

Exodus Chapter 12 Third Continued

Verses 40-41: For nearly four centuries, the people had prayed as they languished under slavery (Gen. 15:13; Acts 7:6; Gal. 3:17). Now they walked out with freedom as promised.

Abraham had been told that his descendants would be aliens mistreated in a foreign land (Genesis 15:13).

Exodus 12:40 "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, [was] four hundred and thirty years."

The "four hundred and thirty years" as the time of sojourning in Egypt has been interpreted in two basic ways. The first is that the bondage lasted only 215 years. The two main arguments for this view are:

- (1) Gal. 3:17 assumes that the 430 years mentioned begins with the call of Abraham and concludes with the Exodus. This would mean that the patriarchal period consisted of 215 years and the oppression in Egypt of 215 years.
- (2) The other argument rests upon the Septuagint (Greek) translation of (Exodus 12:40), which reads "who dwelt in the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan," rather than simply "in Egypt." This also points to the 430 years as including the patriarchal age as well as the period of bondage.

The objections to this view are several.

- (1) Both Genesis 15:13 and Acts 7:6 states the sojourn would be in the land that was not theirs and they would be oppressed for four hundred years.
- (2) Galatians 3:17 does not state that the 430 years was from the time of Abraham's call to the time of the Mosaic covenant; rather it is measured from the confirmation of the Abrahamic covenant until the Sinaitic covenant (Gen. 15:13-16 in 1877 B.C. to Jacob).
- (3) Genesis 15:13 and Acts 7:6 do not speak of Abraham's sons but of his descendants being afflicted for four hundred years.
- (4) The expression "fourth generation" (Gen. 15:16), probably refers to a four-hundred-year period, since that number is given in the same context (15:13). Generations in this context were calculated at one hundred years rather than 40.

The second major view of the period of oppression is that it lasted for the period of 430 years, as stated in Exodus 12:40-41. The view assumes that the reading of the Hebrew text is to be preferred over the Greek translation of the Old Testament (Septuagint).

A third proposal, which is slight variation from the second above, suggests that the 430 years includes the four-hundred-year oppression plus the time from the confirmation to Jacob until the giving of the Sinaitic covenant.

We see from this, the time since Jacob brought his family to Egypt to escape the famine in his land. We know that even though this family voluntarily came to Egypt, they were under somewhat limited circumstances from the beginning. These Israelites had never had a king or ruler. God was the only ruler they had had, but when they came to Egypt to live, they were immediately under the Pharaoh.

At first it was almost guest status, but they were put in Goshen from the beginning. After Joseph died, the feeling of the people changed to these foreigners and these children of Israel became servants to Pharaoh. For some undetermined time, they were actually like slaves. The 430 years covered the whole period not just the servitude time. The word "sojourning" just means inhabited or dwelled in.

Exodus 12:41 "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 LORD went out from the land of Egypt."

The setting forth upon the journey is regarded as the "going out", not the actual exit, which was only effected by the passage of the Red Sea.

This great event was 430 years from the promise made to Abraham (see Gal. 3:17). So long the promise of a settlement was unfulfilled. But though God's promises are not performed quickly, they will be, in their season. This is that night of the Lord, that remarkable night, to be celebrated in all generations. The great things God does for his people, are to be not only a few days' wonder, but to be remembered throughout all ages; especially the work of our redemption by Christ. This first passover-night was a night of the Lord, much to be observed; but the last passover-night, in which Christ was betrayed and in which the first passover, with the rest of the Jewish ceremonies, was done away, was a night of the Lord, much more to be observed. Then a yoke, heavier than that of Egypt, was broken from off our necks, and a land, better than that of Canaan, set before us. It was a redemption to be celebrated in heaven, for ever and ever.

This Scripture means to me, that these 430 years elapsed and there was a specific day when all of the Israelites left Egypt on that same day. This was a large company of people, perhaps close to three million. "Host" means a mass of persons. This large a company probably did not all make it all the way out of Egypt in that one day, but that they started their journey on that day.

Exodus 12:42 "It [is] a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this [is] that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations."

This first passover night was a night of the Lord, much to be observed. But the last passover night, in which Christ was betrayed, was a night of the Lord, much more to be observed. When a yoke heavier than that of Egypt was broken from off our necks, and a land better than that of Canaan set before us. That was a temporal deliverance, to be celebrated in their generations. And this an eternal redemption, to be celebrated world without end!

God did not want them to forget that He brought them out with His mighty Hand. God fought their battle against the false gods of Egypt and God won their victory. God fights our battles for us against the evil one. We just use the name of Jesus and the evil one must flee. For all generations, the descendants of Israel were to remember that God delivered them. They were to observe this night every year as a memorial. Just as we Christians are to remember Jesus' great sacrifice every time we take communion. This is not just for the heads of the church to remember, but for everyone from small children to the older folks; men and women.

Verses 43-51: Additional regulations given for the holding of the Passover contained prohibitions on any uncircumcised foreigner, stranger or hired servant being a valid participant. To partake of this meal, non-Israelites had to be "like a native of the land" (verse 48; see note on Jeremiah 4:4).

Exodus 12:43 "And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This [is] the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof:"

At the same time, he acquainted them with the above things.

"This is the ordinance of the passover": As before delivered, and these the laws and rules, according to which it is to be observed, as now related, both with respect to the lamb, and to the unleavened bread; and the following is an account of the persons that were to partake of it.

"There shall no stranger eat thereof": One that is of another country, an entire Heathen, and unacquainted with, and does not profess the Jewish religion, which was the religion of God.

We see here again that God spoke to Moses, and Moses gave the message to Aaron and Aaron to the people. "Ordinance" means statute or custom. This was just for the Israelites, because they were the only ones who had something to remember. A stranger was not passed over when death came to the Egyptians. The bitter herbs eaten were to remember the bitter bondage. If you actually study the passover feast, it really observes Jesus as the Passover Lamb.

Exodus 12:44 "But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof."

Slaves born in the house were required to be circumcised on the eighth day, like Israelites (Genesis 17:13). Bought slaves were allowed their choice. It is noticeable that the circumcised slave was to be admitted to full religious equality with his master.

A servant actually becomes like a member of the family. This slave mentioned here, was not just one passing through, but would be a permanent part of the family who bought him. Circumcision was not something he (the servant), could accept or reject, but was required. The Israelites let everyone worship. We will discover later on that the laws, such as not working on the Sabbath, were for these servants as well as their Israelite owners. The religious requirements of their lives

were the same as the Hebrews, because they were permanent residents. The fate of the Hebrews was the fate of their servants they had bought.

Exodus 12:45 "A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof."

One of another nation, and one that was only hired by the day, week, or year; as they were not obliged to circumcision. So without it they had no right to eat of the passover, none but such as became proselytes of righteousness.

You see this foreigner and hired servant would not be there year after year to observe this, so just taking it one time when he was there, would not be advantageous to him. He didn't believe so he should not partake.

Exodus 12:46 "In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof."

“Break a bone thereof”: Christ, the Christian’s Passover lamb (1 Cor. 5:7), had no bones broken (John 19:36).

In remembrance that they were not to go out of the house, as the safety was good, just as long as they were in the house covered with the blood of the Lamb. This ordinance about not breaking the bone was carried out by Jesus (The Lamb of God). The custom (when someone was crucified), was to break their legs, so they would die faster. When Jesus was crucified, He had already dismissed His Spirit from His body when they came to break His legs. They did not break Jesus' legs so that this very ordinance could be kept. The family you remember was to pick a lamb the correct size that they could eat and if they didn't have enough members of their own family to completely consume the lamb, they invited another Hebrew family to come and share the lamb. We could see symbols of people coming to Jesus in this.

Exodus 12:47 "All the congregation of Israel shall keep it."

The Passover, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread only. For a Gentile was first to be circumcised, and be joined to the congregation, and then partake of it, and not before.

This statement is very similar to the statement for Christians to remember Jesus by taking communion. All believers in Jesus should take communion and remember our Deliverer (Jesus Christ). Deliverance is for everyone.

Exodus 12:48 "And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will 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 one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof."

Who by so doing became a proselyte of the gate, he observing the commands of the sons of Noah.

"And will keep the passover of the Lord": Is desirous of being admitted to that ordinance.

"Let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near, and keep it": First himself, and then all his male children and male servants. And then, and not till then, he might approach to this ordinance, and observe it. For by this means he would become a proselyte of righteousness, and in all respects as an Israelite, or son of Abraham, as it follows:

"And he shall be as one that is born in the land": A native and proper inhabitant of Canaan, enjoying all the privileges and immunities of such.

"For no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof": These laws and rules concerning those persons that were to eat of the passover are such as were to be observed in all successive generations, to the coming of Christ. These laws and rules were necessary to be given now, because of the mixed multitude that had come up with the children of Israel out of Egypt.

Here we see a stranger insisting on taking the Passover meal. By insisting on taking the Passover meal, he was saying, "I am one of you. I believe the same way you do". Then this Hebrew said "Prove that you are one of us by being circumcised". Only the covenant people of God were to take of this special supper.

I believe this has a parallel in our churches today. Only those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ should take communion. A heathen would have no reason to remember something he did not believe in. I believe the statement above, tells us that if someone comes to our church that does not belong to our denomination (stranger), but believes in Jesus Christ the same as we do, he or she should be allowed to take communion with us. You see our communion parallels their Passover. In each, we are remembering our Deliverer. To me, the purpose in communion is the same as Passover, and that is to remember our Deliverer who saved us.

Exodus 12:49 "One law shall be to him that is home born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you."

This regulation displays the liberal spirit of the Hebrew institutions. Any foreigner might obtain admission to the privileges of the nation on complying with their sacred ordinances. In the Mosaic, equally as in the Christian dispensation, privilege and duty were inseparably conjoined.

I believe this statement just says, (whatever requirements you have on your own group for taking this passover meal or communion, applies to this stranger as well). He would not be exempt from the requirements you have, yet no more requirements than you have for your own would be required.

Exodus 12:50 "Thus did all the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they."

"All ... did they": On two occasions (see also verse 28). Moses emphasized the complete obedience of the nation in response to the Lord's commands to them: a contrast to the disobedience they would demonstrate in the very near future.

This verse was just saying that after Moses and Aaron had given these instructions, these Israelites did exactly as God's instruction had told them.

Exodus 12:51 "And it came to pass the selfsame day, [that] the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies."

“The selfsame day”: What would be for the nation in their new Land a special Sabbath day, was for them at that time the day on which their journey began.

Surely this great mass of humanity did appear to be a vast army. We will find out also, later on, that Moses has them organized to move smoothly. If they had not had a plan of march, they would have lost their families and in this large a group, and probably would not be able to find their group again. Of course, I see Christianity in everything, and this is no exception. Actually, the members of twelve different families were marching together headed for their Promised Land. You remember twelve is a representative number. This reminds me so much of the assorted denominations of believers in Jesus, who must march together to our Promised Land. We may not dot every “I” and cross every “T” the same, but we have the same goal and the same Deliverer.

Our Deliverer (Jesus), is leading us all to heaven. The Bible speaks of God's people being one. I do not believe that this means one denomination. But it does mean there is but one Gospel. Just as there are twelve families here with one goal, we believers in Jesus have one common goal, and that is to be redeemed in Him from this world and spend eternity with Him in our Promised Land. Death passes over us, the Christians, covered by Jesus' (Lamb's), blood and we have life through Him.

Exodus Chapter 12 Third Continued Questions

1. How many years did Jacob's family dwell in Egypt?
2. Why had they come to Egypt?
3. Who had been these Israelites' ruler?
4. When they arrived in Egypt, who was ruler?
5. How many of the Israelites left Egypt?
6. What does "hosts" mean?
7. How long were they to remember?
8. Who had fought for them?
9. What parallel does the Passover have for the Christians?

10. What was meant by a stranger not eating Passover?
11. Why could they not eat?
12. A servant could eat Passover, after he was _____.
13. What did the servants and the Hebrews have in common?
14. What was indicated by not taking the Passover out of the house?
15. What were the requirements of the physical condition of this lamb?
16. What specific part of this ordinance did Jesus fulfill on the cross physically?
17. Who delivers the Christians?
18. In verse 48, what was different about this stranger?
19. What does the author believe this means, pertaining to our churches today?
20. Only the _____ people were to partake of this special supper.
21. What parallels the Passover in our church services today?
22. What is verse 49 saying?
23. Did the Israelites heed God's words?
24. What two men had God commanded to bring this message to the people?
25. What did God call this mass of humanity that He brought out of Egypt?
26. What does the author believe the twelve tribes are symbolic of today?
27. What is the number twelve?
28. What brings life to the Christian?