. If Lucy makes that statement, “That Charley Brown is a dog.” Most of us know that Lucy means that Charley Brown is a literal dog. We may think this refers to Charley Brown’s looks or to his behavior. But we know that she is not saying that Charley Brown is an actual dog, despite the words that she used.

And what we are studying here in Exodus are metaphors. These verses got distorted over the years. God is not invoking anyone to write Scripture on their hands or on their foreheads; nor is He instructing us to make some kind of clothing or ornament to contain special Scriptures. This got distorted by the time of our Lord. Religious men wore these small black leather boxes that contained four passages of Scripture and they were attached to the forehead and to the left arm by leather straps. Along with all of the other overt religious things that they did, these accessories were a source of pride to the very religious (see Matt. 23:5; the item in question is often translated a *phylactery*).

God's Word should be a part of our daily work and life. His Word should permeate our frontal lobes; our minds (it is very common in the Jewish language to take a physical part of the body and have it represent a mental process of some sort—such as heart, kidneys, or bowels). We are faced with human viewpoint for 16–20 hours each and every day of our lives and we are encouraged by simply living life to think in terms of human wisdom and viewpoint. God tells us that His Word should be written on our foreheads, between our eyes, in our souls. Everything that we say should reveal a knowledge of God's Word. Just as there are three classifications of sins, overt, verbal and mental, there are three classifications of areas where our knowledge of God's Word comes to play in our lives. That is, the Word of God should permeate our thinking, our speech and our actions.

Exodus 13:9 It [the celebration of the Feast of Unleavened Bread] shall be as a sign to you [as if it were written] on your hand and as [if it were] a memorial between your eyes, that the Lord's law [= torah (God's truth)] may be in your mouth [so that you are able to speak it]; for with a strong hand the Lord has brought you out of Egypt. [The bracketed additions are mine.]

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<sup>67</sup> *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p.735.

One of the few prejudices which I acquired at the church that I went to was a very strict adherence to the original languages, the original words, and translations which best convey the exact meaning. However, although I eschewed *thought-for-thought* translations, I no longer do that (after decades of studying the Word of God verse-by-verse and word-by-word). Sometimes, a less accurate translation can convey the meaning that we might otherwise miss in the original text. I will quote this verse using some other translations, and you can see how they might better convey the correct meaning, even though they take some liberties with their translations:

Easy-to-Read V.–2001	"This holiday will help you remember--it will be like a string tied on your hand. It will be like a sign before your eyes. This holiday will help you remember the Lord's teachings. It will help you remember that the Lord used his great power to take you out of Egypt.
Good News Bible (TEV)	This observance will be a reminder, like something tied on your hand or on your forehead; it will remind you to continue to recite and study the Law of the LORD, because the LORD brought you out of Egypt by his great power.
NIRV	When you celebrate this holy day, it will be like a mark on your hand. It will be like a reminder on your forehead. This law of the Lord must be on your lips. The Lord used his mighty hand to bring you out of Egypt.
New Simplified Bible	»This festival will be like a mark on your hand. It will be a reminder on your forehead that the teachings of Jehovah are always to be a part of your conversation! Jehovah used his mighty hand to bring you out of Egypt.
New Living Translation	This annual festival will be a visible sign to you, like a mark branded on your hand or your forehead. Let it remind you always to recite this teaching of the Lord: 'With a strong hand, the Lord rescued you from Egypt.'
The Living Bible	This annual memorial week will brand you as his own unique people, just as though he had branded his mark of ownership upon your hands or your forehead.

These other translations on occasion give us a better understanding than do translations which adhere more closely to the original text. This does not mean that *dynamic translations* are always the best; it simply means that, from time to time, you may find that a *dynamic translation* is helpful.

The translations above help us to see that, God is not speaking about writing stuff on your hand or putting a little box on your forehead with Scriptures inside of it. (I realize that this is Moses speaking to the people, but the original instructions came from God.)

One more thing: obviously, I could have used fewer words to explain this verse. I could have said, "Here is what it means..." and, one paragraph later, be in v. 10. There are two things which I hope to do with this study: (1) present the most accurate understanding of

each verse and passage as possible and (2) sometimes give you enough information and explanation that the meaning of the verse stays with you longer.

I doubt seriously that I will live long enough to create thorough chapter-by-chapter Bible studies of every book that I want to. I will do what I can in this earthly realm; and when it is time to leave the field, I hope that there are others younger, who are inspired and have learned to pick up and move forward down the field with what you have.

## **Lessons 189–190: Exodus 13:10–15c**

## **Purchase of the Firstborn/Redemption**

The big picture or the main topic is the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Exodus 13:10 [You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year.](#)

What has been described in the previous few verses is the *ordinance* of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread. This celebration is to be observed at the same time each year, year after year.

Also, the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular continues to be used here (as in, *you will keep*). The responsibility to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread is just as much a personal responsibility as a national one.

God's Law and His Word are more than lists of moral precepts to follow, as in, *do this; don't do that*. However, what we are studying is the Passover and Unleavened Bread Feast. The most important thing for God to reveal to us is (1) this is the true God of the Universe, the Creator of the earth and all of mankind; and, (2) Jesus Christ, the firstborn of God the Father, the unblemished Passover Lamb, would die on our behalf that we might be delivered from the bondage to the slavery of our inner nature into an eternal relationship with God.

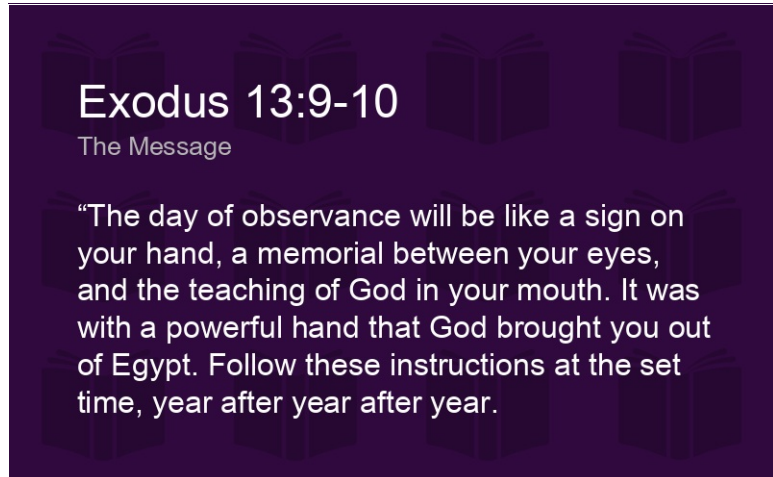
The plural of *days* often means *one year*, as in Genesis 24:55 40:4 Leviticus 25:29 etc. The final phrase in v. 10 literally reads, *from days in the direction of days*; or, *from days to days*. In the Old Testament, I work with perhaps 90 different translations in my study of the Old Testament. The translators who give a literal translation here are Jay P. Green, Sr., (of Green's literal translation), the Awful Scroll Bible, the Concordant Literal Versions, the exeGesis companion Bible, and Young's LT. Lexham footnotes the correct translation. My guess is, for most of you, you have never heard of any of these translations; or, if you have heard of them, you rarely refer to them (all of them are available for e-sword). This phrase, *from days to days* actually means *from year to year, each year, yearly*. This is why most translations—including the most *literal* ones—do not translate this portion of v. 10 literally.



The point that I was trying to make is, even with very literal translations, you are not always reading a *literal translation*.

**Exodus 13:9–10 (The Message)** (a graphic); from [Bibles](#); accessed April 14, 2021.

There was a time I would give little thought to paraphrased Bible, like *The Message*; but now that I read it, I am thinking, *nicely done, Eugene Peterson* (Peterson is the *translator* of the Message).



The paraphrase *the Message*, describes itself as follows: *The Message is a reading Bible translated from the original Greek and Hebrew Scriptures by scholar, pastor, author, and poet Eugene Peterson. Thoroughly reviewed and approved by twenty biblical scholars, The Message combines the authority of God's Word with the cadence and energy of conversational English.*<sup>68</sup>

There are many times when you will find it more profitable to read a paraphrase or a less-than-literal translation of the Bible. In my own process of translating from the Hebrew (or Greek), I refer to about 90 different translations. When I am struggling to get the main theme or the gist of a passage, I have found that some of the less-than-literal translations give me a better idea of what a section of the Bible is telling me.

### The Law of the Firstborn

Exodus 13:11a [“And it shall be, when the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites,...](#)

From the very beginning, God has promised the land of Canaan to His people, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God originally made this promise specifically to Abraham; and then to Isaac and then to Jacob. This promise still stands for the time period that we are studying, even though all of the Hebrew people live in Egypt. Interestingly enough, God did not give them the land of Egypt. God did not survey the situation, and change plans, saying, “New plan, guys: defeat the Egyptians and you can have their land instead.” Because God gave Israel the land of Canaan and not the land of Egypt, the people would have to leave Egypt and allow God to guide them.

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<sup>68</sup> From [Amazon](#), accessed October 13, 2021. More than likely, this is taken directly from the introductory pages for *The Message*.

Moses repeats v. 5a here, reemphasizing that God will bring every individual Hebrew into the land of Canaan. Now, bear in mind, the Hebrew people are just now packed and ready to go (in the narrative). However, God sees the big picture; most of the Israelites only see that they are leaving Egypt. God, through Moses, reminds them of the bigger picture. They are not just leaving Egypt; but they are going to be guided by God to receive His Law and then led into the land of promise.

Exodus 13:11b “...as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you,...

God has, from the very beginning, given the land of Canaan to the Hebrew people. He first sent Abraham there with that very same promise, and God reiterated this promise individually to Isaac and Jacob. Now, through Moses, God repeats this promise to the sons of Jacob (all of whom are now living in Egypt).

God has given this land (the feminine singular suffix) to the people of Israel.

Moses continues to speak to his people using the masculine singular, which focuses on the individuals.

Even when all the sons of Jacob were guided to Egypt to live, this was with the understanding that God would return them all to Canaan at some point. For that reason, Jacob asked that he be buried back in Canaan; and Joseph asked that his bones be carried back to Canaan, when God sent the people en masse back to that land.

Despite the original hospitality of the Egyptians and the necessity of the sons of Jacob to move there, they were never to think of Egypt as their permanent home. Jacob, the patriarch of those who moved to Egypt, was buried in Canaan when he died; he was not buried in Egypt. Joseph asked that his bones not be interred in the ground in Egypt, but that they be carried out of Egypt and placed into the soil of the land that God promised Israel.

This is certainly a very difficult thing for the Hebrew people. Most of us do not have families who have lived in the United States as long as the Hebrews lived in Egypt; yet, as far as we are concerned, the United States is our home. The Hebrew people were not allowed to think that about Egypt. Canaan was to be their permanent home; Egypt was only temporary (do you see an analogy here?).

Think about all that we have studied in the book of Exodus up to this point. God will begin nation Israel with all of the sons of Jacob. There won't be a population of Hebrews who hang back in Egypt saying, “We are pretty happy right here. You guys go ahead. We will keep in touch by writing.” The series of events makes it impossible for any Hebrew family to continue living in Egypt. Every Hebrew person in existence is now (in our narrative) being guided by God out of Egypt.

Exodus 13:11 “And it shall be, when the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you,...

God has continually made promises to the Hebrews about the land of Canaan. This is a brief promise for the near future. For all of the prophecy found in the Bible, some of it is for the near future, some is for the far future, and some has a double fulfillment, both near and far. At a more opportune time, we will take up this doctrine of prophecy.

You will notice the 3 dots at the end of v. 11b. That is because v. 11 is completed by v. 12. This is an awful place for a verse break. V. 12 connects the words of God to the events which Israel lived through. God came through Egypt and killed all of the firstborn who were not covered by the blood. Therefore, the firstborn who were saved all belong to the Lord.

Exodus 13:12a ...that you shall set apart to the Lord all that open the womb,...

God has a claim to those who *open up the womb*, which is a synonym for those born first.

What God did is, He passed over the firstborn of the sons of Israel, allowing them to live. Remember, these firstborn were in houses marked by the blood of the lamb. So, God did not harm these firstborn.

All believers are covered over and saved by the blood of the True Lamb of God (the blood being symbolic of Jesus dying for our sins).

Exodus 13:12b ...that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males shall be the Lord's.

God has a claim on all of the firstborn that He did not kill in Egypt; and, by extension, all firstborn males—whether human or animal.

It is for the reason stated above, that God wants all of the firstborn dedicated to Him. He passed over them during the great judgment; but when He passes over such a one, that person then belongs to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. God preserved their lives. The head of every household listened to what God required—the painting of the lamb's blood on their doorframe. They believed God and did what He told them to do.

The setting apart of the firstborn to God has a two-fold purpose. The first, and by far the most important typological. The firstborn is a type; Jesus our Lord will be called the firstborn of God. Secondly, in any family, the firstborn child is a leader of sorts to his younger siblings and he must be oriented to God's plan in order to properly influence those who follow him from the womb. Moses (who is at most, the third-born), in speaking this to the people, relays God's message of Exodus 13:2.

You and I who have believed in Jesus Christ, we are as the firstborn to God. We belong to Him. We should be left to the destroyer, but we have been covered by the blood of the Lamb. We are owned by God.

Exodus 13:12 ...that you shall set apart to the Lord all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males shall be the Lord's.

The firstborn belongs to God, whether human or animal. The firstborn would have to be purchased. This is because the Lord took the lives of the firstborn of the Egyptians, whether human or animal.

Now let's put the entire sentence together:

Exodus 13:11–12 “And it shall be, when the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you, that you shall set apart to the Lord all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males shall be the Lord's.

God continually focuses the Hebrew people towards the land which God has given them, even though they have spent 400 years in Egypt.

Exodus 13:13a But every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb;...

The firstborn had to be redeemed; which means, *paid for*. The purchase price would be a lamb, which would be sacrificed to God in payment.

What is being done here, is the Hebrew people are teaching that each person must be redeemed by blood. The teaching aids are the firstborn of an ass who is redeemed with a lamb. The reason that this particular parallel is used is, if the Hebrew family did not protect their home with the blood, they lost every firstborn, man and animal.

I have read at least one commentator who suggested the unclean animal was purchased with the clean animal. The claim is this: the donkey is one of the unclean beasts and this is a situation where the animals which are not sacrificed to God (the unclean animals) must therefore be redeemed, just as we as unclean must be redeemed. Here, *donkey* stands in for all unclean beasts, even though only one of them is mentioned here (see also Num. 18:15 34:20).

Although this would make a terrific analogy, I do not find anywhere that the donkey is presented as unclean (maybe I have missed that passage, as there are 185 verses which contain the word *unclean*).

Exodus 13:13b ...and if you will not redeem it, then you shall break its neck.

The alternative to redeeming the donkey would be to break the donkey's neck (which is not what God wanted individual Israelites to do).

Here is the choice that Moses gave the people—they could either redeem the firstborn or they would have to break the neck of that firstborn (setting up the parallel to the Passover).

Exodus 13:13c **And all the firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem.**

The people of Israel must also redeem (purchase, pay for) their firstborn sons, and this would involve an animal sacrifice. Everything must be redeemed with blood; everything is cleansed with blood.

In vv.12–13 and 15, we actually have three different words for firstborn. One I believe is a play on words. The firstborn is to be separated to Y<sup>e</sup>howah and the firstborn is also referred to in these verses as *the first opening or the first separation of the womb*.

Because God spared the firstborn of the Hebrews, the firstborn belong to Him. God killed the firstborn of every beast and of every family of the unbelieving Egyptians and (presumably, if there were any) of any unbelieving Hebrews. Since He spared the firstborn who were under the blood, then they belong to Him. They are dedicated to Y<sup>e</sup>howah; set apart in service to Him. In order for God to spare the lives of the firstborn men, they must be redeemed or paid for. This is obviously a picture of Jesus Christ paying for our sins on the cross. Jesus Christ also died for all unbelievers; He paid the price of their redemption as well.

My educated guess concerning the ass (the donkey) is this: the ass represents Pharaoh, whose will (neck—a symbol of man's volition, as in stiff neck) was broken by Y<sup>e</sup>howah. Still, even unbelieving Pharaoh was redeemed by Christ's death on the cross. V. 17 seems to bear out this interpretation.

Exodus 13:13 **But every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb and if you will not redeem it, then you shall break its neck. And all the firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem.**

Although this doctrine was found in Genesis and the Exodus introduction, it is a good one to repeat. The doctrine here has been abbreviated. This came from Lesson #055 of the **Basic Exodus Study** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). This was an attempt to further abbreviate the doctrine of redemption.

### **The Very Abbreviated Doctrine of Redemption**

1. The verb *to redeem* means *to purchase, to buy*.
2. *Redemption* in the New Testament refers to Jesus dying for our sins and purchasing our souls with His blood (which is not His literal blood but His spiritual death on the cross). When He took upon Himself our sins and *paid the penalty* for our sins, that is what *redemption* is. It is the payment given by Jesus for us. **For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life which you inherited from the fathers [= Jewish religious traditions], not with perishable things, like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish (1Peter 1:18–19). He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed (1Peter 2:24). In Him we have redemption through his blood,**

## The Very Abbreviated Doctrine of Redemption

- the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace (Eph. 1:7). See also Col. 1:14 Gal. 3:13
3. Jesus Christ paid for us; therefore, we belong to Him. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, Whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body (1Cor. 6:19–20). See also 1Cor. 7:23
  4. Jesus Christ is qualified to purchase us.
    - 1) Jesus Christ is born without a sin nature. This is based upon the virgin birth, something which was telegraphed to us as far back as Gen. 3. A man born without a human father has no sin nature (as it is the father who passes down the sin nature genetically). Isa. 7:14 Matt. 1:23 1Tim. 3:16 Heb. 1:3
    - 2) Jesus Christ did not commit any personal sin during His life. Isa. 53:9 John 8:46 19:4 2Cor. 5:21 Heb. 4:15 7:26–28
    - 3) Although Adam's sin was not imputed to Jesus, our sins were imputed to Jesus on the cross.
  5. Because Jesus died for our sins, paying the full redemption price, all men are potentially in the Book of Life. Because Jesus has paid the price for us, our names are written in the Book of Life, unless we die without having believed in Jesus Christ. It is like a city registry. There is a registry of all citizens of a city until they die; and then their names are removed. When a person dies an unbeliever, his name is blotted out of the Book of Life. This understanding, by the way, indicates that Jesus provided unlimited atonement (He died for the sins of all mankind; not just for the sins of the elect). Philip. 4:3 Rev. 3:5
  6. God the Holy Spirit, as the divine Author of the Old Testament, portrays this act of redemption in the Old Testament as a shadow of what was to come.
    - 1) The high priest offering up animal sacrifices was a portrait of Jesus offering Himself on the cross for our redemption. Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then...He entered once for all into the holy places [into the Presence of God the Father after the crucifixion], not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of His Own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption (Heb. 9:11a, 12).
    - 2) The blood of the animal sacrifices represents the actual coin of the realm; the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. Gen. 22:8 Exodus 12:21 Job 19:25–16 John 1:25 Heb. 9:22 1Peter 1:19
    - 3) Job, in all of his suffering, when his friends comfort him little, finally gives his plaintive cry, "I know my Redeemer lives!" (Job 19:25). The God of Job has purchased him and he knew this.
    - 4) God's redemption is related to the blotting out of our sins in Isa. 44:22, which reads: "I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you."
    - 5) Jehovah Elohim is called the Redeemer or the Redeemer of Israel throughout the Old Testament. Psalm 19:14 78:35 Isa. 43:14 44:6.
  7. Redemption yields the following results:



## The Very Abbreviated Doctrine of Redemption

- 1) Redemption purchases the forgiveness of our sins. Isa. 44:22 Eph. 1:7 Col. 1:14 Heb. 9:15
- 2) Because we have been redeemed by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God also **justifies** us. Rom. 3:24 5:9
- 3) Since we have been redeemed by the blood of our Lord, we are therefore sanctified. Heb. 10:10, 14, 29 13:12
  - (1) There are 3 stages of sanctification. We are sanctified in Him through faith in Him and His death on the cross. This is positional sanctification. This is also called *positional truth*; and *position in Christ* (as opposed to our *position in Adam*). Acts 20:32 26:18 1Cor. 1:2 Heb. 10:10
  - (2) We grow spiritually in time, by means of grace and the knowledge of God's Word. That is temporal sanctification. John 17:17 1Thess. 4:3–7
  - (3) We received ultimate sanctification when we are raised with Him in a resurrection body. Eph. 1:14 5:26–27 1Thess. 5:23
  - (4) All 3 stages of sanctification find their basis in redemption.
- 4) Because we have been redeemed, we will receive an eternal inheritance. Heb. 9:15 1Peter 1:2–4
- 5) The purchase of us by Jesus' death on the cross (redemption) is the basis for the strategical victory of Jesus Christ in the Angelic Conflict. Acts 2:32–35 Col. 2:13–15 Heb. 2:14–15 1Peter 3:18, 22
8. Paul, in Colossians, speaks of God cancelling out the debt that we owe: **And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross** (Col. 2:13–14). Although the word *redeem* is not found here, the concept is summed up quite well in these verses: we are dead in our trespasses and sins, having a considerable debt to God. Jesus Christ, takes this debt and nails it to the cross, so that it has been paid off on our behalf.

You will notice that a great many passages on redemption come from the New Testament.

Exodus 13:14a **So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come,...**

God would give the people of Israel a very complex and extensive set of rituals to follow. The whole idea is for one generation to ask their parents what is going on with each aspect of worship, and the father would need to be explain the meaning to them. The explanation given by the parent, the Scriptures and the ceremony itself are 3 witnesses to the same narrative. *By the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses is a fact confirmed.*

There will be a variety of very specific rituals and procedures which mark the faith of the Hebrew people. These rituals were given to them by God for specific purposes.

Exodus 13:14b ...saying, 'What is this?'...

At some point in time, a man's son is going to look up at him and ask, "Just why exactly are we doing this?" The kid might be 4 or 5 or even 8 or 9. Moses is telling them that this would happen and how they should respond.

The kid looks at what is happening. "Why do you use a lamb to redeem the firstborn of a donkey? What is this Feast of Unleavened Bread all about? Why do you do these things?" The answer was *not* to be, "This is what God told us to do." Every father was to give the explanation to his son that Moses is telling them in this chapter.

Exodus 13:14c ...that you shall say to him, 'By strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

The father is to explain to the son where all of this began and what it means. At the beginning, God brought the sons of Israel out of Egypt, away from a life of slavery. With a strong hand, with signs and wonders, without the Hebrew people lifting up a single sword in rebellion, God brought them out of Egypt.

If we understand that Moses said this at this time and then wrote these things down to preserve them, all of this makes sense. If we decide that there was no Moses and some group of people much later just made stuff up (or took manuscripts of history and embellished them), then we have the whole chicken-egg controversy...what came first, the celebrations and customs or someone writing this down on parchment (vellum or whatever), saying that this is what they were supposed to do? And, somehow, in this scenario (taught in many seminaries), these Johnny-come-lately types convince an entire nation to believe something which simply is not true.

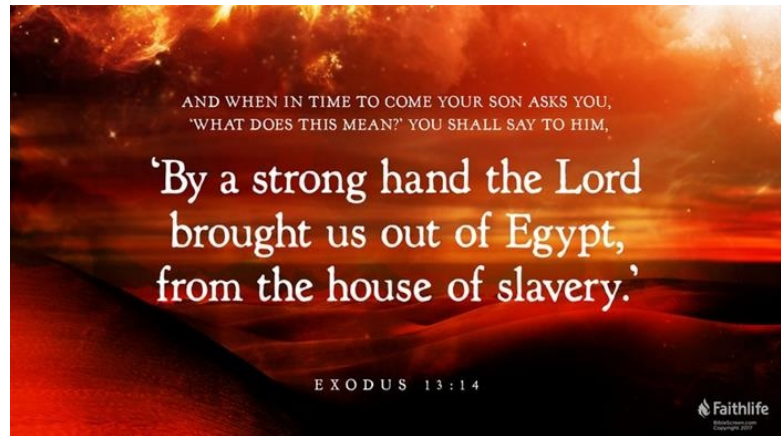
The question of the son is abbreviated here, but he is wondering "What is the meaning of all this?" or "Why are we doing this?" Every ritual, every sacrifice, every celebration was fraught with meaning. It was designed to evangelize the child. It was designed for the young people who are taking part in the celebration to stop and to ask their fathers just what it is that they are participating in. Everything that they did was to provoke conversation and questions. There was more than tradition and heritage involved here; this involved the eternal salvation of their very own children.

Furthermore, at some point, a generation steeped in the teaching of God will, when the Messiah arrives on the scene, recognize Him. Things will start to fit together, and the parallels will become obvious. At least, that is how it is supposed to work. When people are negative towards God—God as He really is—then there is no amount of proof or evidence which will convince him.

Exodus 13:14 So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What is this?' that you shall say to him, 'By strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Here, the son asks about the redemption of the firstborn. "What is that all about?" he would then tell his sons about how God brought them out of Egypt. They had been slaves in Egypt and God purchased them.

**Exodus 13:14** (a graphic); from [Biblia.com](http://Biblia.com); accessed April 14, 2021



Exodus 13:15a **And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go,...**

Pharaoh refused to send the people of God out of the land. No matter that he faced nine very painful plagues, he would not succumb to the divine pressure. He was this anti-God.

Pharaoh was hardened toward Y<sup>e</sup>howah and toward the Hebrews and thought that the future of Egypt depended upon the Hebrews remaining there as slaves. He is the ass with the stiff neck which must be broke, because he refused to be redeemed. The neck on an animal will turn toward whatever direction the animal wants to go in. This is a picture of volition. A stiff neck refers to negative volition; the person guiding the animal cannot guide it in the proper direction. In this case, the broken neck refers to broken volition. That is, the Pharaoh doesn't want the Hebrews to leave; that is not what he personally wants; but he is a broken and defeated man who has run out of options and lets them go against his volition. See also Gen. 27:40 Exodus 32:9 33:3 Deut. 9:6 28:48 31:27 2Kings 17:14

Exodus 13:15b **...that the Lord killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt,...**

Because Pharaoh would not give in, God finally killed all of the firstborn in Egypt. As before, God first warned the Pharaoh what he would do.

Exodus 13:15c **...both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast.**

All of the firstborn died—whether men or livestock. This is what the father is to tell his son when he asks about these traditions.

## **Lesson 191: Exodus 13:15–16      Odd bits of clothing for the hand and forehead**

Exodus 13:13 [Moses is speaking to the people, giving them the instructions which God gave to him]: **Every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck. Every firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem.**

Exodus 13:14 And when in time to come your son asks you, 'What does this mean?' you shall say to him, 'By a strong hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery.

Exodus 13:15a-c And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the Lord killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast.

These feasts and rituals were how God communicated His plan to all the people of Israel, and this approach was designed for generation after generation. When it came to their actions regarding the firstborn animals, this all goes back to Egypt, and how God went through the land and killed all of the firstborn who were not covered by the blood.

Exodus 13:15d Therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all males that open the womb,...

The father is supposed to tell his son, "I will make an offering to the Lord for every firstborn, in order to redeem them." As already said, these could be redeemed. I would understand this to likely mean that the father, the one doing the explanation, is either slaughtering the animal *or* redeeming it. While doing this, he explains to his son what he is doing and why.

Exodus 13:15e ...but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.'

Clearly, he will redeem his own firstborn sons, according to the laws established by God.

God makes it easy for the parents. He tells them here just exactly what to say when their children ask what are they observing these feasts and these sacrifices. And this was to continue for hundreds of years and hundreds of generations.

Exodus 13:15 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the Lord killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all males that open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.'

We have two sets of firstborn to consider. The firstborn of animals and the firstborn of man which belonged to the Egyptians were not redeemed (purchased). So God killed them. For that reason, the Israelite must redeem his firstborn son and the firstborn of his livestock. Everything is paid for by the sacrifice of another.

God spared all of the firstborn of Israel; and so, the firstborn of Israel all belong to God, whether man or beast.

The father is to explain to his son that, every firstborn animal must be redeemed, or purchased.

This is all ceremonial; it is not real. For the Israelite and his son, it is a look backwards. However, these sacrifices are also representative of the sacrifice of Jesus which will occur in the future. He will redeem all the people. Jesus will purchase us at the cross.

Exodus 13:16a *It shall be as a sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes,...*

As before, we have this pronoun *it*. *It* refers back to the redemption of the firstborn (vv. 12–13) and the explanation for this redemption that is to be given to one's son (vv. 14–15).

In the Hebrew, this is the simple wâw conjunction followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect of hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*], the most common verb in the Hebrew language. It means, *to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass*. Strong's #1961 BDB #224. Literally, this reads, *he has been, it has been, this was*. On occasion, this can mean, *and so, it came to pass that*. However, that is generally to be found with the Qal imperfect.

I have provided the previous verses, so that you can absorb the context, that this refers to the ritual act of redemption, for which the father provides an explanation to his son.

Generally, when we find this phrasing (*It shall be as a sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes,...*), it is connected to the words of God. So, the idea is for this people to remember exactly these words of Moses as *if* they put a mark on their hands or frontlets between their eyes.

Again, the importance of training the future generations so that they do not forget Who Y<sup>e</sup>howah is and how they were redeemed by Him and how God has given them the land. Nothing is as important as the spiritual training of our young people.

I recall a popular idea from the sixties and seventies, one I heard expressed many times. Parents might take a child to a couple of churches and let him decide when he is ready to go in whatever direction he might. That is an evil philosophy foisted upon a child by parents who have no true spiritual compass themselves. You do not allow a child to be verbally impolite to others throughout his young age and figure that he will later decide on his own whether or not this is improper. You do not let your child hurt other children, allowing him the choice in the future to perhaps curb this behavior if he decides that is right for him. You do not allow a child to touch a hot stove so that he can choose in the future not to. You do not allow a child to run out in the middle of the street without looking, figuring that when he gets older he will be able to make the proper choice all on his own. You do not allow a child to steal as a youngster, speaking to him about such actions in a non-judgmental way, allowing him the benefit of “life” to help him determine if this kind of behavior is correct or not. The spiritual direction of a child is much more important than any of these other things. If you are concerned about your child's volition, I can guarantee you that he will use it when it comes to spiritual things. No matter how well-trained a child is in spiritual matters, they will always retain their own volition. Furthermore, if your life is



a mess morally and spiritually, your child may reject your faith and Jesus Christ because the most important person(s) in his life is a failure in moral and spiritual things.

Now, as an aside, we all have feet of clay; we will all sin and we will all make some bad choices. We might even have an occasion to speak to our child about our own shortcomings (“I lost my temper and yelled at you; I should not have done that”).

It is our duty as parents to lead our children spiritually and if we are not willing to do that, then we should not ever have children in the first place. This includes a mother who has been abandoned by a worthless husband; she is not to sleep around with other men (or even another man). It might be proper for her to remarry, but it is never proper to lead any child to believe that it is okay to engage in sex outside of marriage. Prior to having children, a woman must commit to those children, even if this means that when she discovers that the love of her life is this worthless piece of crap. If the husband that she chooses turns out to be morally bankrupt, she still cannot go out and have sex outside of marriage.

Above all, both parents have a duty to raise that child in the instruction and the admonition of the Lord, which is exactly what we are learning in this passage (what we teach in the New Testament era is certainly different than what was taught in the Old).

Exodus 13:16a *It shall be as a sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes,...*

The Israelites took this verse (and others) completely out of context and gave it a very weird spin. As a result, they made leather straps for their hands and they designed *frontlets* (little boxes) for their eyes. However, I believe that the idea here is, these things should be as *if* they were a sign on one’s hand—something that you see every day. They would as *if* one had placed frontlets on the eyes; so that you could see these principles all of the time. Accurate doctrinal information needs to be before you all of the time, no matter what dispensation you live in. This does not mean that you design some sort of idiotic clothing to illustrate that.

**A Frontlet Between the Eyes** (a photograph); from [Roberta’s Random Ramblings](#); accessed June 22, 2021.

From Roberta’s Ramblings: *The commandment to wear tefillin is binding on Jewish males 13 years of*





age or older. Women are exempt from the obligation, as are slaves.<sup>69</sup> The tefillin is the frontlet between the eyes. Maybe they were worried that women would be too smart to wear something that looks so goofy.

This passage is not to be interpreted apart from its context, but obviously, some have done just that. Although I believe this to be primarily a Jewish phenomenon, it would not



surprise me to find that there were some Christian cults which did this as well (as a young believer, I knew all about all the Christian cults at that time; as an older believer, I pay little attention to them).

**A Sign on the Hand (and arm)** (a photograph); from [Ari Shishler's blogs](#) (he lists it as plural); accessed June 22, 2021.

Although the Bible (especially the book of Exodus) will describe in great detail the various sacrifices, the holy days, the garments of the priests, there is no such description for either of these things (the sign on the hand or the frontlet for the eyes). The reason that God did not describe what these things should look like is because God did not want people to wear clothing like this. What we read here and previously are figures of speech. The feast itself was what was doing the teaching (along with the explanation of the parents to their children). And this was continued until the child had the torah as if it were in his mouth. That is the child (or young man) came to a place where he understood what each celebration was all about. At that point, *the Law was in his mouth*, meaning that, not only did he understand it, but he could teach it as well. At that point, it would be incumbent upon him (the former child) to teach this to his own children.

Therefore, God did not have some sort of weird clothing in mind that every Israelite should wear. This is the sort of thing that Jesus was talking about when He said: **"You blind guides! You filter out a gnat, yet swallow a camel!"** (Mat 23:24; ISV) In other words, "You obey to the smallest detail something which is not to be understood in a weird way and out of context; but then you miss the important things that God wants from you." Oh, and just so you know, Jesus was not speaking of people who had literally swallowed a camel.

Exodus 13:16b **...for by strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt."**

The parents are to remember that God brought them out of Egypt with His divine strength and they are to teach this to their children.

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<sup>69</sup> From <http://robertasrandom.blogspot.com/2011/04/royal-wedding-hats-not-new-fashion.html> accessed June 22, 2021.

How do we understand the sign on the hand and v. 16b? The Hebrew believer is to look at his hand and arm and remember that God brought the people of Israel out of Egypt with His strong hand. This does not mean that God wants the Israelite to design some kind of weird hand and arm accessory.

Exodus 13:16 *It shall be as a sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes, for by strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt."*

Since we had such similar phrasing in vv. 9 and 16, we may reasonably assume that Moses is repeating this information to stay with them.

What God did for the people had to continue for all generations.

The redemption ceremony, for both animals and people, looks back to God's redemption of the people and animals of Israel while they were in Egypt.

What was being taught is, God, by His strength, brought Israel out of Egypt. Israel is beholden to God for that. Straps of leather wrapped around the hand and arm; or a little box affixed to a person's head is *not* what is being called for here.

It is all about memory; it is all about a father telling his son what took place on this day. Each and every year, the father—originally prompted by his son's curiosity—tells his son what took place on this day. This will further be backed up by the written record of this information by Moses.

## **Lesson 192: Exodus 13:17–18a**

## **Israel continues to move forward**

### **The Wilderness Way**

Exodus 13:17a *Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go,...*

Pharaoh sent the people of Israel out of Egypt just when God expected him to. God knew that, despite the horrendous affect which the first 9 judgments had on Egypt, that Egypt would still not be willing to let the Hebrew people go. However, after the Passover and the deaths of the firstborn, the Pharaoh and people of Egypt all demanded that the Hebrews leave Egypt. This separation was to be permanent.

Exodus 13:17b *...that God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines,...*

There was a more direct route into the land of promise, but that would have been through the land of the Philistines. They controlled a great deal of the land in southern Canaan near the Mediterranean. The Hebrew people could have gone in a northeasterly direction and entered into the land near its southwestern coast. However, that portion of Canaan was occupied by Philistines, who were fierce warriors. The Philistines would be a thorn in the side of the Israelites at least until the time of David.

Exodus 13:17c ...although that was near;...

God began leading Moses and the people early on, but He did not lead them directly to Canaan. This would have taken Israel through the land of the Philistines, even though that was the shortest route to the land of promise.

Exodus 13:17a-c Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near;...

Although we do not know the exact route, God took the children of Israel on a southeasterly route, which took them, more or less, towards Midian (Moses was quite familiar with this general route, as he had taken it twice).

If Israel moved northeast, they would be traveling along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea towards the land of Canaan. God could have immediately led His people into Canaan. However, God chose not to do this, knowing what the reaction of the Israelites would have been.

Because God did not lead the people directly into the Land of Promise, it is apparent that they were not ready for that.

**Ancient Canaan** (a map); from [Pinterest](#), accessed June 22, 2021. The direct route would be traveling east-northeast, entering into the land through Kadesh-Barnea and traveling north from there. This would have placed the Israelites smack dab in the middle of Philistine territory.

God explains why He did not bring the Hebrew people along this route at the very beginning.

Exodus 13:17d ...for God said, “Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt.”

If Israel traveled to Canaan, right off the bat, they would have faced war with the Philistines.

God could have led the people directly to the land, because it is not very far to travel from Egypt to southern Canaan. However, He chose not to, so that they did not become afraid.



The concern was, the people would have faced a fight, right off the bat, and this would have caused them to return to Egypt.

The Israelites could have entered the land in a very short time; however, they had been slaves for four hundred years. As a result, even though they may have been in good physical shape, they were relatively passive, as they had been controlled by slavery for 200–300 years. It would take them a generation before they would be willing to fight for their land and freedom. God knew exactly what He was dealing with and He made provision for that. If that were not the case—if the Hebrews had more character—they could have marched right into the land of Canaan and taken it from the Canaanites.

**Application:** God works with what He has. God is the ultimate Realist. He works with the people before Him. At the same time, God removes those with whom He cannot work (which process is known as the sin unto death). That is what will take place among these Israelites over the next 40 years (this is covered historically in the books Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy).

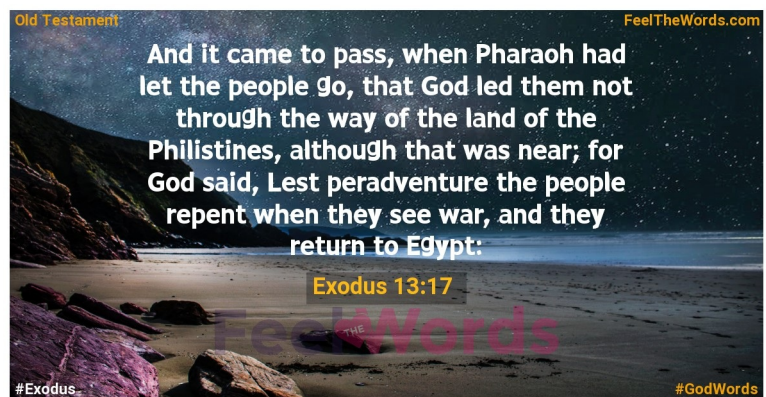
The people with whom God cannot work will be removed by the sin unto death. These are Hebrew people who, from their own volition, will continually work against God (despite the fact that they are believers). When all is said and done, God is going to remove essentially an entire generation of Israelites.

Exodus 13:17 Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, “Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt.”

**Exodus 13:17** (a graphic); from [Feel the Words](#); accessed April 14, 2021.

There is a proper time for things to occur. Given who He was working with, God could not bring the sons of Jacob into the land of promise.

**Application:** There is a lesson in this: God does not put us to the test if we are not yet ready for that test (of course, the exception would be, God using difficult circumstances to wake us up). But, if something is a test, then God has given us the opportunity to prepare for that test. Now, if we have not prepared for the test, then God often exposes us to discipline instead.





**Application:** A test is something which requires us to apply the doctrine that we know to difficult circumstances. The end result, when we pass the test, gives us confidence in the Word of God and the guidance of God.

I once heard a skeptic make the comment: “If God is omniscient, then He does not have to test Christians because He already knows how they will do.” The mistake of this skeptic is, he thinks that the test is for God to gather information on us. It’s not. God knew all of that information in eternity past. God knowledge is not increased after we complete a test. These tests are for us, so that we can develop confidence in Him.

**Application:** Sometimes your test is simply a set of circumstances to which you react correctly, and this moves you along your way in life. A test can have the added advantage, at times, to lead you to a place of blessing.

**Illustration:** If you have been a Christian for any amount of time, then you have been tested. You have gone through a difficult situation. However, at some point, you came out the other side. Maybe you passed and maybe you didn’t, but it is over. How much time did you waste worrying about this situation? How many desperate things did you do? How many people did you contact so that you could tell them all about your problems? But what solved the problem? A period of time + Bible doctrine in your soul = the solution for all of life’s problems. That provided the solution for you.

Exodus 13:18a [So God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea.](#)

We would expect for the people of Israel to travel east and north east, to come up to the Land of Promise in fairly short order. However, there was an area of desert-wilderness near the Sea of Reeds, and that is the route which they followed.

**The Desert-wilderness** (a photograph); from [the Warehouse](#); accessed April 14, 2021. We do not know exactly how the land looked, but I think the emphasis should be on *wilderness* rather than on *desert*. The idea is, this is an uninhabited region.

Exodus 13:18a [So God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea.](#)

There are several words which help to describe the route taken by the Hebrew people by the guidance of God.

There are several things which we should take into consideration when discussing the route taken.



First of all, God knows the route and He is the One guiding them, so He knows exactly what He is doing.

Secondly, God knows the people with whom He is working. He knows how far they can be pushed.

Also, even though topology rarely changes, it does change. Rivers and lakes obviously conform to the land, but there is reason to believe that this region, at one time, received a great deal more rainfall than it does today. For the most part, we know the topical elements of this land today and we project these elements backward 3600 years to the time of the exodus and try to correlate what we read with what we know today. What we know today about the various topological elements today may not match up exactly with the same features back then.

We have done extensive levee work on the Mississippi River, here in the United States, in order to keep it along the same course (so that flooding does not destroy towns or cities established near the river). According to the research I read, the Mississippi River changes course about every thousand years or so. We should not, therefore, be surprised if Moses' eyes-on description does not exactly correlate with what we see today.

## Lesson 193: Exodus 13:17–18

## Capacity for Blessing/Maps of the Exodus

At this point, the people of Israel have packed up and they have left (= *to exodus*) Egypt. They actually left Egypt back in Exodus 12:36–41, but a great deal of the text between there and where we are has been given over to how this will be celebrated in the future. In fact, about half of chapter 12 was devoted to that and all of chapter 13 up to this point in the narrative. Only two generations<sup>70</sup> of people will actually experience the exodus. But this event is so important that God wants its remembrance to be central to nation Israel, all generations forward.

Exodus 13:17 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near. For God said, "Lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt." (ESV)

The direct route to the land of promise was east-northeast. However, God is leading the people south-southeasterly route instead. The people of Israel were not ready yet to enter the land which God had given them.

**Application:** This actually has a fascinating application. Believers are not ready to enjoy all the blessings which God is ready to give them. The believer must develop a capacity for life and a capacity for love in order to receive the blessings which He has slated for our lives. These capacities do *not* naturally develop in the believer. The naturally develop in

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<sup>70</sup> I call them Gen X (those who are 20 years and older at the time of the exodus) and the generation of promise (those who are younger than 20).



the believer who is growing spiritually. That means the intake of Bible doctrine. Bible doctrine has to be more than an academic pursuit. *You also must believe it.* This primarily occurs in a local church by a well-qualified pastor-teacher. On some occasions, people have place themselves under the authority of a pastor-teacher from another location and have learned under his ministry (through audio or video files, or through teaching which may be posted on the internet).

**Illustration:** R. B. Thieme, Jr., when he taught the David series, taught that the believer needs to develop a cup in the soul (the cup being a metaphor for spiritual growth). Once that cup becomes a part of the soul, then God pours blessings into that cup until it is overflowing.

R. B. Thieme, Jr. did not just pull this *cup illustration* out of the air; this comes from Psalm 23:5 (the ISV is used below).

Psalm 23:5	
Scripture	Text/Commentary
You prepare a table before me,	The table which God prepares is a metaphor for the blessings which God prepares for each believer.
even in the presence of my enemies.	No matter how nice we are and no matter how many people like us, we have enemies. The believers does not go through life without enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;	Anointing the head with oil is a reference to spiritual growth and, in the Church Age, the power of the Holy Spirit (which is <i>not</i> an emotional experience).
my cup overflows.	This is the cup developed in the soul through spiritual growth. When this cup exists in our soul, then God begins to pour blessings into our cup until it overflows (overflowing is a picture of our blessings becoming a part of the lives of those near and dear to us).

I took this brief interlude because the children of Israel are not yet ready to be led into the land of promise. They do not have the capacity for that blessing yet. They lack the cup in their souls for God's blessing. In fact, one entire generation will never have the capacity (which is why Israel will spend 40 years in the desert-wilderness after leaving Egypt).

Exodus 13:18a **So God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea.**

The phrase *way of the wilderness* is two words. *Way* is derek<sup>e</sup> (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced *DEH-rek<sup>e</sup>*], which means, *way, distance, road, path; journey, course; direction*. Although this can often refer to an actual road or path, that is not the only way this word can be understood. Strong's #1870 BDB #202. *Wilderness* is simply an uninhabited region. This does not

mean that this area is desert or unable to be settled, just that it had not been as of yet. *Wilderness* has a definition article, which means that it is not a construct of the phrase which follows (a construct relationship ties two of nouns closely together). *Way*, on the other hand, is in the construct form.

The *Red Sea* is actually, *a sea of reeds*. The first word is the construct of *yâm* (יָם) [pronounced *yawm*] and it originally came from an unused root word which meant *to roar* (as the sound of the waves of the sea crashing down). It is used primarily of seas but it can refer to a large river (Isa. 19:5 21:1 Jer. 51:36 Nahum 3:8). Strong's #3220 BDB #410. It is modified by the word *çûwph* (סוּף) [pronounced *soof*] and it means *reeds*. Strong's #5488 & #5489 BDB #693. Literally, this is, *a way of the wilderness, a Sea of Reeds*.

As you can see from the map below, the actual Red Sea is quite a distance from where the people of Israel are at this point in time. At that time, this place was well-known. Although this could refer to a specific part of the Nile, that is unlikely as the Nile is normally identified with the Hebrew word for *river* *y<sup>e</sup>ôr* (יָרֵךְ) [pronounced *y<sup>e</sup>ohr*].

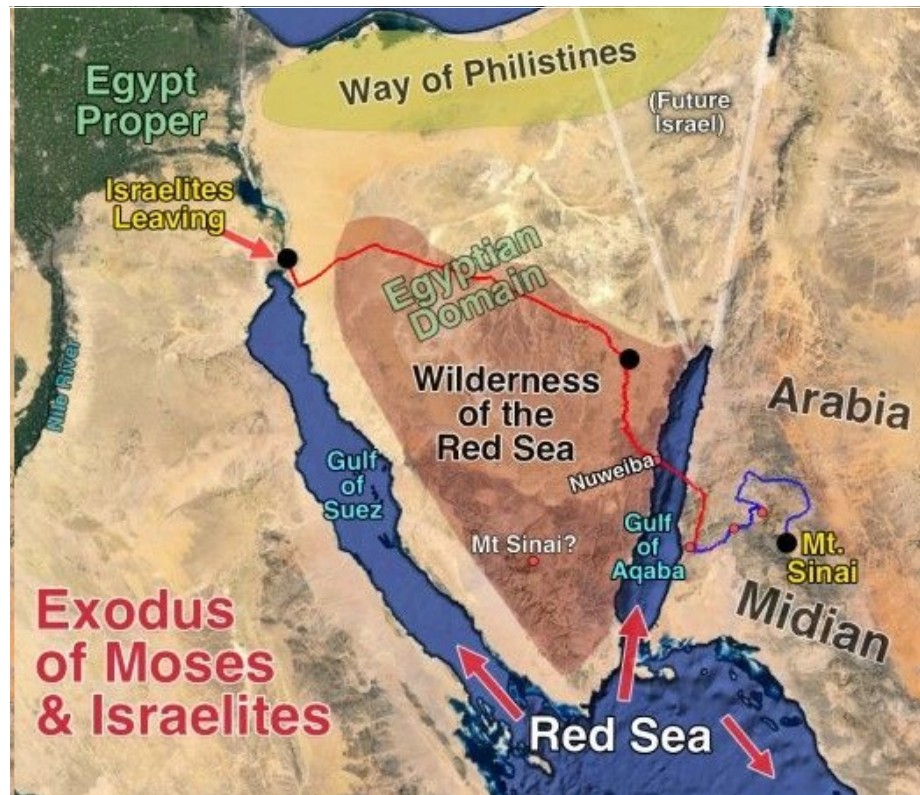
I believe that the best we can hope for is to make some general statements regarding the exact location of the Israelites at this point in the narrative. Mapping out a more precise route is nearly impossible; and attempting to do so would be for what reason? There are a great many things that we can learn from Scripture. However, the precise route of the Israelites will not necessarily be one of them.

The wording found here suggests more of a general route and a general direction. If the Hebrew people headed east/northeast, they would be going *the way of the Philistines*; if they moved in a southeasterly direction, they would be going this wilderness route in the vicinity of the Red Sea (or sea of reeds).

**Exodus of Moses and the Israelites** (a map); from [Christian Stack Exchange](#); accessed November 23, 2021. The general route that the Israelites took is sketched out below.

Exodus 13:18b And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt.

The key Hebrew word translated *orderly ranks* in v. 18b is *chāmushîym* (חֲמִשִּׁיִּם) [pronounced *kheh-moo-SHEEM*], which is variously translated *in battle array* or *in military columns of five*. This tells us that they moved in a very organized way; not necessarily that they marched with weapons. Strong's #2571 BDB #332.



Interestingly enough, the people of Israel were organized into a military array as they moved out. This was not a disorganized mob heading for the hills, but a very organized group. Part of the organization would be that the people of Israel would remain in their tribes (according to their birth).

We do not know exactly how this happened. Did Moses and the elders so organize them, or had the Egyptians trained them to move as a group in this way (logically, they would have been organized by tribe and then by branch and/or family).

For those of you who believe in peace at any price and that war is always evil, you will despise the Old Testament and parts of the New. There were nations which were totally and wholly degenerate, whose degeneracy threatened to spread throughout the world and infect every nation. This is just like a cancer an the best way to deal with a cancer is to cut it out entirely. The Hebrews will do this over the next few generations (and they will be subject to this principle themselves).

Exodus 13:18 So God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt.

We do not know exactly which route was taken by the Hebrews. Although we have several specific sites mentioned, such as Succoth and Etham, in v. 20 (see also Exodus 14:2), we can only today guess where these locations may have been.



Also, this Sea of reeds should not be confused with the sea that God will cause to part in Exodus 14. They are obviously somewhere near one another, but these are not the same bodies of water (although they would be connected). In Exodus 14, the sea wherein God performs His miracle is nowhere called the Reed Sea (nor is it called the Red Sea, for that matter). The Hebrews are led along a freshwater tributary in order to clean themselves and to have water to drink. Once we get to Ex 14:9, the Hebrews have crossed over to the sea (possibly the Red Sea, but more likely, a tributary leading to the Red Sea). Saint Stephen, in Acts 7:36, will make a reference to the Red Sea, which likely refers to the gulf which leads to the Red Sea as we know it.

**Map of the Exodus Route;** from [Jesus Walk](#); accessed 9/29/2013.



The black lines in this map represent the trade routes of that era. The red line represents the route followed by Israel.

Although there is a route today where Israel would have encountered very little water, let me suggest that, at that time, there were greater rivers and the Gulf of Suez (which is a part of the Red Sea), may have been more a extensive body of water than it is today.

No matter where the route was, the Biblical record indicates that there was a point at which the sons of Israel crossed over a fairly substantial body of water.

In conclusion, we do not know what the system of rivers, gulfs and torrents existed at this time. It is my opinion that Israel, Egypt and the wilderness area east of Egypt, in that era, was much more watered than Israel today; and that the same is true of Egypt.

At this point, Israel has packed up and they are moving out of Egypt.

Exodus 13:19a [And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him...](#)

Moses himself did not personally bring Joseph's bones with him, but he would have ordered someone to do this.

This is an extremely important verse, because this suggests that the people of Israel knew more about the book of Genesis than simply their genealogies (which they could have known apart from Genesis). They knew about Joseph's bones. Moses obviously knew about Joseph's bones.

I have suggested on several occasions that the *book* of Genesis is already in existence—it may not be a book, per se—and have provided good evidence which Moses knew it. This moving of Joseph's bones and the recording of it by Moses indicates that Moses indeed did know portions of the book of Genesis (I believe that he knew all of it).

Joseph, the second youngest son of Jacob (Israel), as prime minister of Egypt, knew the importance of the Land of Promise. In previous lessons, I have explained just how the Israelites learned and knew this information, despite not having the book of Genesis in written form (it would have been memorized and spoken aloud at various times when Y<sup>e</sup>howah was worshiped).

Joseph ended up in Egypt apart from the exercise of his own volition, but he clearly understood that God's permanent plan for the sons of Israel was Canaan. Joseph knew that, temporarily, God would use him, as prime minister of Egypt, to provide for his family at that time; and Joseph knew that they would live with him in Egypt temporarily.

As an aside, how precisely did Moses know about the bones of Joseph? I can suggest two possible ways. When Moses was young and being educated, he would have received some education from Hebrew scholars living in the land of Egypt. They may have even provided him with the Scriptures (which were not necessarily in written form). Who Moses was would have been known to some Hebrew men (I don't think that this was widely known, as Moses was not embraced by the Hebrew people at the beginning). But, as we have studied, Moses had Hebrew origins—his immediate family would have known about him. So, if he was, as a young man, educated by some Hebrew scholars, they probably knew his background as well.

Bear in mind, I am speculating that Moses had Hebrew scholars teach him in preparation to become king of Egypt and I am speculating that they knew of his background (none of this is recorded in the book of Exodus). However, it is clear that Moses understands Joseph's bones and their importance, he knows who Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are; he

knows his own genealogy; and he knows that he is a Hebrew. All of this suggests some knowledge of the book of Genesis (and I believe that he knew all of it).

Moses may have even traveled with those Scriptures to Midian (not in the form of writing in that era, but in his mind). Clearly, I am speculating here; but I believe that Moses' knowledge here in this passage demonstrates his knowledge of the book of Genesis.

In Midian, Moses' father-in-law was apparently a gentile priest to God. He may have had access to the holy Scriptures (that is, the book of Genesis); or to some portion of them. However, I prefer theory #1 above. That seems more likely to me.

In any case, God had Moses in Midian for 40 years. One assumption would be that Moses was just living there and nothing spiritual was happening. However, I believe that God prepared Moses while he was in Midian, so that, when God called him, he knew who the God of Genesis was.

I do not want to minimize the instrumentality of Moses' wife in his spiritual growth. His life with her was preparation for his life with an oft times faithless Israel (this is what lies ahead of us in this study).

Exodus 13:19a **And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him...**

Again, I believe that Moses' understanding of this was more than superficial.

Exodus 13:19b **...for he [Joseph] had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath...**

This verse carries two verbs used two times each. The first is the verb *shâba'* (עָבַשׁ) [pronounced *shaw<sup>b</sup>-VAHG*] and it is closely related to the number *seven*, which is a sign of completion or a sign of perfection; it means to take a solemn oath. This verb is found back-to-back with itself. It is first found in the Hiphil infinitive absolute and then in the Hiphil perfect. An infinitive absolute is a verbal noun which can stand on its own; but most often it is used to mean *surely, certainly, definitely* when accompanied by the same verb having a different morphology.

Exodus 13:19a-b **And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him. For he had made the sons of Israel *certainly swear*...** (Green's literal translation)

Exodus 13:19a-b **And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him; for Joseph *had adjured, yea adjured* the sons of Israel...** (Concordant Literal Version)

Exodus 13:19a-b **And Moshe took the atzmot [= bones] Yosef with him; for Yosef had *made the Bnei [= sons] Yisroel swear unconditionally*...** (Orthodox Jewish Bible)

Joseph understood the big picture, so he told his sons (and, apparently, others), that his bones were not to be buried in Egypt, but kept to where they could be taken up, carried to Canaan and then placed into the ground in Israel (Genesis 50:25). This would be a



testimony to the promises of God. Bear in mind that the people of Israel would live in Egypt for 430 years, which is a very long time. And, they would be enslaved for much of that time.

Joseph knew that, no matter what happened, the sons of Jacob would, at some point, return to the Land of Promise (Canaan) and settle there, as God had given them this land. This is coming to pass in the narrative which we are studying.

Throughout the history of Israel, we have a variety of multi-generational witnesses. The Bible itself was an ongoing record of God's interactions with His people over a number of centuries.

The second verb which is repeated is found in v. 19c:

Exodus 13:19c ...saying, "God will surely visit you,..." (Gen. 50:25)

The second repeated verb is *pâqad* (פָּקַד) [pronounced *paw-KAHD*] and it means *to visit, to attend to, to appoint*. It is first found in the Qal infinitive absolute, and is used in the same way the infinitive absolute of *shâba'* was used. Immediately afterward, it is found in the Qal imperfect, indicating continuing action (and God did attend to and visit Israel throughout her history as a client nation to God). My guess is that this would stand as a record of number of repeated verbs in a single verse; but I have much more Scripture to cover before I can make that statement unequivocally.

Joseph told the people in Moses' generation that God would certainly return to the sons of Israel and bring them into the land of promise. This is the promise of the book of Genesis, which took place 400 years previous to our narrative in Exodus.

Although God is continually with His people (even to this day), from the man-ward side, this would not be as apparent to the people of Israel. God spoke with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; but then He does not appear to speak with anyone else until Moses. So from the human perspective, God is not visiting Israel between Jacob and Moses (a period of about 400 years). That is a very long gap between God speaking directly to His people. However, I believe that the people did have the book of Genesis, which various men spoke from memory when the Hebrew people gathered together. So they did have God's Word up to Genesis 50.

Exodus 13:19d ...and you shall carry up my bones from here with you." (Gen. 50:25)

Therefore, Joseph told several people that his bones must be preserved above ground to be buried later in Canaan.

Some have said that, Joseph's bones was the Bible of the Hebrews for the past four centuries. It is better to understand that his bones were a witness and a training aid. Just like the feast of the unleavened bread, the sacrifices of the lambs, the consecration of the firstborn, Joseph's bones were to provoke conversation to elicit the meaning for their

existence. If Joseph's bones are in the Egyptian soil, then there is nothing to discuss. If he moved to Egypt, died there and was buried there, then there is nothing more to say. However, Joseph moved to Egypt, died there, but was *not* buried there, then that means something. Joseph specifically requested that he *not* be buried in Egypt. That should elicit some discussion among the Hebrew people over the next few generations. So, even though a Hebrew man may have been born in Egypt, as well as his father and grandfather and even great grandfather, that was still not their permanent home.

We, in our own minds, associate the people of Israel with the land of Israel, so, in retrospect, we see Egypt as a temporary thing. However, if you are raised in a place where your father and grandfathers were raised, that is pretty much considered home to you. Many of us have had ancestors who have lived in the United States for 300–400 years. We do not think of any other country as being our home. Some of my ancestors came from Poland. Even though I like the idea of being a Polack, I have no deep emotional ties to land of Poland, since I have never met anyone in my family who actually comes from there. I have no reason to go and visit that country; I would not have anyone that I could look up there and interact with. Even if I located a “Kukis” there, it would be pretty much impossible to determine what our relationship is.

This is how it is for the Hebrew people in Egypt. This is their home. It was going to take a lot to move an entire nation from one place—where they have been for 400 years—to another place.

The Hebrews remained in Egypt for many centuries and they had become accustomed to slavery. There were 3 things which kept Canaan alive in their thinking: (1) the oral tradition (that is, the book<sup>71</sup> of Genesis remembered and recited regularly<sup>72</sup>); (2) Joseph's unburied bones; and (3) the increased viciousness of their enslavement. These things had a differing amount of influence, but all of them together helped the people of Jacob to leave Egypt. All the people needed was the proper catalyst, and that was Moses, who, through the power of God, would lead them.

Joseph knew that God had given him and his progeny the land of Canaan and that Egypt a only a temporary dwelling place for the Jew. Therefore, as a testimony to all future generations who lived in Egypt, Joseph would not allow his bones to be buried in Egypt but wanted them to remain above ground. He directed that his bones be carried to Canaan and buried there when the Hebrews settled in the land which God gave them (see Gen. 50:24–26).

Exodus 13:19 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, “God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you.” (Gen. 50:25)

### Joseph's Bones:

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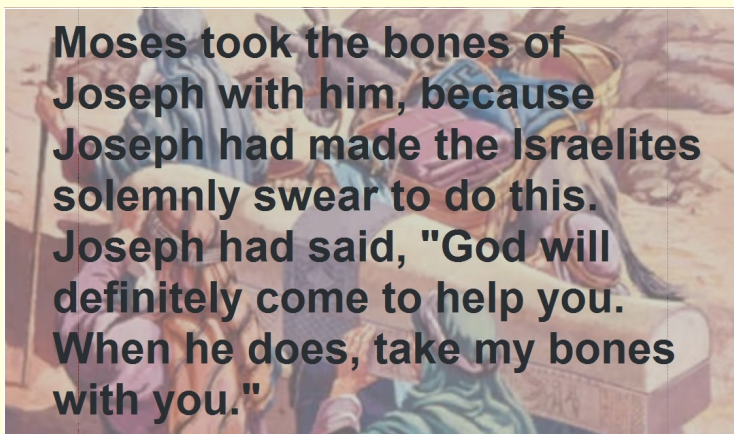
<sup>71</sup> It is not a book in terms of having been written down.

<sup>72</sup> That is my opinion.

Joseph did not want his bones buried in Egypt. You may recall that the body of his father Jacob was buried in the land of Canaan (Genesis 50:1–14); but the same was not done for Joseph. The idea was that, the people of Israel would, at some point, leave Egypt for the Land of Promise; and then they were to take Joseph's bones with them. Joseph wanted his bones to be buried in the land God promised to Israel. For 400 years, every generation of Israelites knew that, when it was time for them to leave Egypt, they were to take Joseph's bones with them.

Near the end of his life, Joseph spoke about the disposition of his body after death.

Gen 50:24–25 And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here." (ESV)



Since the exodus is occurring 400 years or so after Joseph uttered these words, the people to whom he spoke are long since dead. However, Moses is aware of what Joseph said. The people of Israel are aware of what Joseph made his people promise. They had not forgotten Joseph. Therefore, they knew existing Scripture (which would have been the books of Genesis and possibly Job).

This was yet another witness to this people—to these sons of Israel—that they did not belong in Egypt, but that God wanted them to take Canaan and occupy it.

**Exodus 13:19 (God's Word™)** (a graphic); underlying graphic from [ARZA.org](https://www.arza.org); accessed April 14, 2021.

## Lesson 195: Exodus 13:17–22

## God leads Israel out of Egypt

### A brief review of Exodus 13:17–19:

The first few 3 verses are taken from God's Word™.

Exodus 13:17 When Pharaoh let the people go, God didn't lead them on the road through Philistine territory, although that was the shortest route. God said, "If they see that they have to fight a war, they may change their minds and go back to Egypt."

God did not lead Israel directly from Israel into Canaan. They were not ready yet for war.

Exodus 13:18 *So God led the people around the other way, on the road through the desert toward the Red Sea. The Israelites were ready for battle when they left Egypt.*

God led Israel east-southeast.

Exodus 13:19 *Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, because Joseph had made the Israelites solemnly swear to do this. Joseph had said, "God will definitely come to help you. When He does, take my bones with you."* (God's Word™; capitalized)

Moses took the bones of Joseph, which had been lying unburied in Egypt for 300+ years (he died at the age of 110 years, as per Genesis 50:25).

Exodus 13:20a *So they took their journey from Succoth...*

It is not clear from the text whether these are cities or simply areas which have been given a name. It is reasonable to suppose that Moses knows these various routes out of Egypt, something that he had studied when he was a pharaoh-in-waiting. He may have traveled some of these routes when going from Midian back to Egypt.

There was, apparently, a time during which the people packed up, asked of their neighbor, and then left. They were unimpeded during that time.

They moved in a very organized fashion—like military troops. What seems to be the case is, they started at Succoth, got organized, and moved on from there.

Exodus 13:20b *...and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness.*

The desert-wilderness is simply an unpopulated area; or a scarcely populated area. They were moving away from Egypt, which was populated, into the regions adjacent to Egypt, which were not populated.

The next place they went to is Etham, which was on the edge of the desert-wilderness.

Most of Egypt, from what I understand, is desert. With the average rainfall being less than six inches per year<sup>73</sup>, the fertile part of Egypt is around its rivers, primarily the Nile. There was probably a very clear demarcation between the fertile area and the desert. The Hebrews are traveling Southeast, although the promised land is Northeast.

Etham was apparently the last stop prior to entering into the desert. This word might mean *fort* and it was very likely a fortification on the edge of the desert; a first point of protection and defense for the Egyptians. This bordered the desert of Shur (Exodus 15:22) and a portion of that desert was known as the desert of Etham (Num. 33:6–8).

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<sup>73</sup> I believe that there was greater rainfall back during the days of Moses.



Exodus 13:20 So they took their journey from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness.

I believe that, in most cases, the people simply named each stop along the way (those places which did not already have a name). These were not established towns or oases.

Numbers 33 will recall every stop made by the Israelites on their march to Mount Sinai (the sons of Jacob likely do not realize that this is where they are headed). There is no indication that God spoke to Moses and said, “Listen, this is the route that you are going to follow, through here, then here, then here; and eventually you will end up at the foot of Mount Sinai.” Instead, God took the sons of Israel on a day-by-day journey (much like out lives today).

Exodus 13:21a And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way,...

In the day, God appeared to the people of Israel as a pillar of cloud, and when it moved, they followed it.



In the day, God was a cloud-pillar to the people of Israel. He was clearly visible. By His movements as a pillar of cloud, they knew which way to go in the daytime.

**God Goes Before Israel as a Cloud** (a graphic) from [Restoring Wholeness. Org](https://restoringwholeness.org/); accessed April 14, 2021.

**A Pillar of Cloud Leading Them** (an artist's rendition); from [Patterns of Evidence](https://patternsforevidence.com/); accessed April 14, 2021.

Exodus 13:21b ...and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light,...

At night, God appeared to Israel as a pillar of fire. This pillar would also move when it was time for Israel to move on.

At night, God was a pillar of fire. He could both be seen and He



provided light to the sons of Israel. He led them in this way as well.

**God Gives Israel a Pillar of Fire by Night** (a graphic); from [Allen Browne's blog](https://www.allenbrowne.com); accessed April 14, 2021.

Exodus 13:21c ...so as to go by day and night.

As a result, God could lead the sons of Israel day or night; and they could move day or night, depending upon what was needed.

Jesus Christ, in a preincarnate form, led the Hebrews through the desert. Egypt, being as dry as it was, had few if any clouds. To most of those who read this, looking up and seeing a cloud is not that impressive; however, it was every bit as much of a miracle as the pillar of fire at night. This pictures our walk as lead by the Holy Spirit; day and night we are guided—the trick is our interior defenses and trust built up by living in God's Word. From this, we need patience.

This certainly indicates that there was some night travel for the people of Israel.

Exodus 13:21 **And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night.**

God guided them out from Egypt in the way that He wanted them to go.

**A Pillar of Fire and a Pillar of Cloud** (a graphic); from [Bobby Edwards's website](https://www.bobbyedwards.com); accessed April 14, 2021.

Exodus 13:22a **He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day...**

In these weekly lessons which I send out by email, I use the New King James Version. It reads as follows: Exodus 13:22a **He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day...** What





they did here was take the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah (from the previous verse) and suggest that God is the subject of this phrase. However, God is not actually the subject here.

The verb here is the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect of mûwsh (מוּשׁ) [pronounced *moosh*], which means *to depart, to remove*. Generally, if the subject and the verb are already there (which they are), one does not go elsewhere to find the subject. So this more properly reads:

The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people. (Modern Literal Version 2020)

The pillar of cloud did not cease by day, and the pillar of fire by night, before the people. (Green's literal translation)

It is a minor linguistic point, but there is sort of a dual subject here. However, we begin with a singular subject and a singular verb, and then add on, in the second half of this verse, another subject. The Hebrew does this sort of thing often. This is not necessarily a big deal; but I attempt to find an accurate translation first, and then go from there.

Here, the difference is simply one of emphasis. This could have been written, *He caused the cloud and pillar of fire to remain*. However, sometimes a negative is thrown in there for greater emphasis. The more inserted negatives, the stronger the statement. This is a strong statement, but it is not the strongest. God has told us "*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*" (Deut. 31:6 Heb. 13:5). If you want cumbersome, examine the exegesis of Heb. 13:5 (if memory serves, this is the verse with 5 negatives). That is super-strong emphasis.

That is probably much more grammar than you want; but the point I am making is, this verse is strong than had it been written, *God caused the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire to remain*.

Exodus 13:22b ...or the pillar of fire by night from before the people.

The pillar of fire was always available to the sons of Israel in the evening.

Moses is fully aware of the movement which is taking place here. He recognizes that this is not the quickest way to Canaan, but he has also learned to trust God—particularly, over the past few months.

We do not know just exactly what Moses' spiritual life was in Egypt or later in Midian. There are some clues (from Acts 7 and from the fact that Moses' father-in-law is a priest), but nothing is definitive. For that reason, I have speculated about Moses' spiritual state prior to being called by God. There is a principle that God calls prepared men. That is, you may have a particular spiritual gift, and you receive that gift at salvation. However, the actual use of that gift does not kick in fully until you have grown spiritually. Now, to be accurate, the concept of the spiritual gift is particular to the Church Age. However, the

principle is the same—God uses prepared men (and women). For that reason, I believe that Moses experienced considerable spiritual growth in Midian, even though we are not specifically told that.

Exodus 13:22 He [God] did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people.

Jesus Christ is the manifest person of the Godhead and He was that pillar of fire and pillar of cloud. The Hebrews were mostly on foot and there were women and children with them. There were also a lot of them. Therefore, their traveling would be generally slow. They have a particular place to reach in the Reed Sea tributary before Pharaoh and his army attack them.

This guidance by God was always there for the people of Israel. When either of these things moved, Israel needed to pack up and follow them. If the pillar of fire began to move, the people did not say, “You go on ahead, God; and we will catch up to you later.” They broke camp and began to move out immediately. They could not allow for either pillar to leave their sight. This was their guidance.

We may not realize or appreciate it, but there is always guidance for the believer in the Church Age. For more information on this, see the doctrine of the **Will of God** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) or R. B. Thieme, Jr.’s [Divine Guidance](#).

## Lessons 196–197: Exodus 13:1–22

## A Summary of Exodus 13

I have found it helpful to go back and review each chapter in 1–3 lessons. Below, I will use the Urim-Thummim Version (UTV). In vv. 9 & 16 I inserted information to help explain what these two verses are actually saying, as they have been distorted by certain Hebrew groups over the centuries.

There are times when I am going through these passages, and information which we have not covered before comes to mind. I say this because, it is important for you to read these reviews. Not only does it help you to nail down this chapter more in your own mind, but there may be some lessons and applications not covered before.

### Chapter Summary outline for Exodus 13:

Exodus 13:1–2	<a href="#">Consecration of the Firstborn</a>
Exodus 13:3–7	<a href="#">The Feast of Unleavened Bread</a>
Exodus 13:8–10	<a href="#">Continuing the Traditions</a>
Exodus 13:11–15	<a href="#">Consecration of the Firstborn Part II</a>
Exodus 13:16	<a href="#">These Things are for a Sign</a>
Exodus 13:17–22	<a href="#">Moses Continues Leading the People on Their Journey</a>

Most of this chapter is Moses speaking to the people, telling them about the Feast of Unleavened Bread (vv. 3–10). Moses tells the people to connect what they are experiencing—their deliverance by Y<sup>e</sup>howah—and to relate that to the feast. During the feast, they are to tell their children what took place here in Egypt and how God brought them out with a strong hand. This was to be a part of Israel's consciousness throughout its time in the land of promise.

There is a very short section at the beginning (vv. 1–2), where God speaks to Moses about the redemption of the firstborn, which Moses explains to the people in vv. 11–15.

The final third of this chapter is about God leading the people out of Egypt, using physical manifestations to guide them.

### **Consecration of the Firstborn**

Exodus 13:1–2 YHWH spoke to Moses saying, Set apart (consecrate) for Me all the firstborn of the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of animal, for they are Mine. (Urim-Thummim Version will be used throughout this chapter summary; in some instances, I will capitalize pronouns which refer to God<sup>74</sup>)

The firstborn belong to God. All of the firstborn were going to be killed on the night of the Passover, but God passed over the homes where He saw the blood applied to the door frame as God required. He did not kill the firstborn from that household. Therefore, those firstborn, and all subsequent firstborn, in principle, belong to Him. What is being taught here is, God has purchased every person in the world (although, at this point in time, the Israelites would not necessarily recognize that).

### **The Feast of Unleavened Bread**

Exodus 13:3 And Moses said to the people, Remember this day that you came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery, for by strength of hand YHWH brought you out from this place, there will no leavened bread be eaten.

The people to whom Moses is speaking is known as the Exodus generation (as we progress further in Moses' writings, I will break them down into two groups). He is telling them to keep in mind the events of this day; and to remember that their bread was not leavened (as there was not enough time for the leavening process to take place).

The unleavened bread was a look backward to the Exodus, when the sons of Israel did not have enough time to let their bread rise. Therefore, they initially made and ate what we might call flatbread.

Exodus 13:4 You came out this day in the month Abib.

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<sup>74</sup> The Urim-Thummim Version is not always consistent in this regard. Here, they capitalized *Me*, but they do not capitalize *mine* (in this verse) or *he* in v. 5.

Abib is the first month to the Hebrew people; and this event was to be celebrated by all the Hebrew people.

Exodus 13:5 And it will come about when YHWH will bring you to the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and the Jebusites, which He affirmed to your forefathers to bestow on you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you will observe this service in this month.

God is bringing the Hebrew people out of the land of Egypt and, eventually, into the land of Canaan. They are to observe this event in this *new* land—the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Passover—every year. The things which they do serve as reminders of when Israel exited Egypt.

At this time, there were at least 5 major groups of people who occupied the land (this list changes from time to time in the Mosaic writings).

At this point, the people would be taking this on faith. The land of promise is like another world to them, because they have been living in Egypt for 400 years.

Exodus 13:6 Seven days you will eat unleavened bread, and on the 7<sup>th</sup> day it will be a festival to YHWH.

The people are to eat unleavened bread for 7 days, and the 7<sup>th</sup> day would be a special feast day.

Exodus 13:7 Unleavened bread will be eaten 7 days, and anything fermented is not to be seen with you, leaven will not be seen with you in all your regions.

All that is leavened or fermented was not to be seen among the people.

### **Continuing the Traditions**

Exodus 13:8 And you will tell your son in that day saying, this is done because of what YHWH did to me when I came out of Egypt.

When these days are celebrated, the father is supposed to explain to his son what had taken place on the day of the Exodus. The father is to connect the tradition of celebration with the actual historical events that it represents. The father passes this along to the next generation.

Exodus 13:9 This [Feast of Unleavened Bread] will be for a sign to you upon your hand, and for a memorial between your eyes, that YHWH's Law may be in your mouth for with a strong hand has YHWH brought you out of Egypt.

Notice the insertion of the additional text. Moses is *not* saying, “Here is a great idea for some new religious accessories that you might wear.” God is not designing new types of

clothing to be worn on the hand and foreheads of the people. The people are to know all about this event—all the things which took place (the things which we are studying). This knowledge and understanding is to be as perspicuous to them as something on their hand or on their forehead.

We know that these two things are symbols and not actual articles of special clothing because, even though God goes into great detail about the type of clothing to be worn by the priests and by the High Priest, there is no such detail provided for some kind of special accessory ensemble that goes upon the hand and forehead.

Several translations try to fill in the missing subject here:

Exodus 13:9 **This celebration** will be like wearing a sign on your hand or on your forehead, because then you will pass on to others the teaching of the LORD, whose mighty power brought you out of Egypt. (CEV)

Exodus 13:9 **This festival** will be like a mark on your hand or a reminder on your forehead that the teachings of the LORD are always to be a part of your conversation. Because the LORD used his mighty hand to bring you out of Egypt, (God's Word™)

See also the Easy to Read Version and the Unfolding Word Simplified Text.

A number of translations express this as a simile (using the words *like* and *as*) rather than as a metaphor (using the word *to be*), even though this is a metaphor in the Greek text. This is probably due to English readers not fully understanding of how to read and understand English. The most common example of a metaphor which is not being understood is found in these words of Jesus: "**This is My blood and this is My body,**" when He was referring to the grape juice and unleavened bread. As a result, there is a cult-like devotion to the idea that communion grape juice magically (they would prefer the word *mystically*) turns into the literal blood of Christ, and the bread magically/mystically turns into His literal body. No, that does not happen—this is a metaphor. It is very much like a simile, except the words *like* and *as* are not used. How do we know this? No one has ever coughed up the grape juice (or wine, if that is what is drunk) and it has turned into blood.

You may ask the obvious question, if something is expressed in the Bible as a metaphor, how do we know? How do we know that one paragraph is telling us what is real, but the next paragraph tells us something which is metaphorical? How do we really know? Let me suggest this amazing way of differentiating between reality and metaphors: common sense. This is like you distinguish such things in real life, outside of the Bible. Let's say that Charley Brown tells you that his new truck is a monster, do you think that it is supernatural with scary eyes, or that it is just really large? If Lucy Van Pelt describes her own life as a *train wreck*, do you think that she just got hit by a train? If you were able to read and figure out the logical option, then you understood what both people meant by using common sense.

Throughout my commentary on the Bible, you have noticed that, once and awhile, I examine what is happening, but is not fully explained. On occasion, I will present a few options. Then we consider each option logically. Sometimes we can come to a number of solid conclusions simply based upon the meaning of the Scriptures by simply applying some logic and common sense.

Back to the text:

Exodus 13:10 **You will therefore observe this statute seasonally from year to year.** (Now returning to the Urim-Thummim Version)

The Feast of Unleavened Bread was to be observed every year.

### **Consecration of the Firstborn Part II**

Exodus 13:11–12 **And after YHWH brings you into the land of the Canaanites as he affirmed to you and your forefathers and bestows it to you, then you will set apart to YHWH all the firstborn of the womb, and every firstborn that comes from your animals, the males will belong to YHWH.**

God would bring the people into the land of Canaan; but they were to set aside the firstborn of men and animals to God. Because God did not kill the firstborn of Israel, these therefore belonged to Him.

By doing this, something is being taught here. Maybe the reader/doer understands and maybe they do not.

Exodus 13:13 **And every firstborn of a donkey you will ransom with a lamb and if you will not ransom it, then you will break its neck and all the firstborn of Adam among your children will you ransom.**

God describes exactly what the ransom would be for the firstborn.

This all looks forward to the ultimate ransom of Jesus Christ for our souls.

Much of the Mosaic Law, given to us in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, is related to the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Putting the narrative aside, the law is often broken down into 3 sections, one of those sections being called a complete Christology (all of the rituals, holy days, the design of the Tabernacle and its furniture, and the animal sacrifices). This does not mean that the participants in these various rituals understood that this looked forward to Jesus. However, ideally speaking, they were to make the connection when the True Lamb of God came onto the scene (John 1:29). The so-called religious Jew, after the crucifixion, should have been able to make the connection between these animal sacrifices which they have been offering so long to Jesus, Who died for our sins.



Subsequent generations will study the Old Testament, and line it up with Jesus in the New and some of them will recognize the many parallels between ceremonial portion of the Law and the life and work of Christ Jesus.

Let me suggest that, over time, millions of Jews have read these various passages on these rituals (which rituals they no longer practice), and God reveals the gospel of Jesus Christ to them through those rituals. It all fits together; they get it; and they believe in Jesus. Obviously, this is not every Jew—but many have believed in Jesus over the years. There are many Jews, throughout the past 2000 years who make these connections and believe in the True Messiah as a result.

Exodus 13:14 In future times when your son asks you saying, what is this? Then you will say to him, by strength of hand YHWH brought us out from Egypt from the house of slavery.

On many occasions, sons will ask their fathers, “Why exactly are we doing this?” And the father is to have a ready answer for his son. Both the traditions and the meaning of the traditions were to be passed on from generation to generation.

Exodus 13:15 And it came about when Pharaoh would hardly let us go that YHWH killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of animals. That is why I sacrifice to YHWH all the firstborn of the womb that are males, but all the firstborn of My children I ransom.

God killed the firstborn of men and animals on the night of the Passover (apart from those covered by the blood<sup>75</sup>). All of the firstborn belong to God; so a sacrifice must be made to God in order to preserve the lives of all future firstborn.

### **These Things are for a Sign**

Exodus 13:16 This [act of redeeming the firstborn of man and animals] will be for a sign upon your hand, and for bindings between your eyes, for by strength of hand YHWH brought us out of Egypt.

Note the inserted words at the beginning of v. 16 (again, specific translations of this verse also make clear what *this* refers to).

The hand is used for what a person does; the eyes are a means of perception (the people to whom Moses is speaking will observe with their own eyes all that is taking place). By what they do and by what they have seen, this generation is to celebrate the great feasts of the Hebrew people, and, more importantly, they are to know exactly what these feasts mean.

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<sup>75</sup> When I used this phrase *covered by the blood*, did you think that I meant that the survivors literally had blood covering them? Or did you understand this to mean, there was blood on the door sill for the house where they lived? Common sense.

## Moses Continues Leading the People on Their Journey

Exodus 13:17 Then when Pharaoh sent the people away, Elohim did not lead them by the route to the land of the Philistines even though that was shorter, for Elohim said, Unless the people regret leaving when they see war and then turn back towards Egypt.

The route between Egypt and Canaan is not that far. Moses did not get lost leading his people through the desert-wilderness. Moses, by his training to become king of Egypt, had an excellent knowledge of geography. He knew exactly where he and the people were at any given time. There is no confusion on the part of Moses (as we will see, God is doing the actual leading). As we study this, do not think that the Jews are *wandering* because Moses has lost his way or is confused about where he is. Their wandering is going to mirror their souls, which souls are wandering from God.

God could have led the people directly to Canaan, but they would have retreated when coming face to face with the Philistines. The Philistines and the Jebusites were probably the most fearsome warriors in the land of Canaan. It will take Israel a very long time to expel them from their borders. Judges 1 tells us why these various peoples remained in the land of Canaan, given to Israel from God.

Exodus 13:18 But Elohim led the people by the desert route of the Red Sea, and the children of Israel went up arrayed for battle out of the land of Egypt.

The translation used here has *arrayed for battle* as a description of the people of Israel. This simply describes how they look when moving out of Egypt. They looked like organized regiments going out to battle.

God took the people along a south-easterly route (if the people were going to Canaan, they would be traveling northeast).



**Route of the Exodus** (a map), from [Bible News1](http://www.BibleNews1.com); accessed November 24, 2021. Some of these maps will have a single route; other maps will show multiple possible routes. The green route above is what we are currently studying.

The Israelites are moving as an organized army would. They are not a mob running for their lives.

Exodus 13:19 Moses also took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made the children of Israel pledge saying, Elohim will certainly visit you and you will carry up my bones out of this place with you.



The Hebrew people were very big on having visuals (more accurately, God often communicated to the Hebrew people by visuals). Joseph, of the patriarchs, spent more time in Egypt (a greater percentage of his life) than did any of his brothers (Joseph and all of his brothers lived out the end of their lives in Egypt). Joseph's father, Jacob, although he died in Egypt, was buried in Canaan. There was a great procession from Egypt to Canaan to bury his body there (this was attended by his own family and by many Egyptians).



Joseph, on the other hand, had become the prime minister of Egypt. It may have been somewhat of a slap in the face for him to require burial in Canaan as his father had. However, he did request that he not be buried and that his body would be taken up when the people left Egypt for Canaan. Moses is fulfilling this request (this verse is another indication that Moses and the Hebrew people knew the book of Genesis).

**A Casket of Bones Representing Joseph's Bones** (a photograph); from [Clergy Stuff](#); accessed December 1, 2021. I have seen a number of artistic representations of the bones of Joseph; however, this may be closer to what was carried along with Israel when they left Egypt.

Exodus 13:20 [Then they took their journey from Succoth and encamped in Etham, by the edge of the desert.](#)

Some of the places where the Hebrew people camped were not actual cities or villages. The place either had a name already given it; or the Hebrew people gave it some sort of name.

There are at least two places named Succoth in the Bible. One is in Canaan (Gen. 33:17) and this one is in Egypt, not far from Rameses (Exodus 12:37 13:20, Num. 33:5–6).

Ethan is only mentioned here and in Numbers 33:6. It is not an Egyptian name.

Moses, the writer of these words, would have known where they were (and therefore, he would have known if a stopping place had a name). If they stopped in a region which lacked a specific name, then Moses (or the people) may have given it a name.

Exodus 13:21 YHWH went before them by day in a Pillar of Cloud-mass to lead them on the journey, and by night in a Pillar of Supernatural Fire, to give them light to go by day and night.

God led the people out of Egypt and put them on a route. The route would be mapped out by supernatural means. When the people traveled in the day, there would be a cloud mass guiding them. At night, there would be a pillar of fire. Both of these pillars would have been very unusual.



Exodus 13:22 He did not take away the Pillar of Cloud-mass by day, nor the Pillar of Supernatural Fire by night from in front of the people. (Urim-Thummim Version used throughout this chapter summary)

Despite the many failures of this people, God continued to provide them with this supernatural guidance (we have not yet begun to examine their many failures).

Many believers today, when they read the Bible, begin to look around and try to find supernatural stuff in our lives, because they believe in Jesus. Although God



is fully capable of providing us with a miracle every hour on the hour, He does not do that. We have the complete Word of God. This is far, far more powerful than any set of miracles.

**The Pillar of Cloud and of Fire** (two graphics); both from [www.johnsanidopoulos.com](http://www.johnsanidopoulos.com) ; accessed December 1, 2021.

This exodus generation (actually two generations of Israelites) saw a great many signs and wonders in their lives. The reason for this was, God was changing programs. Previous to this, there was no nation Israel. There was just a small extended family of men descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. However, now they number as many as 2 million. God will now establish the great nation of Israel (over the next 40 years), which nation will represent God for the next 1500 years. When such a big change of program takes place, God brings in signs and miracles to confirm that this is of Him.

#### **Lesson 198: Exodus 141–2b:**

#### **Introduction to Exodus 14**

Before we move into the next chapter, let's take a look at a chart of parallels between Moses and Jesus:

Moses is a type of Christ. The word *type* means that Moses, in many ways, foreshadows the Lord.

<b>Typology of Moses and Jesus (from Agape Bible Study)</b>	
<b>MOSES</b>	<b>JESUS</b>
The Hebrew people were ruled by a gentile king who was antagonistic towards them and particularly towards Moses.	The Jews were ruled over by a gentile king who was antagonistic towards their Savior who was being born.
An evil king/Pharaoh tried to kill Moses as a baby: <a href="#">Exodus 1:22</a>	King Herod tried to kill baby Jesus: <a href="#">Matthew 2:16</a>
Moses was hidden from the evil king/Pharaoh: <a href="#">Exodus 2:2</a>	An angel said to hide the child from the evil King Herod: <a href="#">Matthew 2:13</a>
Moses' life was preserved in Egypt: <a href="#">Exodus 2:3-4</a>	Jesus was taken into Egypt to preserve His life: <a href="#">Matthew 2:13-15</a>
He was saved by women: his mother: <a href="#">Exodus 2:3</a> ; Miriam <a href="#">Exodus 2:4</a> ; Pharaoh's daughter <a href="#">Exodus 2:5-10</a>	Jesus was saved and helped by His mother, Mary: <a href="#">Matthew 2:14</a>

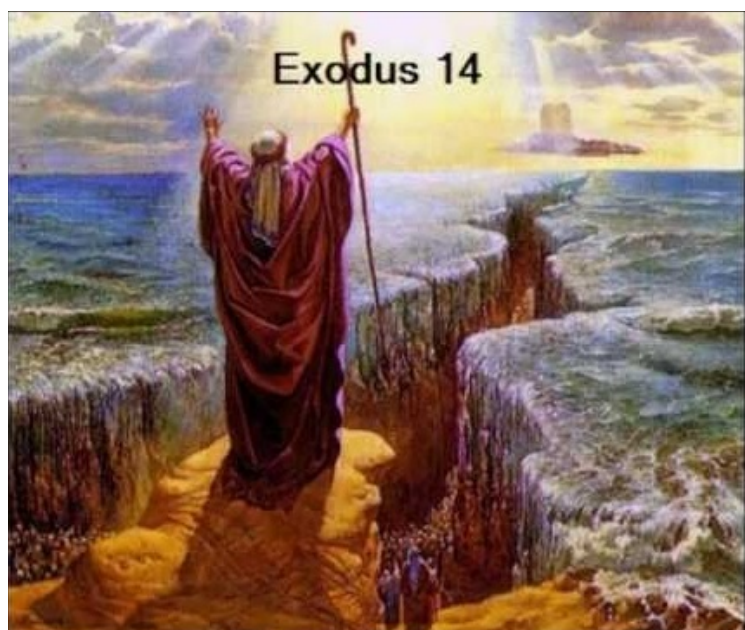


Typology of Moses and Jesus (from Agape Bible Study)	
MOSES	JESUS
Moses is raised, apparently, without his father (although his own mother nurses him); the Pharaoh's daughter appears to be unmarried.	Jesus is born apart from the seed of the man. He is virgin-born.
Theologically speaking, it is key for Messiah to be the seed of the woman (that is, born/raised apart from a father). This prophecy goes all the way back to Genesis 3. This is far more than simply a miracle. The sin nature is passed down by the human father, and Jesus did not have a human father.	
Pharaoh's daughter adopted Moses: <a href="#">Exodus 2:10</a>	Joseph adopted Jesus: <a href="#">Matthew 1:25</a>
Moses became a prince of Egypt: <a href="#">Exodus 2:10</a>	Jesus is the Prince of Peace: <a href="#">Isaiah 9:5</a> ; <a href="#">Matthew 28:18</a> ; <a href="#">Luke 2:14</a>
Long period of silence from childhood to adulthood	Long period of silence from childhood to adulthood
Moses had a secret identity—he was a Jew being raised as a prince.	Messianic secret = Jesus the Son of God
To clarify this point, some people certainly knew about Moses being a Hebrew; and some knew that Jesus was the Messiah (however, He often gave cryptic answers when asked directly).	
He tried to save a Hebrew kinsman: <a href="#">Exodus 2:11-12</a>	Jesus came to save His Hebrew kinsmen first: <a href="#">Mark 7:26-28</a>
Went from being a prince to a pauper: <a href="#">Exodus 2:15-19</a>	Went from being God to being man: <a href="#">John 1:1-3, 14</a> ; <a href="#">Mark 6:3</a>
Saved women at a well: <a href="#">Exodus 2:15-19</a>	Saved a woman at a well: <a href="#">John 4</a>
Became a shepherd: <a href="#">Exodus 3:1</a>	He is the Good Shepherd: <a href="#">John 10:11</a>
Moses' mission was to redeem Israel from slavery to Egypt	Jesus' mission is to redeem mankind from slavery to sin
Moses was loved and supported in his ministry by his sister Miriam [in Hebrew, Miryam]	Jesus was loved and supported in his ministry by His mother Mary [in Hebrew, Miryam]
Moses was often rejected by his own people	Jesus was often rejected by His own people

Typology of Moses and Jesus (from Agape Bible Study)	
MOSES	JESUS
Moses will give God's law on the mountain of Sinai: <a href="#">Exodus 20:1-31:18</a> ; <a href="#">34:1-35</a>	Jesus will give the Law as it should be understood from the Mount of Beatitudes: <a href="#">Matthew 5</a>
Moses spent 40 days fasting on the mountain: <a href="#">Exodus 24:18</a> ; <a href="#">34:28</a>	Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the desert wilderness: <a href="#">Matthew 4:2</a>
Moses performs signs/ miracles	Jesus performs signs/miracles
I could add that neither Moses nor Jesus used any inherent power in order to perform these miracles; they were accomplished by a power outside of Moses and outside of Jesus (Doctrine of Kenosis).	
Moses offered his life for the salvation of his people after the sin of the Golden Calf: <a href="#">Exodus 32:32-33</a>	Jesus offered His life for the salvation of the world: <a href="#">Isaiah 53:12</a> ; <a href="#">Romans 5:12</a> ; <a href="#">6:10</a> ; <a href="#">2 Corinthians 5:15-21</a> ; <a href="#">Colossians 1:19-20</a> ; <a href="#">2:14-15</a> ; <a href="#">1 John 1:7</a> ; <a href="#">2:2</a> ; etc.
Moses is the prophet of the Old Covenant between God and man. He acted as a ruler (king) over his people; and his brother was the first High Priest in Israel.	Jesus is the prophet, priest, and King of a New and everlasting Covenant with Israel
From <a href="http://www.agapebiblestudy.com/">www.agapebiblestudy.com/</a> accessed June 28, 2017 (edited). Michal Hunt, Copyright © 2003, revised 2005 Agape Bible Study. <a href="#">Permissions</a> All Rights Reserved.	
When this is integrated back into the Exodus 14 chapter study, this chart will be placed into the addendum.	

## The Red Sea Crossing

Exodus 14 is the portion of the Cecil B. DeMille film that we all recall (those of us who have seen *The Ten Commandments*). Pharaoh will *harden* his heart and pursue the Israelites and the Israelites will walk through the midst of the sea on dry land. The sea will be pushed back on both sides, held in place there by God. The sons of Israel all cross over the river bed, getting easily to the other side. However, as Pharaoh and his army pursue them, across



this land, the water is brought back down over them and it drowns them.

**Exodus 14 — Moses Parting the Red Sea** (a graphic); from All Audio Bible on [YouTube](#); accessed January 5, 2022.

Throughout history, men have tried to naturalize and *soften* portions of the Bible to make them more palatable to the unbeliever. Unbelievers might believe in mental telepathy, people from other planets (either living here or visiting on occasion), astrology, methods of attaining good luck (or avoiding bad luck); they that they can be instrumental in *saving* the planet by driving the correct car, or many even think that the *universe* speaking to them or guiding them in some way; but damned if they are going to believe that the God of the Universe can do miraculous things. If you remove the miraculous from the Bible, you remove God from the Bible. This does not mean that we personally should see miracles every day in order to believe in God (or even every few years). Miracles are actually very rare events occurring only during specific periods of time in the Bible.

The Bible could be titled, *The History of God and Man*. Because of this, God will make contact with man in a variety of ways; and God will perform a variety of miracles, as appropriate to the era and the occasion.

Generally speaking, when a dispensation is changed or when one period of a dispensation is being changed, then God will often insert a number of miracles into human history (usually to establish a new set of authorities). In fact, some of these miracles might be seen as being quite spectacular. This is done in order to draw attention to the change in His divine program. Most often, these miracles are entrusted to one or to many men, who will use these miracles as their letters of reference from God to verify that they are actually from God. Once they have established themselves as men from God and once the new era has been established, their ability to perform such miracles is often removed because that sort of thing is no longer necessary.

The ability to seemingly perform a miracle is sometimes likened to having a credit card, which you can pull out and use at any time. This ability might be seen as having signed papers from God, testifying to your authority in a specific realm. The whole idea is the miraculous ties the message of the miracle worker to the message of God. Once that authority is clearly established, such sign gifts can disappear (such as Paul's ability to heal, 1Tim. 5:23 2Tim. 4:20).

Now, had these miracles not occurred at the beginning of the Church Age, for example, then there would have been numerous writings from that time period contradicting the teachings of the Christians. Such writings would have been popularly received as Christians were most often in the minority and anything to discredit Christianity would have welcomed by many. Both the Roman government and the religious hierarchy of Judaism colluded to work against Jesus and then against His disciples. However, the writings which sprung up during the time of miracles of the first century AD do not dispute the miracles but dispute the teachings themselves.

In the Lord's public ministry, we have very little disputation when it comes to what He did. Instead His authority and character were continually questioned by His enemies. It was impossible to deny what He did right before their faces.

Exodus 14 will be the culminating event of the struggle between Egypt and Israel. This will be one of the most amazing events in all of human history, and it is the reason why Egypt will never again come after the Israelite people (at least not for the next few generations), despite them living only a relatively short distance away. The people of Israel will be able to establish themselves as a new nation—one of the nearest nations to Egypt—and Egypt will not make any attempt to control or harm this nascent nation. This is because God had destroyed the nation of Egypt for many generations; and in this chapter, God will destroy Egypt's entire army.

There is one more thing which sets Exodus 14 apart from the previous 3 or 4 chapters. Exodus 14 focuses upon one topic; it focuses upon one thing (Israel crossing over the Sea of Reeds and then this same water is used as a fatal weapon against the Egyptian army).

In previous chapters, there would be some narrative, then some description of this or that ceremony, followed by a sparse narrative followed by the details of a celebrated feast.

Let me be quick to point out that, the chapter divisions did not exist in the original manuscripts. They were added. However, Exodus 14 is one of the longest sections of cohesive narrative that we have had in awhile.

**Exodus 14 Trust God** (a graphic); from [Living Water](#); accessed January 5, 2022.



By this graphic, I certainly do not mean that you wait for and expect a miracle from God's hand whenever you are in a jam. This is a chapter about an amazing miracle. However, this event is not indicative of how God works in this dispensation.

## Lesson 199: Exodus 14:1–2

## Pharaoh keeps tabs on the Hebrew people

The "X" organizational structure below is called a chiasm. A chiasm is where the first thing in a narrative matches with the last thing; and the second thing matches to the second to the last thing, etc.

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## Exodus 14:1–14 as a Chiasmus (Dr. Peter Pett)

The Pursuit By The Egyptians Will Result in Deliverance By Yahweh (Exodus 14:1–14).

There is a further example of a chiasmus within a chiasmus in this passage which again brings out how Yahweh fulfils His promises:

- a Pharaoh will say the people of Israel are entangled in the land and the wilderness has shut them in (Exodus 14:3).
- b Yahweh will get Himself honour on Pharaoh and all his hosts and the Egyptians will know that He is Yahweh (Exodus 14:4).
- c The Egyptians say, 'Why have we let Israel go from slaving for us?' (Exodus 14:5).
- d Pharaoh makes ready his chariot forces and takes them forward (Exodus 14:6–7).
- e Pharaoh pursues the children of Israel (Exodus 14:8).
- e The Egyptians pursue the children of Israel and get them in their sights (Exodus 14:9).
- d The children of Israel lift up their eyes and see the forces of Pharaoh (Exodus 14:10).
- c Israel cry out with a desire to slave for the Egyptians (Exodus 14:11–12).
- b The salvation of Yahweh will be revealed. The Egyptians will be seen no more (Exodus 14:13).
- a Yahweh will fight for the people of Israel and they will hold their peace (Exodus 14:14).

Note how in 'a' Pharaoh will say they are entangled in the land and the wilderness has shut them in, a devastating situation, in the parallel Yahweh fights for them and they will confidently hold their peace. In 'b' Yahweh will get Himself honour on Pharaoh and all his hosts and the Egyptians will know that He is Yahweh, while in the parallel the salvation of Yahweh will be revealed, and the Egyptians will be seen no more (truly they now 'know that He is Yahweh'). In 'c' the Egyptians say, 'Why have we let Israel go from slaving for us?', while in the parallel it is the Israelites who in craven fear cry out with a desire to slave for the Egyptians. In 'd' Pharaoh makes ready his chariot forces and takes them forward, while in the parallel the children of Israel lift up their eyes and see their forces. In 'e' Pharaoh pursues the children of Israel, while in the parallel the Egyptians pursue the children of Israel and get them in their sights.

From Dr. Peter Pett; *Commentary Series on the Bible*; from e-sword, Exodus 14:1–14. His work can also be found online. There was some editing done for clarification.

**Exodus 14 “Stand Still...”** (a graphic); from [Seeking the Kingdom](#); accessed January 5, 2022.

Based upon what we read in this chapter and the circumstances of this chapter, we have to be careful when it comes to applying this information to our own lives.



God speaks directly to Moses and gives him the game plan in the first four verses.

God will guide Moses and the people of Israel along. He is also going to inform Moses about what is happening right now with Pharaoh.

Exodus 14:1a    Now the Lord spoke to Moses,...

Throughout most of the Pentateuch, we do not know how God chooses to manifest Himself to Moses or how and when this communication takes place.

Obviously, God speaks to Moses on God's timing; but there is at least some indication that Moses could initiate a meeting with God.



There appears to have been a tent—not *the* Tabernacle (which will not be built until Exodus 40)—used for religious purposes. This tent is probably where Moses would go to communicate with God. I would postulate that this tent had been originally set up in Goshen (where the Hebrew people lived in Egypt) and that it continued to move with nation Israel (we have no explanation as to its origin). In a future chapter in Exodus, the existence of such a tent will become more apparent, as it will be moved *outside the camp* (and this is not Moses' own tent, as the people will watch Moses walk to to this tent).

Many commentators get this tent mixed up with the Tabernacle, which will cause several commentators to give really convoluted explanations for the timing of the building of the Tabernacle. However, the explanation is simple: (1) right now, in the narrative, there is some sort of tent which Moses goes to in order to talk with God; (2) there is the actual Tabernacle built in the final chapter of Exodus. These are two different tents (*Tabernacle* means *tent*). Many centuries later, David will also have an unofficial Y<sup>e</sup>howah tent set up in Jerusalem.

This is not a doctrine which has been carefully presented in the Old Testament. But this helps to explain a few odd passages here and there. Along the same lines, during the time of David, the Ark of the Covenant is in Jerusalem; and there is a second High Priest in Jerusalem. This would make perfect sense if there is a tent there for Y<sup>e</sup>howah worship. If such a tent does not exist, where does the High Priest go? Where is the Ark placed? Don't misunderstand my point—I am not saying that this is the same tent. I am simply saying that there have been times in Israel's history when there are more than just one tent dedicated to the service of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.



Moses needs some sort of place where he can communicate with God. Most of the time, where and how this communication takes place is simply not explained. However, these communications appear to be less random, if we understand Moses goes to a tent where he meets with Y<sup>e</sup>howah (a tent which precedes the actual Tabernacle<sup>76</sup>).

Exodus 14:1b–2a ...saying: “Speak to the children of Israel,...

This meeting appears to have been initiated by God, and God is going to tell Moses to direct the movements of Israel.

What would seem logical to me is, Moses would daily go into this tent, and pray and consider what has happened in his life to this point. Now and again, while Moses is in the tent, God would speak to him—most likely audibly. I am simply approaching this logically, as there is not any extensive text on this. I could, at best, back this up with some passages in Exodus which tells us about this tent (however, the passages where this tent is spoken of are rare).

Exodus 14:2b ...that they turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth,...

There are 3 *places* named in v. 2 (actually 4), and we do not know exactly where any of them are. Pi Hahiroth means *mouth of the gorges (openings)* and is only found in 3 places in the Bible: Exodus 14:2, 9 Num. 33:7, all of which refer to this particular incident. This place would be on the western shore of the Sea of Reeds (or wherever Moses and company happen to be at this moment).

The origin of this word appears to be both Egyptian and Semitic (which is what we might expect, given that Israel lived in Egypt for 400 years). Fausset suggests that this might be understood to mean *house of wells* and possibly one of the last fresh water watering places that Israel will enjoy.

Pharaoh will later say in this chapter, “They are hemmed in by the desert-wilderness;” which suggests that, they have sources of water here, but where else can they go to find water in this desert region? Therefore, Pharaoh senses that they are trapped (they may be trapped by mountains as well). Pharaoh also knows the geography of this region—that is a part of his job description—and he knows that Israel is in a very precarious position here.

Exodus 14:2c ...between Migdol and the sea,...

Migdol means *tower*, which suggests either mountains or fortifications. This place is only named here and in Num. 33:7 (Num. 33 is a summary of the movements of the Israelites). There is another Migdol associated with Egypt mentioned elsewhere in Scripture (Jer. 44:1 46:14), but it is apparently a different place.

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<sup>76</sup> At this point in the narrative, Moses and the people of Israel have no idea about the Tabernacle.

This could be a place where Pharaoh could gather his army, unseen by the people of Israel, until his actual attack. That is, Pharaoh's troops could be on the other side of a mountain unseen by the people of Israel.

At one time, this region could be identified:

*ISBE: In about 385 AD, Silvia, traveling from Clysma (Suez), was shown the sites above mentioned on her way to Heroopolis, but none of these names now survive.<sup>77</sup>*

Geological formations change over centuries—albeit slowly and slightly—so finding this exact place today is highly unlikely (many have tried). Interestingly enough, there are dozens of people who believe that they have figured out where exactly this was and they have put their findings on the internet—lucky for us!

There are several important points to be made regarding this location. Where the water was during this period of time was probably remarkably different than where it is today. The very miracle discussed in this chapter likely changed the location of this river (gulf, or sea). I believe that Israel and Egypt were far more fertile in the time of Moses than they are today. I believe there was more rainfall and that the water table was much higher then than it is now. Even today, we are aware of deserts increasing and forested areas decreasing.

The only thing that probably has not changed is the location of the mountain ranges.



One more factor is this: for this water mass to be called the *sea of reeds*, it would have to be fresh water or brackish water. It could not be salt water. We would not find a lot of reeds in a salt water mass.

However, that does not mean that we can only look at places which are today fresh water. 3600 years ago, the locations of fresh, brackish and salt water no doubt changed a great deal. The more rainfall on this land, the further south fresh water would exist.

<sup>77</sup> *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Migdol.

**The Red Sea Crossing** (a map); from [Herald of Hope](#); accessed January 11, 2022.

I have seen suggestions of a northern crossing. However, we have already been told that the Hebrew people did not go the way of Canaan (going north would be heading towards Canaan).

Looking at that map, the mountains were certainly there even back then. Walking in between the water and the mountains right there would certainly caused Pharaoh's ears to perk up. "They went there?" Because water is harder to place, 3600 years later, the problem would be—is there enough room for all Israel to go into that area? Had Pharaoh known that the Israelites were in that area, that would have been enough to get him hopped up for revenge. Given the circumstances, that would have been a no-fail destruction of the Israelites, from human viewpoint.

Exodus 14:2d ...[opposite Baal Zephon](#);...

Baal Zephon means *lord of the north wind*; and this place is only named here, v. 9 and Num. 33:7. It is opposite Migdol and possibly north of Migdol.

Exodus 14:2e ...[you shall camp before it by the sea](#).

This is likely another body of water in this general region rather than the Red Sea. Again, to have the plants described by the name, the water would have been fresh water or brackish water.

God wanted Israel to camp there. He knew this would be reported back to Pharaoh (who apparently has eyes on Israel at this time). Israel will appear to have placed themselves in a very vulnerable position, open to an attack from the north (my assumption being that this map is a reasonable representation of the landscape 3500 years ago). Pharaoh and/or his spies knew the region, knew exactly where Israel was, and that they were camped with a large body of water around them. In that era, that body of water might have been impassible.

## **Lesson 200: Exodus 14:1–4b**

## **Pharaoh's Army Being Lured into a Trap**

We have begun the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of Exodus. The first two verses read:

Exodus 14:1–2 [Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: "Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon; you shall camp before it by the sea.](#)

God was very specific in the way that he was guiding the people of Israel. The places named here were likely already established and named by the Egyptians. The Egyptians would have had various posts established near their borders. They would have had a way

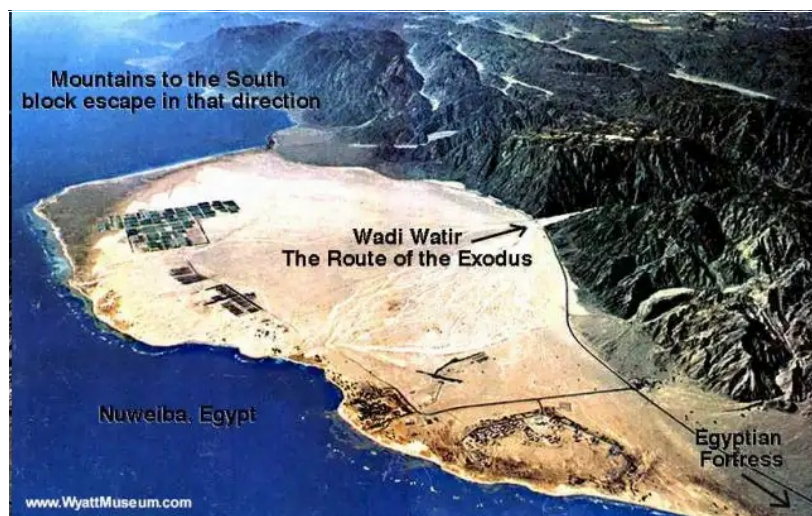
of communicating over distance so that, in very short order, the Pharaoh would know what was taking place on their border.

Moses, due to his training, knows exactly where he is; and God knows where everyone is. Furthermore, it appears that Pharaoh has men watching Moses and they know the significance of Moses and the people of Israel being right where they are.

Israel is not just moving straight ahead, at this point, but they appear to be backtracking, and Pharaoh notices (he certainly has eyes on them this entire time). By Israel's movement, Pharaoh will sense confusion, indecision—perhaps aimlessness—all of which goes against the notion of an All -Powerful God leading them.

Israel has water nearby. This massive movement of 2 million people with livestock requires water—but where can they go from here? If they are between the mountains and the water, as the map below suggests, then Israel is trapped.

**“The Desert-wilderness has shut them in”** (a graphic); from [God's Hot Spot](#); accessed January 5, 2022. What we have here is one interpretation (not drawn to a true north bearing), where Pharaoh, a man well-acquainted with the geography, realizes that the sons of Israel have essentially trapped themselves. If his army acts quickly, they have nowhere to go.



So that there is no misunderstanding, this map is an interpretation of what is taking place. It is very reasonable and it could be reasonably accurate. However, the map is very much based upon theory and logic.

What Pharaoh does not appreciate is, God is luring him and his army into a trap. Pharaoh has no clue about this.

**Application:** What Pharaoh should have done is simply pull back his spies and let Israel go wherever. Pharaoh really needed to let Israel go in his own mind. Throughout life, we will have incidents, slights, bad interactions with others, and we simply need to let such things go. We need to leave them in the past and move forward in our own lives. How many times has someone committed an injustice against you? Many times. You just have to let it go. You do not need to rehearse a story to tell all of your friends; you do not need



to plot revenge, you do not need to plan on what you will say to that person next time you meet. You let it go; if you think about it, you rebound that, and then move forward in your own life. If you are a normal person, then you have enough in your life to keep you from dwelling in the past.

As we have studied in the previous chapter, God is guiding Israel—with a pillar of cloud in the day and a pillar of fire at night. So, no matter what it looks like to Pharaoh's spies, God knows exactly what He is doing.

**Application:** I believe in the Church Age, our guidance is just as specific. Now, God is not going to tap you on the shoulder and tell you to make a left turn up ahead; God is not going to travel with you and audibly tell you what to do and which way to go; but with Bible doctrine in your soul, you are able to enjoy guidance from God with the near specificity that we read right here. This guidance is the result of the interaction of Bible doctrine in your soul as mixed together with your day-to-day life. However, *duv* guidance is never the result of emotional and/or magical inklings.

Exodus 14:3a *For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, 'They are bewildered by the land;...'*

Remember, right now, God is speaking to Moses (these are God's actual words to Moses that we are reading). God is telling Moses what is happening in Egypt. At this point, God has chosen to keep Moses informed of the actions and thinking of Pharaoh (it is only fair, as Pharaoh is doing that with Moses).

This suggests that the direction that the people of Israel go in seems confusing to Pharaoh; as if Israel is lost and/or confused. So, obviously Pharaoh is monitoring their progress, and considering his options. His primary thought should be, *now how do I restore my own country*. But that is not where his thinking is.

Essentially, the sons of Israel have gone to a place where they will be closed in on all sides, and there will be the sea behind them. They have nowhere to go, and Pharaoh is taking note of this, suggesting to him that Israel is very confused at this point.

The KJV and many others use the word *entangled*. The word here is the Niphal passive participle of *bûwk*<sup>e</sup> (בִּיב) [pronounced *book*], and it means, *perplexed, confused, bewildered*. Other translations render it like this: Owens, Webster, WEB: *entangled*. MKJV: *tangled*; AOB, CEV: *wandering*. Strong's #943 BDB #100. However, this is a word which, in Pharaoh's mind, describes Israel's thinking.

Because God is guiding Israel, they cannot be confused or entangled or mixed up in any way. But, their movement as described by Pharaoh's spies makes them appear confused. However, this is God simply baiting the trap.

**Application:** It is so often a bad idea to make a judgment call based upon things that you cannot actually see (Pharaoh cannot see the thoughts of the people of Israel).

Given what happens in this chapter, Israel will appear to be hemmed in by natural barriers (chiefly by a river or sea and perhaps those mountains). On their own, they would have no idea how to proceed further.

Exodus 14:3b ...the wilderness has closed them in.'

Pharaoh was trained all of his life for his job. He knows geography. He knows where Canaan is, and the Israelites are not going in that direction. Also, they just (inexplicably, by Pharaoh's estimation) doubled back (or made a strange turn). Pharaoh is starting to look at all that happened in a new light—maybe the sons of Israel are not being led by a competent God.

So Pharaoh plots revenge.

God continues speaking to Moses, telling him what Pharaoh is doing and saying.

Exodus 14:3 For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, 'They are bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.'

There are two, slightly different ways of understanding this. The first is, the Hebrew people are confused, and are simply staying near water. If they go off in any direction, then they could find themselves right in the middle of a wilderness with nothing to drink. In this way, the desert has closed in around them or it has boxed them in. If this is the proper way to understand this, then they are perplexed, entangled and/or wandering, trying to figure out where they can go to get away from Egypt. This is how Pharaoh reads this situation.

A second slightly different view is, the Hebrew people are simply following the guidance of their God. So Pharaoh's view of what is happening, and what is actually happening, are two very different things. Pharaoh's is being faked into thinking that the people are confused, wandering and vulnerable; or that their God may not be as powerful as previously thought.

Even though many caravans can find their way in and out of Egypt; even though the original Jewish settlers found their way easily through the desert to Egypt, Pharaoh will believe that the Hebrews have become confused and disoriented by the desert, as they move further from Egypt. Some people do have no sense of direction and this appears to be what Pharaoh has assumed about the Hebrews and their leader Moses. He has apparently discounted God from this movement (Pharaoh does not mention their God in his observations). When spiritual information is given to the unbeliever, the unbeliever only has a short amount of time during which to act until the Word of God is lost to him. We do not have a memory of everything which we have heard and seen in our lives. Things are eventually lost to our memory; and this includes divine information.

This is what happened with Pharaoh. He reached a point where he is miserable and defeated and he understands for a few brief hours that the God of the Hebrews is the true



God of the Universe; but, once the pressure is removed—Israel leaves and the judgments stop—he returns to his heathen state.

In fact, when Pharaoh returns to his natural heathen condition, his latter state is worse than the first. This is because he has accumulated more negative volition towards God (called **scar tissue** by R.B. Thieme, Jr.). He is a dog who has returned to his vomit. He has returned to his hatred of the Hebrew people and of their God. As a result, Pharaoh has a great desire for revenge.

Let me explain that final reference more clearly. Throughout the ten judgments, Pharaoh has been motivated by his implacability and hatred for Israel and Israel's God. This is not where Pharaoh's thinking ought to be, and the end result of this thinking was the near destruction of Egypt. But now, Israel is completely gone from Egypt, and God is no longer bringing judgment down upon Egypt. Nevertheless, Pharaoh returns to his hatred and implacability, just as a dog returns to his own vomit (see Proverbs 26:11 2Peter 2:22).

Exodus 14:4a [Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart,...](#)

God is speaking; God will *strengthen* Pharaoh's resolve.

If you replace the word *harden* with the actual Hebrew word, you may have fewer problems with this portion of v. 4. It is the Piel perfect of *châzaq* (חָזַק) [pronounced *khaw-ZAHK*], a very common word which means *to strengthen*. Its Piel meanings are given as: *to bind someone with a girdle; to make strong, to strengthen; to fortify [a city]; to heal; to harden, to make obstinate*. Given all that has happened, the Pharaoh may have become a despondent, beaten down man, with few inner resources. Many of us know atheists and those who are against God. There are those, to nearly their dying breath, will curse God. For some—let's say that they have been beaten down with cancer and chemotherapy—come to a point where they can no longer curse God. They are still negative, but they are no longer expressing this negative volition with great zeal and enthusiasm.

Let me suggest, this is where Pharaoh was in his thinking. He was a beaten man and his firstborn son had just died. God gives him the strength to express his negative volition, because he no longer has this inner strength. He is still filled with negative volition. Now he has the inner strength to express it.

As we have discussed earlier, giving Pharaoh strength of the resolve does not mean that God reaches into his soul and changes his volition. Pharaoh got knocked for a loop when he lost his firstborn son. He had refused to let the Hebrew people go until this happened. Let me suggest that his feelings and thinking about the Hebrew people did not change at all; but, what changed was, he did not have the inner strength to exercise his volition. He was just beaten down, but his thinking about God and the Hebrews had not changed. God gives him the strength to exercise his volition; God is not changing Pharaoh's free will.

Exodus 14:4b [...so that he will pursue them;...](#)

The result of Pharaoh's heart being strengthened is, he has chosen in his soul to pursue the Hebrew people, with the intention of destroying them. All that has happened previously is set aside in his mind, in favor of revenge against Israel. His emotions and his negative volition towards God outweigh the experiences which he has just had interacting with the God of Israel.

God explains to Moses what is about to happen because, in some situations, if we know what is coming, we are prepared for it. God is saying, "When I give Pharaoh strength, then he will pursue after the people of Israel.

We have no idea how Pharaoh had acted. Did he come out into his palace and just sit? Did he not come out into public at all. But, God will give him strength and he will use his strength in order to gather an army with which to chase after Israel.

Pharaoh's thinking and negative volition is illustrative for us of much of Egypt. That is, he is not the only person like this. Despite the devastation wrought by God against Egypt, Pharaoh will be able to raise up an army to go after the sons of Israel. All he needed was enough strength of resolve to do this, and God gave him that strength. There were enough Egyptians, filled with anger and negative volition towards Israel, to form a very large army.

Now bear in mind, Israel has done nothing against any of the Egyptians. The God of Israel has certainly come down hard on them (as the Egyptians came down hard on Israel in slavery), but Israel as a people have done nothing to engender any sort of revenge from the Egyptian people.

**Illustration:** Have you had people act against you, but then they blamed *you* for *their* actions? I have had friends and relatives cut me off, but, they blamed me for what they did. I write this in early 2022, where there are differences in opinions about the COVID vaccines and their efficacy. One segment of our population will not take the shots; and another segment of our population wants them punished for that (remove them from their jobs, do not allow their children to attend school, etc.). The second group wants to see these restrictions placed upon the first group, but they *blame* the first group for being under these restrictions.