

## CHAPTERS ELEVEN AND TWELVE

## (The Final Plague and the Passover)

**A final plague is announced –**

If I asked you what Exodus chapters 6 through 14 had in common, would it occur to you to say that each of them opens with the words: ***“And the Lord said unto Moses...”***? I mention this because several commentators (Calmet, Gill, Barnes) take the position that this phrase is used in the “preterpluperfect” tense. In case you don’t know what that means (don’t feel bad...I had to look it up myself), it indicates that the word ***“said”*** actually means ***“had said,”*** as in “The Lord *had already said*” those things to Moses at a previous time. In other words, Moses had already been “briefed” by the Lord, not little by little each time he was summoned to appear before the Pharaoh, (or, as it reads in Exodus, each time a chapter starts) but in advance, so he knew what was going to happen, how the Pharaoh was going to react, and how God was going to display His power and omnipotence before the Egyptian people.

This also explains Moses’ calm demeanor during his conversation with the Pharaoh, even when the powerful ruler – who could have given the order to end his life at any moment – was furious. He also understood God’s purpose in bringing about the rescue of His people in this manner, as he indicated when he spoke to the Pharaoh. For example, in Exodus 8:10 when the Pharaoh had just asked to have the plague of frogs removed: Moses said, ***“...Be it according to thy word: that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the LORD our God.”*** In Exodus 9:29-30 when the king could no longer endure the hail, Moses said to him: ***“...I will spread abroad my hands unto the LORD; and the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know how that the earth is the LORD’S. But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the LORD God.”***

The question then is when did God reveal to Moses all of these events that we have seen thus far – and some that are yet to come? I believe all the details mentioned above were told to Moses back in Midian before he and Aaron even set foot in Egypt. Notice the last four verses of chapter 3, when God was speaking to Moses from the burning bush: ***“And I am sure that the king of Egypt***

*will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty: But every woman shall borrow of her neighbor, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.”*

While these short verses may not contain everything the Lord revealed to Moses from the burning bush, there is enough detail here to support the idea that Moses was told everything beforehand. Even if it didn't happen at the burning bush, but elsewhere at a different time, we should still understand that God had already told Moses about the series of plagues He would bring on Egypt before they began. So, Moses also knew that it would be necessary for all of them to take place before the Pharaoh would actually let the people go.

And so, chapter eleven begins with these words, *“And the Lord said to Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether. Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbor, and every woman of her neighbor, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold. 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.”*

It is now time to prepare for the Exodus! According to Spence, the term *“thrust you out”* implies an enthusiasm for their departure, a “good riddance” attitude, if you will. To expedite the final arrangements, the text says, *“...the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians.”* And even more so, *“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.”*

I feel certain the “greatness” mentioned in verse 3 is because of how impressed the Egyptians were with Moses' ability to bring on, then call off the plagues – merely by calling on

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his Lord. Anyone in contact with such a powerful God must be worthy of respect. And remember, he had convinced some of Pharaoh's officials to bring in their slaves, animals and family from the field before the hail, so they seemed to understand that he was in communication with a Higher Power greater than the gods they served. You will also recall that in chapter 10:7, Pharaoh's own officials asked him, ***"How long shall this man be a snare unto us?"*** Keep in mind that the Egyptians were taught to treat their king as a god himself. I wonder if it was obvious to Ahmose – as it was becoming obvious to them – that this man Moses represented a real God, and displayed the strength, poise and demeanor, always with humility ... of someone who knew it.

As we prepare to discuss the final "plague", you will notice that it is announced but not immediately implemented. It will occur at midnight, while the Israelites are in the midst of a brand new worship service called the Passover.

At the end of lesson 8, after the plague of darkness had fallen upon the Egyptians, Moses was called back to the Pharaoh, then angrily dismissed from him when he refused to negotiate God's plan for the release of His people. I imagine the Pharaoh shouted these words: ***"Get away from me! Watch out that you never see my face again, because on the day you see my face, you will die!"*** (Exodus 10:28 ISV)

As I alluded to at the end of lesson 9; it is generally agreed among scholars that Moses' response of ***"Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more."*** was not a parting shot. Instead, he stayed long enough to announce the coming of the 10<sup>th</sup> plague. After all, he had been told not to "darken the door" ever again. Certainly the Lord could have intervened had Moses dared to show his face again before the Pharaoh, but it seems more logical to me that Moses would have used that opportunity to tell Ahmose about the final plague before he left. I imagine it happening something like this: The Pharaoh threatens Moses with death should he see his face again, and Moses replies, ***"You're right. I'm not going to see your face again, but before I leave, listen to what else the Lord has in store for you."***

Pay particular attention to verse 4, where Moses – speaking to the children of Israel – says, ***"Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt..."*** All of the

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previous plagues were implemented either by Aaron's rod or by the stretching out of Moses' hand. This time however, the Lord Himself ***"will go out into the midst of Egypt."*** The result will be the death of all "firstborn" in the land of Egypt – from the firstborn of the Pharaoh himself – all the way down to the least maidservant that grinds at the mill. Even the firstborn of all the animals will perish. ***"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 ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel."*** God is sending a very clear message: If there was any doubt before that I take care of My own, know that the children of Israel – My people – will suffer no loss.

It should be noted that the use of the word "plague" really isn't correct in reference to this last "event." This is the Lord's "death angel" showing the Egyptians and the Israelites God's sovereign authority. As Moses has said repeatedly, it is God that is in control... not the Pharaoh nor all the false gods of Egypt, nor even the mighty nation of Egypt itself. It is the Almighty God – The Creator of all things! His will is supreme!

I hope you noticed that in Exodus 11:2, for the first time during this ordeal, Moses is instructed to speak to the people of Israel. Since the plagues began, there has been no recorded dialogue between them... up until now. It might be said that his attention has been on "external affairs." But now, that all changes! The preparation for departure has begun and Moses needs to address "internal affairs," so he speaks to his people, and directs them to "borrow" from their neighbors – the Egyptians – gold and silver!

As bizarre as that directive may sound, it is in fact the fulfillment of a statement God made to Abram 239 years earlier, recorded in Genesis 15:14 where God told Abram that the children of Israel, when released, ***"... shall come out with great possessions."*** And, from everything indicated in the text of chapter 11, the people of Egypt willingly provide those ***"possessions."*** Perhaps it is because so many of the Egyptians had come to look upon Moses with respect. I find it very interesting that both the "general public" of Egypt and many of Pharaoh's own officials – in spite of the generations of "training" they had had in the worship of idols and multiple gods – had apparently come to respect

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this Hebrew man as a representative of an actual God, greater than the ones they worship. That pretty much leaves the Pharaoh standing alone in opposition.

The last part of verse 8 says, ***“And he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger.”*** Why would Moses be so angry after delivering this final message? Most believe it was in response to Pharaoh's threat against his life, should he ever show his face before the throne. However, I wonder if there could have been a feeling of disappointment on his part because he could never get to Ahmose's heart. Of course, God had already told him how things were going to go, but remember – Egypt was where Moses was born. He was raised by a Pharaoh's daughter, educated in the courts of the king and had become a man of character and stature before leaving Egypt and living in Midian for the last 40 years. And now here he is at 80 years of age, standing before another Pharaoh who, in spite of all the warnings and the resulting devastation, has absolutely no remorse for the destruction he has brought on his people. No... I doubt Moses' anger is the result of the threat against his life; I suspect it is because of the stubborn, unrepentant heart of Pharaoh Ahmose! Perhaps Moses is even thinking of what is to come...within hours this man's pride is going to cost him a beloved child.

Concerning the Pharaoh, I have one last thought before closing chapter 11. The negotiations are over. The final judgment of God is looming – just a few hours away – and the Pharaoh has closed his mind and hardened his heart. The miracles have been undeniable. He has witnessed – up close and personal – all the wonders God worked through Moses. Yet, in spite of it all, he has responded just like the unrepentant ones of Revelation 16: 9 who, ***“...blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.”***

It has been said that describing hell to someone, making them see the consequences of sin, will get them to repent. I don't believe that. Scaring someone into making this choice isn't true repentance. True repentance is a desire to take advantage of God's mercy, and this begins voluntarily in our hearts. We must truly be sorry for our sins and honestly cling to God's word to help us resist the devil. We must want to sin no more. But as long as our heart remains unrepentant – like the Pharaoh Ahmose we have seen in these lessons – we are doomed!

### THE PASSOVER – (Exodus 12:1 – 28)

This chapter begins with what we might consider an unusual statement: *“And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ‘This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.’”* While the Israelites are waiting to leave Egypt, God is changing the beginning of their calendar year!

So let’s take a “Time Out” to better understand what God is doing. First of all, know that the system of keeping time in the Old Testament was based on the cycles of the moon rather than the solar calendar like we use today. Their lunar calendar normally contained 12 months of 30 days each. But, since the actual lunar cycle is about 29 ½ days, it required them to add a 13<sup>th</sup> month in 7 out of every 19 years in order to keep the calendar coordinated with the seasons of the year! This

Hebrew Month	Canaanite Name	Modern Equiv.	Farming Harvest
<u>Shebat</u>		Jan. / Feb.	Winter Figs
Adar		Feb. / Mar.	Flax & Nuts
Nisan	<u>Abib</u>	Mar. / Apr.	Barley
<u>Iyyar</u>	<u>Ziv</u>	Apr. / May	General crops
Sivan		May / Jun.	Wheat & Vine
Tammuz		Jun. / Jul.	Early Grapes
<u>Ab</u>		Jul. / Aug.	Grapes Olives
Elul		Aug. / Sep.	Summer Fruit
Tishri	<u>Ethanim</u>	Sep. / Oct.	Late Olives
<u>Marchesvan</u>	<u>Bul</u>	Oct. / Nov.	Grain Planting
<u>Chislev</u>		Nov. / Dec.	Late Planting
<u>Tebeth</u>		Dec. / Jan.	Spring Growth
Adar II		Added Year	7 of 19 years

additional month was added at the end of the calendar, following Adar (called “Adar II”) but only used 7 years out of every 19. The visual on the left is keyed to the months in our modern calendars.

Although the history of this ancient calendar is not clear, it is thought the Israelites adopted some elements of marking time from both the ancient Canaanites and the Babylonians.

Unfortunately, the Canaanite names are only known for four of the months as you

can see. The others were apparently lost.

The thing to remember is that this was the calendar in use during the time period of Exodus!  
*(Just for the record, this calendar was changed by the Babylonians somewhere around 600 BC when the Jewish nation went into Babylonian captivity, and the names of the months not already reflecting Babylonian influences were changed.)*

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So, according to this calendar, when did the Exodus occur? We find the answer in Exodus 13:4 when Moses is speaking to the people and says, ***“This day came ye out in the month Abib.”*** As you can see on the chart above, Abib is the Canaanite name for the month of Nisan! As a matter of fact, we even know the day the exodus started: the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Nisan shortly after midnight, after the Egyptians found their firstborn child lying dead and “hurried” them out!

And that brings us to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final thing we need to know: When the Lord announced to Moses, ***“This month shall be unto you the beginning of months, it shall be the first month of the year to you?”*** ...what did He mean? It involves a shifting of all the months. Nisan still occurs in the

Hebrew Month	Canaanite Name	Modern Equiv.
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Sivan		May / Jun.
Tammuz		Jun. / Jul.
<u>Ab</u>		Jul. / Aug.
Elul		Aug. / Sep.
Tishri	<u>Ethanim</u>	Sep. / Oct.
<u>Marchesvan</u>	<u>Bul</u>	Oct. / Nov.
<u>Chislev</u>		Nov. / Dec.
<u>Tebeth</u>		Dec. / Jan.

modern equivalent of March/April, but henceforth will be referred to as the first month of the year. So, if that entire line on the chart moves to the top, Shebat and Adar will be pushed off and drop to the bottom.

New Jewish Months	Approximate Secular Date
Nissan	Mar – Apr
Iyar	Apr – May
Sivan	May – Jun
Tammuz	Jun – Jul
<u>Menachem</u>	Jul – Aug
Elul	Aug – Sep
<u>Tishrei</u>	Sep – Oct
<u>Marcheshavan</u>	Oct – Nov
Kislev	Nov – Dec
Tevet	Dec – Jan
Shevat	Jan – Feb
Adair	Feb – Mar

The chart on the right is the result. Notice I have labeled the left column **“New Jewish Months”** and Nisan is now the ***“beginning of months to the Israelites.”*** I have also used the names that the Babylonians (about 1100 years later) attached to these months.

This calendar is still in use today in one form or another, and the Jewish months do, in fact, correspond to the secular dates shown. What that means is we begin our year in January, but the Jewish year does not begin until about the 15<sup>th</sup> of March – and has been so ever since the Exodus!

Hopefully, this explanation helps us understand how God “changed their calendar.”

### **INSTITUTION OF THE PASSOVER SACRIFICE – (Exodus 12:43 – 51)**

In the interval between when Moses warned the Pharaoh of the death of the first-born and the time it was carried out, Moses received instructions for the institution of a new religious rite that would allow the Israelites to save their first-born at the same time when each Egyptian family was suffering the loss of theirs. Note that their salvation, much like ours, depended on a sacrifice. On the first day of the month of Nissan, two weeks before the Exodus from Egypt, God told Moses and Aaron: *“This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house:’”* one lamb for each household that has been kept separate from the flock until the fourteenth day of this month.

*“Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. 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.”* (NKJV) The instructions are specific. If the Israelites wanted to please God, they would follow them to the letter. The same is true for us today. If we want to spend eternity with God, we will follow His instructions to the letter.



***“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. 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.” (NKJV)*** Let’s remember that this is to be an everlasting statute, a ritual they are to observe even when they get to the Promised Land. Moses told them their children would want to know more about this observance, saying *“What is this service to you?”* Their answer was to be: *“It is a Passover sacrifice to the Lord, for He passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, and He saved our houses!”* I’m sure it required a great deal of faith and courage for the Israelites to carry out this command, because the lamb was one of the “sacred” animals to the ancient Egyptians – one they wouldn’t have dared to kill under normal circumstances.

Let’s fast-forward to midnight (14th day of Nissan) when death came to every household in Egypt, exactly as Moses had warned. ***“And 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.”*** The Pharaoh’s child is among the stricken. Was the Pharaoh personally impacted by all the other nine plagues? We don’t know for sure. But there’s no denying that the death angel visited his home on this night.

***“And he called for Moses and Aaron by night...”***

Remember, the Pharaoh had already told Moses (after the 9th plague) that he never wanted to lay eyes on him again, at which point Moses then agreed and said, *“You got that right. We will never see each other again.”* And, as we discussed, Moses did leave ***“in great anger,”*** but not right at that moment. He proceeded to tell him about the coming 10th plague and added ***“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.”*** So, that being the way their last meeting ended, can it be that Moses is again before the Pharaoh in the middle of the night even though he agreed that they would never see each other again?

Some commentators (Spence, Kalisch) understand this to be a summons to the Pharaoh's presence in spite of that previous threat. John Gill, on the other hand, believes that Pharaoh sent some of his servants in his place. That seems to better fit with Moses' parting statement quoted above from Exodus 11:8. So, I believe Ahmose set up a meeting between his own court officials and Moses and Aaron, or maybe just Moses. After all, he is grieving greatly himself – and I imagine that he might be rather reluctant to look into the face of the man who tried to warn him this would happen.

So here's his message, probably delivered by his servants: ***“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.”*** (NKJV) I seriously doubt that Ahmose was actually asking for a blessing; however, in his grief and time of weakness, he might fear – after what he has brought on his people – that his own life may be in danger. There is no record of Moses praying for him.

Meanwhile, the Israelites have been preparing for their hasty departure. They assembled in groups to eat the Passover lamb before midnight, and now they are fully clothed as they had been told to be. They have packed up their belongings, and *“... asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing.”* The women took the unleavened bread from the ovens, and packed away the remaining unleavened bread. Then, with the preparations concluded, I'm sure they were instructed to gather together and “line up” in a certain way as they awaited the command to go! Chapter 13 will tell us that, even with the rush and excitement of getting everything ready, they still honored the pledge given by their ancestors, and took the bones of Joseph with them.

What about the gold and silver they got from the Egyptians? The King James Version says they ***“borrowed of the Egyptians...”*** The version I quoted above is the New King James which says they ***“asked from the Egyptians...”*** It has been clearly shown by Hengstenberg and Kurtz that *“asked”* is the correct translation. In other words, their Egyptian neighbors were so happy to see them leave, that when the Israelites asked for jewelry and other things (as they were directed to do),

the Egyptians granted their requests. The result was that the Israelites left Egypt, not dressed as slave laborers, but as conquerors, in good clothing and decked with the jewels of the Egyptians. After all, these were the people of God!

The order finally came, and as verses 37 & 38 state, “... *the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle.*”

The “*mixed multitude*” mentioned in verse 38 is thought to be native Egyptians who were anxious to escape the tyranny of the Pharaohs. Cook even suggests that they were the remains of the old Semitic population in the eastern provinces. Whoever they were, according to Numbers 11:4-5 “*Now the mixed multitude who were among them yielded to intense craving... ‘We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic’...*” (NKJV) They were evidently the first to complain and regret leaving Egypt behind.

So, sometime after midnight, on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Nissan, in the year 1527 BC, the children of Israel, after spending 239 years in Egypt, begin their journey to the Promised Land and “As the crow flies,” this first leg of their trip would have only been about 25 to 30 miles. We are not told any other

details about this first distance they traveled – just that they were still in Egypt at this point, but on their way out!



I show two possible routes on this map, both are just guesses. Some experts believe they stayed close to the marked trade routes which may be the red line, but since the Lord was leading them, and the ground is relatively flat with no

rivers to cross, I think they probably went the most direct route, which might be the yellow line.

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Try to picture what this might have looked like from a bird's eye view: The Israelite men alone numbered about 600,000! There were probably at least that many women, and then with the children and that "mixed multitude," plus all the flocks, herds, and "*very much cattle*," several commentators estimate around 2 million people. It would have been quite a sight to see!

By the way, at that time the Sinai Peninsula was under Egyptian control, and the borders of Egypt extended all the way to the river at Kadesh Barnea. In order to be out of Egyptian controlled territory, they would need to be in Midian.

One more point must be addressed: verses 40-41. ***"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, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt."*** Many people would say that the math problem we did back in lesson 2 – where we proved their time in Egypt to be 239 years – was completely unnecessary because it tells us right here that they spent 430 years there!

The key word in understanding this passage is the word "*sojourn*." What is actually being said in verses 40 - 41 is that the sojourning of the children of Israel was 430 years. And we are told in Genesis that the sojourning began when Abram left Haran and went to Canaan. He was promised that his descendants would be given that land, and starting with this exodus, that is about to happen. Even though much earlier, Abraham had lived there on Abimelech's invitation, neither he nor any other Israelite ever owned any part of Canaan. Back in lesson 2, we also looked at Galatians 3:16-17 where Paul says that the time from the promise made to Abraham until the law was given was 430 years. Ergo, the total time of sojourning – beginning with the promise to Abraham, and ending with the exodus – is 430 years. This is what these verses are telling us. It just so happens that the last 239 of those "sojourning years" were spent in Egypt.

As the Israelites are beginning their journey, we end lesson 9. If you are interested in learning more about how Jews celebrate the Passover, you may continue reading below.

**ABOUT WHAT FOLLOWS –**

The material below comes from different sources. I did not write it, but I have formatted it to better fit into this document. The first segment is a simplified version of the rituals involved in the Passover, focusing on the “Seder meal”, followed by a brief powerpoint presentation, and ending with a detailed view of each segment of the Passover that I copied from one of my more often visited Jewish websites. If you are interested in how the Jewish people observe the Passover, this will provide most of the information you need.

**THE SIMPLIFIED VIEW**

**Cleansing the Home of Leaven:**

Jews start the seder by cleansing the house of all leaven.

**Unleavened Bread:**

One of the core elements in the meal was unleavened bread. Unleavened bread was symbolic of purity. It must be 100% leaven free. It also was pierced as it was baked in the oven. During the meal, (3) pieces of unleavened bread would be placed in a bag. One loaf was called the bread of affliction. It was broken in half and one half was wrapped in a linen cloth and hidden or “buried” – the celebration could not end until that loaf was broken, buried, and brought back.

**Drinking from the Cup:**

Everyone participating in a seder drinks four cups of wine or grape juice. The first cup of the celebration symbolizes sanctification. The second cup is used to remember the ten plagues. The third cup signifies blessing and redemption. The final cup was a cup of praise and expectation.

**Greens:**

Every Seder meal would have some kind of greens. You might think of a garnish, like parsley. They represent life. During the meal, the greens are dipped in salt water. This is symbolic on a few levels. The salt water represents the tears of life, and this process reminds the Jews that their ancestors were under a heavy burden in Egypt... the tears of slavery. It also reminds them that a life

without redemption is full of tears. Lastly, the salt water would remind them of the parting of the Red Sea and how God saved them through salt water – life being drawn out of salt water and tears.

**Bitter Herb or Horseradish:**

A piece of unleavened bread is used to dip in the horseradish. This element symbolizes the tears of bitterness.

**Apple and Nut Paste:**

This paste represented the mortar the Jews used to make bricks for Pharaoh. The point was to remember that even the bitterest trials in life can be made sweet by God's redemption.

**Egg:**

A hard boiled egg is used to remember the festival sacrifice expected to be performed in the tabernacle or Temple. Since the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., the Jews would slice the egg and dip it in the salt water to mourn the loss of the Temple and sacrificial system.

**Shank Bone of a Lamb:**

Reminds the Jews of the Passover lambs that were central to the first Passover in Exodus. The lamb had to be a firstborn male. It had to be pure and without blemish. It could not have any broken bones.

**Open Door:**

I think the end of a Passover Seder is fascinating. One of the youngest participants will be told to go to the front door of the home and open the door. They leave the door wide open. Why? They are anticipating another guest. They are looking for the prophet Elijah! They are anticipating his presence. They are expecting the forerunner of the Messiah to arrive and tell them, "Hold on, the Messiah is coming!"

**Application:**

Every year, Jews all across the world wait in expectation. Year after year, they sit around their table remembering the Egyptian bondage.

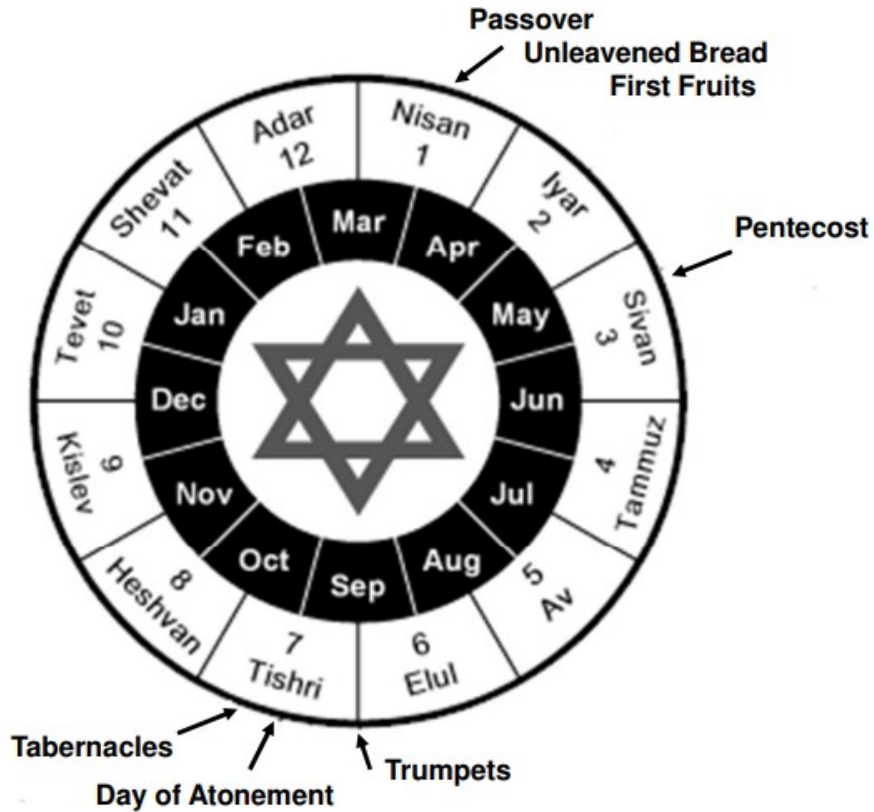
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They celebrate the release of their ancient ancestors and look forward to a day of personal and national redemption. They are looking forward to FREEDOM.

### THE POWER-POINT PRESENTATION –







**Passover was the first of the feasts ordained by God to be observed by the Jews. Jews have continued to observe this feast since the first Passover 3,500 years ago and it remains the most important feast for the Jews down to today.**

**The Passover Seder (Seder means “order”) meal is based on directives given in Exodus 12 and included:**

**Lamb – to remind them of the blood sacrifice of the unblemished lamb that saved them as God passed over them.**

**Unleavened bread – to remind them of the haste of departure.**

**Bitter herbs – to remind them of the bitterness of slavery.**



### **Feast of Early First Fruits – Sfirat Haomer**

**The feast day was observed the day after the Passover Sabbath.**

**Early First Fruits commemorated the very first harvest of the year.**

**The literal Hebrew meaning of Sfirat Haomer: “a promise to come.”**

**The early fruit trees were ready to harvest and a offering from them was brought to the temple as a special sacrifice.**

**A sheaf of barley was harvested and brought to the Temple where the High Priest would wave it in every direction before the Lord and the people.**

**The observance acknowledged God’s provision for them and His sovereignty over all the earth.**

**First Fruits was a reminder that since God had blessed them with the early harvest, He would certainly bless them with a future harvest.**



## **Feast of Unleavened Bread**

**The Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on the next night following Passover and lasts for seven days.**

**The Israelites flight from Egypt began hastily the day following the Passover, and the bread they took with them did not have time to rise, thus was unleavened.**

**In the observance of the feast day of Hag HaMatzah or Unleaved Bread, the unleavened bread became a symbol of their freedom and redemption from slavery in Egypt.**

**Leaven was also a metaphor for sin as the leaven in bread represented impurity or sin, thus unleavened bread represented purity and without sin.**



**During the Seder, four cups of wine or pure grape juice are sipped at designated times.**

**The first cup – the cup of sanctification opens the Seder to set this meal apart from all others as special to the Lord.**

**The second cup – the cup of deliverance recalls the ten plagues.**

**The third cup – the cup of redemption emphasizes the redemption Israel received from the sacrifice of the lamb.**

**The fourth cup – the cup of praise commemorates the acceptance of the Israelites as God's people.**

**THE DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PASSOVER –**

**THE JEWISH PASSOVER:**

In the third month after the Exodus, the Lord established His Mosaic covenant with Israel; establishing their law, priesthood, calendar, and their holy convocations. And He purposed to fulfill His promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to deliver their descendants into the land of Canaan, and give that land to them as an eternal inheritance. Because of that, the celebration of the Passover – commanded to be observed with the roasting of a Paschal Lamb, and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs – was consecrated as an eternal ordinance of remembrance with the nation of Israel, and for more than three thousand years, the Jewish people have been celebrating this occurrence each year in what is called a Seder, meaning “order” of the Passover. The booklet used to tell the story is called a Haggadah.

**THE HAGGADAH:**

The Haggadah is a complex piece of rabbinic literature, written predominantly in Hebrew, with parts also in Aramaic. Its style is like the Talmud and Midrash which have a homiletic or story-telling quality to them, very similar to how Jesus taught His disciples. These stories are bolstered with illustrative elements, such as the Seder plate, that activates all five of our sensory conduits. The whole point is to get you to think.

**THE SEDER:**

The Seder is considered a family affair, and it is common to invite others that might otherwise not have the means to participate. Seders are long, ranging anywhere from two to more than four hours. Since the Seder cannot begin until after dusk, an Orthodox Seder can go until midnight. Seders are both joyful and celebratory and involve an elaborate dinner with an assortment of unleavened kosher foods. Community Seders today are quite common in many Jewish congregations. What has also been growing in popularity are Messianic and Christian observances of the Passover that correlate events of the Exodus to the coming of our Messiah, including His death, burial, and resurrection. We will make those same correlations in this teaching. Some churches are even starting to call their communion services, “Passover communion.”

**BIBLICAL ORDINANCES:**

What is traditionally characterized as Passover (Pesach) today is comprised of three separate but overlapping convocations; The Sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb (Korban Pesach), The Festival of Unleavened Bread (Hag Ha'matzot), and The Offering of First Fruits (Reisheet Katzir). On the day of Passover sacrifice which always falls on the fourteenth day of the first month in the Hebrew calendar (Nissan), the priests inspect and prepare the lambs for slaughter in the morning. Then starting in the afternoon, they offer them as Passover sacrifices on the bronze altar in the Temple. The sacrifices continue throughout the night, ceasing before dawn as commanded by the Lord. This effectively intertwined the day of the Passover sacrifice and the Festival of Unleavened Bread into one continuous convocation and celebration.

The first and seventh days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread are ordained as days of rests, Sabbaths. On the day after this Sabbath (not to be confused with Saturday) the Jewish people are required to bring a sheaf of the first fruits of their harvest to the priest. Fifty days from this second day began the counting of weeks, which established the date for the Feast of Weeks (Shavuot, also known as the Day of Pentecost).

The seven weeks between the second day of Passover and the Feast of Weeks is known as the period of counting the Omer. When the Temple stood in Jerusalem, the Jewish people would bring a sheaf of barley (called an Omer) on the second day of Passover. After the destruction of the Temple, this seven-week period became a time of semi-mourning.

On the thirty-third day of counting the Omer the Jews celebrate Lag B'Omer, the only day during the seven weeks when weddings are allowed. According to tradition, a terrible plague struck the students of Rabbi Akiva during the Omer period, but on the thirty-third day, the plague miraculously ended. During this Omer period, it is believed that Jesus ascended to heaven at the age of thirty-three.

The period of counting the Omer concludes with the Feast of Weeks, also called an offering of the First Fruits (Bechorim), which in ancient times traditionally consisted of a wheat offering. While Passover celebrates the miraculous Exodus from slavery in Egypt, the Feast of Weeks celebrates the giving of the Torah (Law) at Mount Sinai. However, there is a greater Messianic fulfillment of these biblical festivals.

We now understand that Christ Jesus perfectly fulfilled these four events at His first advent. He was scourged and crucified on the day of the Passover sacrifice. He was buried before the Sabbath on this first day. He lay in the tomb on the second day, this being the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and a Sabbath rest. And He rose from the tomb early on the morning of the third day, this being the first day of the week and the Feast of First Fruits (what we call Resurrection Sunday). Fifty days after this Sunday came the Feast of Weeks, the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit fell in Jerusalem, and the church was born in the Power of the Spirit to go forth and preach the gospel. Everything was perfectly fulfilled exactly according to God's Holy calendar.

#### **PREPARATION FOR THE SEDER:**

Before starting the Passover Seder, two important traditions take place. On the evening preceding the Passover, the Jewish people search all their property for leaven (Chametz), by the light of a candle. And then on the eve of the Seder before sunset, the mother or woman of the house lights the festival candles (Le'hadlik Ner) like those lit for Shabbat. The Jews see Jesus as the fulfillment of these traditions: "Purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump." For indeed Christ, the Jew's Passover, was sacrificed for them. They keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" and "All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it" (John 1:3-5).

#### **ORDER OF THE SEDER:**

The Seder itself is comprised of fifteen parts, starting with Kiddush (sanctification) of the meal, and ending with the prayers of acceptance. Dinner is served about midway through the Seder.

This is a welcomed treat as most attendees by then have been sitting for well over an hour, reciting scripture and nibbling on dry Matzah and bitter herbs. The order of the Seder is attributed to Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki), who correlated the fifteen discrete steps of the Seder with the fifteen steps that the Levites took to ascend into the Temple, and the fifteen Songs of Ascent (Shir Ha'maalot) that they intoned during their ascent. Psalms 120-134.

The Passover Seder plate (a relatively late addition), is comprised of several required and several added elements and required where the Paschal Lamb (today represented by a shank bone called Zaro'ah), unleavened bread (Matzah), and bitter herbs (Maror) represented by horseradish, endive, or romaine lettuce. Added elements include a boiled egg; parsley dipped in saltwater or red wine vinegar, and a sweet fruit and nut dish called Charosette. The Lord also required that all sacrifices be offered with salt and a drink offering of wine, so these were incorporated into the Seder from the services in the Temple. Before the twelfth century, the practice was to dip the leafy vegetable into red wine symbolizing the blood of the Paschal sacrifice.

#### **FOUR CUPS OF WINE:**

There are several rabbinic opinions as to the meaning of the four cups of wine, however commonly accepted is their correlation to this scripture. "Therefore say to the children of Israel: I am the Lord; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you as My people, and I will be your God" (Exodus 6:6). Here we see four prophetic promises for the nation of Israel, these being the cup of sanctification, the cup of deliverance, the cup of redemption, and the cup of restoration. We know that Jesus has presently fulfilled the first three cups, so there is still one cup yet to be fulfilled at His second coming—this being the cup of restoration.

Another explanation to the four cups is that they are a prophetic picture of the four cups of salvation that Israel will drink in the Messianic future, correlating with these scriptures. "O Lord, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot" (Psalm 16:5); "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over"

(Psalm 23:5); and “I will take up the cup of salvation, And call upon the name of the Lord” (Psalm 116:13).

**THE NIGHT OF WATCHING:**

Passover is often called “the night of watching,” a night that has been watched continuously since the six days of creation. As cited in the Talmud, “In the month of Nissan (the first month), Israel was delivered, and in the month of Nissan they will be delivered again in the time to come.” Therefore, Israel’s final redemption will begin on the same night as their first redemption. For this reason, Elijah—the harbinger of the Messiah—is the logical symbol for the Passover Seder. Jesus said, “Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things” (Matthew 17:11). And he is coming again before the return of the Lord, hence the tradition of setting aside a fifth cup of wine—called the cup of Elijah. There was a tradition at one time to drink a fifth cup of wine without reciting any blessings. Today this is represented by the additional cup that is set aside and not drunk.

**THE BREAD OF AFFLICTION:**

On the Passover table are three unleavened pieces of bread (Matzot). The middle Matzah is broken in two. The smaller piece is returned to its place between the two unleavened breads, and the larger piece is wrapped in linen cloth and hidden. This larger piece is called the “Afikoman,” translated from Greek meaning “that which comes after dinner” or “desert.” After dinner, the younger children will search for the hidden Afikoman, and the winner will receive a prize, often chocolate or candy.

We can see the direct correlation to Jesus where it says, “Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury” (John 19:40). And because of Israel’s overall rejection of their Messiah, Yeshua said, “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes” (Luke 19:42). But we know that in her appointed time, Israel will search for her Messiah and she will find Him, “and so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: The deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob” (Romans 11:26).

## A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF EXODUS

Ron Roberts

Lesson 9

Matzah is called “the bread of affliction.” Since the original Passover was intended to set a new course for the nation of Israel—breaking with the things of the past—it is apparent that the “bread of affliction” points to something to come. Jews understand that Christ is that bread. He is not only the true bread of life that came down from heaven, but He is the One who was afflicted for our transgressions, “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted” (Isaiah 53:4).

The rabbis teach that the bread of affliction was to be eaten by someone designated as a Onen. An Onen is defined as someone who is in a state of bereavement (Aninut), the period between the death of a near relative and their burial. The Lord God is that Onen. He sent His Son to die on the cross for our sin. And since the commandment of bitter herbs was to be eaten with the Paschal Lamb, we can conclude they also are a prophetic reference to the suffering Messiah, and not exclusively to our bondage in Egypt.

The portion of the Haggadah about the bread of affliction reads as follows: “Let all who are hungry eat; let all who are needy come and celebrate the Passover.” This is a direct reference to Isaiah and a universal call to salvation where it says, “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price... Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you—The sure mercies of David” (Isaiah 55:1 & 3).

It is interesting to note this call is not made on the other two great assemblies; Pentecost (Shavuot), and Tabernacles (Sukkot). Why? Because salvation for either Jew or Gentile is found in none other than the Lamb of God who took away the sins of the world, and His sacrifice was made on the Passover. This verse in Isaiah promises the everlasting covenant of salvation to all flesh—Jew and Gentile alike.

On the night of the last supper (the last Seder), Jesus officiated the New Covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah; “In the same manner He [Jesus] also took the cup after [the Passover] supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it,

in remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat this bread [of affliction] and drink this cup [of wine], you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes" (1Corinthians 11:25-26).

**FOUR QUESTIONS:**

A popular section of the Haggadah is the reciting of this classic question, "What makes this night different from all other nights?" The question—asked by the youngest child—is revealed in four parts: Why do we dip the vegetable twice? Why do we eat unleavened bread? Why do we eat bitter herbs? And why do we eat while reclining to the left? This last question was a later substitute for one that was removed after the destruction of the Temple, "Why do we eat only roasted meat on this night?" I have added this one back into the Seders I teach because of its direct correlation to Jesus.

**A COVENANT OF SALT:**

It was interesting to discover that leafy vegetables were historically dipped in red wine to symbolize the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb. Parsley is commonly substituted today as Hyssop is not available in most western parts of the world. This practice was later switched to dipping in red wine vinegar, and then to saltwater to commemorate our tears of affliction in Egypt. Conceivably, the saltwater could also signify the tears shed over Jerusalem because of the destruction He saw coming to her. However, there is a much deeper meaning that lies in the suffering our Messiah endured on the cross for our transgressions. This selfless act officiated in the earthly realm—and served as a witness to the nations—of the New Covenant Jesus made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

We know that salt is the sign of God's eternal and everlasting promises, calling them "covenants of salt." One He made with the house of Aaron—the priestly lineage that came through Levi, the third-born son of Israel; and the other He made with the house of David—the kingly lineage that came through the tribe of Judah. For it says, "it is a covenant of salt forever before the Lord with you [Aaron] and your descendants with you" (Numbers 18:19), and "Should you not know that the Lord God of Israel gave the dominion over Israel to David forever, to him and his sons, by a covenant of salt?" (2 Chronicles 13:5). Jesus is the fulfillment of both covenants, for He is both the King of



Israel and her high priest forever whose name is Melchizedek—translating from Hebrew; “my King of righteousness.”

**THE FINAL EXODUS:**

There is an interesting story in the Haggadah called the discourse of Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah. Rabbi Elazar said that we must remember the day we came out of Egypt, every day and all the days of our lives. The sages then added, “The days of your life” implies our present world and includes the future time of the Messiah. Rabbi Ben Zoma further asserted that “In the future, Israel will cease to mention the exodus from Egypt. As it says, “‘Therefore behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord, that it shall no more be said, ‘The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ but, ‘The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.’ For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers.’” (Jeremiah 16:14-15)

This does not imply that the exodus would not be mentioned, but rather the deliverance from the great exile of Israel to the nations of the earth shall take precedence, and would be an even greater deliverance than Egypt. The other implication is that Israel’s restoration remains incomplete.

The Haggadah asserts that God has calculated the end. This phrase is commonly used by the rabbis to refer to the end of the age and the coming of the Messiah. In prophetic literature, this is called “the Day of the Lord.” The rabbis understand that Israel will endure incredible persecution before the arrival of the Messiah. The prophet Jeremiah called it “the time of Jacob’s trouble.”

Therefore, the Seder is as much prospective as it is retrospective, and is even more about the future deliverance of Israel than just the remembrance of the past. Its prophetic quality requires us to view the trials of Israel from the exodus through our present day, and into the future itself.

Jesus warned His disciples when He said, “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake” (Matthew 24:9). And Peter said, “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy” (1 Peter 4:12-13).

**GOD'S JUDGMENT:**

As a part of the reading of the Exodus story, it is traditional to call out each of the ten plagues; dipping one's finger into a wine cup, and dabbing it onto a plate. This is not just a function of mere convenience, but a prophetic demonstration of the finger of God smiting the Egyptians. Rabbi Eliezer said that each of the plagues represents the four dimensions of the fierceness of God's divine anger: wrath, indignation, trouble, and messengers of evil. God Himself executed the final, and climactic judgment, and not by a messenger, seraph, or agent. No other created being could have distinguished the seed of the firstborn. Only God can, for it says, "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" (Exodus 12:12).

This final judgment was executed at "the division of the night," otherwise known as midnight. And so, it shall be with the coming of our Messiah, for it says, "And at midnight a cry was heard: Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!" (Matthew 25:6).

**THE FESTIVAL MEAL:**

The festival meal (Shulchan Orech), begins with eating a hard-boiled egg dipped in saltwater. There were two Temple offerings given on the Passover; the Paschal Lamb (Korban Pesach), and the festival sacrifice (Korban Chagig'yah). With the destruction of the Temple, these offerings were symbolically replaced on the Seder plate by a shank bone (Zeroah) representing the Paschal Lamb, and an egg (Beitzah) representing the festival sacrifice.

The Hebrew word "Zeroah" literally means "arm," alluding to, "And I will redeem you with an outstretched arm" (Exodus 6:6). The Aramaic word for egg is "Beya," which also means "pray" or "please." The Jerusalem Talmud, therefore, tells us that the shank bone and egg together quietly supplicate to the Lord, "May it please the Merciful God to redeem us with an outstretched arm." This, again, is the anticipated promise of restoration for Israel.

**GRACE:**

In Jewish tradition, grace is done after the meal, for it says, “When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you” (Deuteronomy 8:10). The order of grace is set up in four parts: The first benediction is that of “Who Feeds” (Ha’zan). The second is the benediction of the land (Birkat Ha’aretz). The third is “Who builds Jerusalem” (Boneh Yerushalayim). And the fourth is “Who is kind and deals kindly” (Birkat Ha’tov Vecha’mativ).

**CLOSING:**

The Seder is concluded with a popular phrase, “Next year in Jerusalem!” This is not just a dream or hope of the Jewish people to return to the land of Israel, as many are now living there, but an ultimate promise of something much greater. At the very core of the Jewish faith and religion is the belief that God will one day destroy death—the death of death