

Exodus Chapter 12 Continued

Exodus 12:11 "And thus shall ye eat it; [with] your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it [is] the LORD'S passover."

"As prepared for a journey": The first was done by the skirts of the loose outer cloth being drawn up and fastened in the girdle, so as to leave the leg and knee free for motion. As to the other, the Orientals never wear shoes indoors, and the ancient Egyptians, as appears from the monuments, did not usually wear either shoes or sandals. These injunctions seem to have applied chiefly to the first celebration of the rite.

"It is the Lord's Passover": Called by this name from the blood-marked dwellings of the Israelites being passed over figuratively by the destroying angel.

We see that God was telling these people to be prepared to leave. These were traveling clothes. His reason for them eating it in haste was because they did not know at what moment they would be ready to go. He reminded them in the last part of this verse, that even though they ate it hastily, they must not take it lightly. This was a special feast that would free them from the bondage of hundreds of years. This Passover would always be a most holy feast with these Hebrews.

Exodus 12:12 "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite 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."

"Against all the gods": The tenth plague was a judgment against all Egyptian deities. The loss of the firstborn of men and beast had far-reaching theological implications. Namely, the importance of the pagan deities, many of whom were represented by animals, to protect their devotees from such nationwide tragedies. The great cry of grief (11:6; 12:30), may also have bemoaned the incapability of the nation's gods.

The one who would "pass through the land" was not some angel of death as is commonly assumed. According to the repeated pronoun "I", it was the Lord Himself, bringing judgment "against all the gods of Egypt".

We see the answer to the plagues (against all the gods of Egypt). God discredited these false gods, one by one, in the plagues. You remember the death of their firstborn was just punishment for all the Hebrew children they had killed. Because animal worship was prevalent in Egypt, God would kill the firstborn of them as well. God did not have to tell them that He had the right. He is the LORD.

Exodus 12:13 "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye [are]: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy [you], when I smite the land of Egypt."

The annual Feast of the Passover commemorated the birth of the nation Israel and her deliverance from Egypt. Typologically, it pointed forward to the greater deliverance from the bondage of sin to be provided by the Messiah. In the Passover, a lamb without blemish was selected and killed. The blood was then applied to the doorpost (doorjamb), of the home, and the lamb was roasted and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

Death comes to all those who are not covered in the blood of the Lamb, whether then or now. The blood of the Lamb is what brings life. God would quickly recognize the Israelites when He saw the blood. The blood was their protection and is our protection as well. He sees the shed blood of His Son which does away with the sin. Then God looks down to sinful man and does not see the sin.

Verses 14-28: This lengthy section describes the ordinances for the Passover. The Passover is preceded by the "Feast of Unleavened Bread", a period of "seven days" in which no leaven is permitted in meals or in the people's homes. To commemorate that first Passover, all succeeding Passovers were to be marked by the eating of unleavened bread (called matzo today).

Exodus 12:14 "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 a feast by an ordinance for ever."

"A memorial": The details of how this Passover Day was to be memorialized in future years were laid down (verses 14-20) and then repeated in the instructions to the elders (verses 21-27). Prescribing the eating of unleavened bread for 7 days, demanding a thorough housecleaning from leaven (verse 15), issuing a stern warning of banishment for eating leaven (verse 15), and bracketing the 7 days with special holy days (verse 16), served to proclaim the high importance of the nation's remembering this event.

We see by this that this Passover Feast was not initiated for just this one occasion, but was to be remembered forever and celebrated as long as there were Israelites. We will see as we go along that not just the physical Israelites would remember this, but the spiritual Israelites (Christians), as well. Jesus celebrated Passover and was, in fact, the Passover Lamb that was sacrificed for us, the Christians (spiritual Israel).

Exodus 12:15 "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel."

This was to commemorate another circumstance in the departure of the Israelites, who were urged to leave so hurriedly that their dough was unleavened (Exodus 12:39), and they had to eat unleavened cakes (Deut. 16:3). The greatest care was always taken by the Jews to free their houses from leaven, the owner searching every corner of his dwelling with a lighted candle.

A figurative allusion to this is made (1 Cor. 5:7). The exclusion of leaven for seven days would not be attended with inconvenience in the East, where the usual leaven is dough kept till it

becomes sour, and it is kept from one day to another for the purpose of preserving leaven in readiness. Thus, even were there none in all the country, it could be gotten within twenty-four hours.

"That soul shall be cut off": Excommunicated from the community and privileges of the chosen people.

Remember, we are looking at the spiritual side of this. Leaven symbolizes sin. We can see here, if we continue to sin, we will be cut off from our inheritance. "Seven" means spiritually complete. We see that these seven days away from leaven symbolizes the justification we have in Jesus. We are just as if we had never sinned because we have partaken of Jesus, our Passover Lamb, and kept sin out of our lives. These seven days symbolize completeness in God. We see from this, the importance of walking as near a sinless life as possible. If you sin, repent quickly and begin to walk sinless again. Christians should not desire to sin. Communion should always be taken with unleavened bread to show that Jesus was sinless (The bread symbolizes His body).

Exodus 12:16 "And in the first day [there shall be] a holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save [that] which every man must eat, that only may be done of you."

The Passover was to be kept on the fourteenth day of Abib, at even. The seven following days were to be "days of unleavened bread." On the first of these, the fifteenth of Abib (Leviticus 23:6), there was to be a "holy convocation," i.e., a general gathering of the people to the door of the sanctuary for sacrifice, worship, and perhaps instruction (compare Nehemiah 8:1). The term "convocation" implies that the people were summoned to attend; and the actual summons appears to have been made by the blowing of the silver trumpets (Numbers 10:2).

On the seventh day, the twenty-first of Abib, was to be another similar meeting. "No manner of work" was to be done on either of these two days. Or rather, as explained (in Leviticus 23:7-8), "no servile work" (having or showing an excessive willingness to serve or please others).

"Done of you" (see note on verse 46).

It seems that from April 15th until April 22nd would be a time of absolute rest for the Hebrew. It is probably associated with 6 days of work and on the seventh, a Sabbath of rest. The only two celebrations that the Hebrews have of seven days duration, are the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Tabernacles. We see here, that the only type of work that can be done was feeding the family. These holy convocations meant a worship service. It would begin with worship and end with worship.

Exodus 12:17 "And ye shall observe [the feast of] unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever."

This was a distinct feast from the Passover feast; for though at that unleavened bread was eaten, it was kept but one night, these seven days. Then it is repeated that it might be taken notice of,

and the rather, as it was to be observed in all ages as long as the Jewish economy lasted. The reason of which follows:

"For in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt": Which, though not already done, was just on doing and was certain. Besides, it respects the day when it should come about another year. By their "armies" are meant the tribes of Israel, not so much for their military force, for as yet they were an unarmed people, but for their numbers, which were sufficient to make several considerable armies. And for their order and ease; as there was no fear of the enemy when they marched out of Egypt.

"Therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever": According to the rules given, with the same exactness, strictness, and constancy, as the first of the Passover, and as long as that continued (See Exodus 12:14).

We read here on April the 15th, God would bring His people out. The Christians celebrate Easter about this time of year. The Jewish calendar is different from the Julian calendar and our date falls on various days, but the Jewish calendar is set up on the full moon change. This would be actually the evening before Jesus rises from the grave. We see in all of these celebrations of these Israelites that Jesus fulfills their celebrations when He is crucified and resurrected. The Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread were fulfilled in Jesus' crucifixion. We see Firstfruits practiced when Jesus rose from the grave and brought captivity captive with Him. Firstfruits was the day after Sabbath or the Sunday after crucifixion.

Exodus 12:18 "In the first [month], on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even."

As it was now ordered to be reckoned, the month Abib or Nisan.

"The fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread": That is, at the evening following, the fourteenth of Nisan, and which was the beginning of the fifteenth day, the Jews beginning their day from the evening. Hence the Targum of Jonathan is, "on the fourteenth of Nisan ye shall slay the passover, in the evening of the fifteenth ye shall eat unleavened bread."

"Unto the twentieth day of the month at even": Which would make just seven days. The above Targum adds, "on the evening of the twenty second ye shall eat leavened bread, which was the evening following the twenty first day. This long abstinence from leaven denotes that the whole lives of those who are Israelites indeed should be without guile, hypocrisy and malice, and should be spent in sincerity and truth.

This would be April 14th on the Jewish calendar. As was said, this Feast of Unleavened Bread and Passover really were the same. They were to eat unleavened bread (be completely rid of sin), these seven days. "Seven" means spiritually complete, so these seven days were the correct time in God's plan to make sure there was no sin (leaven). Jesus was crucified on the first day of Unleavened Bread, or Passover; Jesus was the Passover Lamb.

Jesus also is the Bread of Life. He is free from sin (then and now). He fulfills the unleavened bread, as well making us spiritually justified in Him. This 14th would have been a Friday. The "THIRD" day He arose, Sunday the 16th. You see Firstfruits in His resurrection. God is exact. "Bethlehem" means house of bread. Jesus was born in Bethlehem and He is the Bread.

John 6:35 "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

None of this is coincidence. God has everything planned exactly.

Exodus 12:19 "Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land."

"A stranger": Provision was made right at the beginning for non-Israelites to be included in the nation's religious festivals. Failure to comply with the regulations on leaven would result in banishment for the alien as well.

We know that through Abraham, we Gentiles as well as the Hebrews, are Israelites. The Hebrews are physical Israel and we Gentile believers are spiritual Israel because of our faith. We have faith like Abraham's, and we are spiritually the descendants of Abraham.

Gal. 3:6-9 "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, [saying], In thee shall all nations be blessed." So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

We see whether we are physical or spiritual Israel, we must do away with sin in our lives and live in the salvation that Jesus purchased for us all. If we continue in sin after Jesus has cleansed us and made us righteous, then we will be condemned.

Exodus 12:20 "Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread."

That included neither bread nor anything else that had any leaven within it.

"In all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread", that is, if they eat any bread at all, it must be such. Otherwise they might eat cakes of almonds or of eggs mixed with sugar, provided there was no leaven used. And this the Jews call the rich unleavened bread. This is repeated over and over, that they might be the more careful of observing this precept; but as this was limited for a certain time.

Here again, is a re-emphasis on how important the removal of sin (leaven) is. This eating of the unleavened bread is symbolic of the taking of Jesus (The Word of God), into our bodies. This again is why I am so dogmatic about using unleavened bread in the communion. The bread we

take in communion is symbolic of the body of Jesus Christ (the sinless one). It must be free of sin (therefore unleavened). Jewish people still practice the Feast of Unleavened Bread today.

Exodus 12:21 "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."

I.e., draw the lamb from the fold and then take it to the house.

"The passover": The word is here applied to the lamb; an important fact, marking the lamb as the sign and pledge of the exemption of the Israelites.

This was Moses telling them it was time to go and kill the passover. Notice the elders here. When the Passover Lamb (Jesus Christ) was crucified, the elders were standing by also.

Exodus 12:22 "And ye 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 at the door of his house until the morning."

"Bunch of hyssop": Certain identification is impossible, but this could be the marjoram plant.

"Lintel ... the two side posts": The top and two sides of the doorway.

The only protection these Hebrews had that night in Egypt and the only protection we Christians have now, is the shed blood of the Lamb. The destroyer did not enter in where the blood of the Lamb was. The hyssop was used many times in ministering to lepers. It was believed to have purifying powers. This "hyssop" was used like a mop, so that the blood would not be handled. The hyssop was not the protecting power, the blood was. The hyssop was just used to spread the blood. If the Hebrews left the covering of the blood and went outside, they were not protected and would die just like the Egyptians.

Exodus 12:23 "For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth 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]."

"The destroyer": This is most likely the Angel of the Lord (2 Sam. 24:16; Isa. 37:36; see note on 3:2).

We see here, that this was the Lord God who was directing the destruction of the firstborn. The Lord told the destroyer which house he (the destroyer), might enter. Anyone or any animal, not in the house with the blood covering would lose their firstborn. Notice this was not Satan doing this, it was God. Just as God had made a separation between the Israelites and the Egyptians in the plagues, this tenth plague was no different. God destroyed the firstborn of Egypt and spared the Israelites.

Exodus 12:24 "And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever."

Not this last thing of sprinkling the blood, which was peculiar to the Passover in Egypt; but the whole before observed relating to the feast of the Passover, and the feast of Unleavened Bread, and all the rites appertaining to them, which were to be observed until the coming of Christ.

We see that God did not want them to quickly forget this night. God expected them to remember and thank God forever.

Exodus Chapter 12 Continued Questions

1. How were these Israelites to eat the Passover?
2. What does this mean?
3. Why must this be holy to them?
4. What would He do as He passed through Egypt?
5. God would execute judgment against whom?
6. What did God call Himself in verse 12?
7. What did God do to Egypt's gods?
8. Why did God choose to kill the firstborn as Egypt's tenth plague?
9. When God saw "what", the destroyer would pass over the house?
10. Who smites the land of Egypt, Satan or God?
11. Who does eternal death come to?
12. How can God recognize His own?
13. How long shall the Israelites remember Passover?
14. Who were Israelites? Explain.
15. How many days should they eat unleavened bread?
16. What would happen to those who ate leaven during that time?
17. What does leaven symbolize?
18. What do the seven days symbolize for Christians?
19. Why should communion always be served with unleavened bread?

20. On the holy days, what is the only work that can be done?
21. Abib is April on our calendar. What day would this Unleavened Bread be?
22. What are Israel's only two feasts that last seven days?
23. What were holy convocations?
24. What Christian holiday occurs about the time of Unleavened Bread?
25. When Jesus was crucified and resurrected, what Jewish feast was He fulfilling?
26. What day was the Feast of Firstfruits?
27. What day of the first month were they to begin and end the Feast of Firstfruits?
28. What two feasts are covered in the same time element?
29. What day did Jesus rise from the grave?
30. What does "Bethlehem" mean?
31. Who is the Bread?
32. Through what man are we Gentile believers made Israelites?
33. What was counted to Abraham as righteousness?
34. Who are blessed with Abraham?
35. What is leaven symbolic of?
36. The eating of unleavened bread is symbolic of what?
37. What is the communion bread symbolic of?
38. What were they to do with the lamb?
39. What were they to use to apply the blood to the door posts?
40. Why were the Israelites not to leave the house?
41. What is the only protection Christians have against the devil?
42. Who would pass through the land that night?
43. What separation was made between the Egyptians and the Israelites?