

Death of the First Born

We have through the first nine plagues come full circle to where God was at the beginning when He called Moses cf:

Exodus 4:22 And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel [is] my son, [even] my firstborn: 23 And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, [even] thy firstborn.

We pick up the story after the first nine plagues.

Exodus 10:27-29 But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. 28 And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in [that] day thou seest my face thou shalt die. 29 And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more.

"Moses said, "I will see thy face no more ..." This seems to terminate the interview here, but it does not. The present interview does not terminate here, but is continued into the next chapter.

Both critical and conservative scholars alike accept this reading. Moses does not leave the presence of Pharaoh until Exodus 11:8.

Moses did not flee from Pharaoh's because of the vicious threats. Moses accepted Pharaoh's words without fear then calmly told Pharaoh plainly beginning in verse 4 about the final plague ... but first we have a time out so Moses can give us information about what the Lord had already said to Moses. This should be read as a parenthesis.

Exodus 11:1-3 And the LORD (had) said unto 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.

"And The LORD said unto Moses ..." This means, "God HAD Already said unto Moses".

These first 3 verses of this paragraph should be read parenthetically there is no excuse for any scholar's misunderstanding this fact. Because the ancient Samaritan text of Exodus arranges it in such a way as to prove the ancients understood this being a past tense verb.

Examples in English are: "we had arrived"; "they had written".

Exodus 11:2 Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold.

The word "borrow" is a miss translation "ask" would be a better word. There was no intention of returning the gifts.

God had long ago foretold cf:

Genesis 15:14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

Exodus 11:3 And the LORD gave the people favour 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.

God's influence is one of the reasons why the Egyptians so readily parted with their valuables.

Fear must have entered into it also. They had already experienced many disasters through Pharaoh's refusal to grant Moses' demands.

Guilt could have played a part they had exploited shamelessly the Hebrew slaves, they had been a part of the genocide by helping enforce the killing of the Hebrew male babies.

The plagues had exalted Moses and made him to be very great.

Plague 10 The death of the firstborn. Moses announces to Pharaoh himself, who was a pretending god the coming plague of the death of the first born. The ancient Egyptians believed that in order for a person's soul to survive in the afterlife it needed to have food and water. The opening of the mouth ceremony was a ritual that was performed by the first born son or the heir apparent so that the person who died could eat and drink again in the afterlife.

Now reading 10:28 with 11:4 this is Moses' response to Pharaoh's threat

Exodus 10: 28-29 And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in [that] day thou seest my face thou shalt die. 29 And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more.

Exodus 11:4-5 And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: 5 And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that [is] behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.

"Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt ..." What midnight was this? All guessing here is useless, for it is not revealed. If the preparations for the institution of the Passover had already been completed by Israel, then the midnight plague could have been the midnight of that very day Moses prophesied the final plague.

On the other hand, if the detailed instructions for the preparation, slaying and eating of the Passover lamb was given to the people by Moses following this final interview with Pharaoh, then that midnight could well have been up to fourteen nights later.

It seems that the exact midnight was unspecified, leaving Pharaoh to be afraid and tremble in his boots every midnight until the fatal blow came.

"All the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die ..." Pharaoh had continued to refuse the right of God's first-born (Israel) to worship Him. (Exodus 4:22-23) Pharaoh will now experience the appropriate judgment, the death of his and the rest of Egypt's first-born,

Did the first-born of Pharaoh really die? Yes, indeed. No matter which Pharaoh it was, whether it was Tutmose III his first born did not succeed him and Amenhotep II first born did not succeed him. Even if you believe in the late date Rameses II first born did not succeed him.

Moses now knew that the victory was the LORD's and that his people would soon be delivered. Moses, writing Exodus long after the events included this here as an explanation, not only of his confident reply to Pharaoh, but also of other events such as the willingness of the Egyptians to give their treasures to the Israelites.

Exodus 11:6 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.

"And there shall be a great cry ..." "The Spirit inspires the writer here to see the Exodus as an illustration of the eschatological (final) victory of the LORD ... like the 2nd coming of Christ this will be a type or shadow of the eternal judgment.

Once the Israelites had cried under the whips of the slave-masters, but now the oppressors cry from the judgment inflicted by God.

Exodus 11:7-8 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.

"Not a dog shall move his tongue against man or beast (in Israel) ..."
This is a proverbial expression meaning either that "not a dog would bark," or that "no dog would harm." What a marvel this is! What prevented dogs from barking on a night when thousands of people were weeping and wailing all over Egypt? That God controls, not merely, all men, but all animals is likewise seen in His stopping the mouths of the lions when Daniel was cast into their den.

"That ye may know how that the Lord doth make a distinction between the Egyptians and Israel ..." These words could not have been addressed to any other person than Pharaoh and are further proof that these verses are a continuation of the narrative interrupted by the parenthesis Exodus 11:1-3.

Exodus 11:8 And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out. And he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger.

Pharaoh had forbidden Moses to ever again to appear in his presence, but Moses' blunt reply is, "Very well, then let your servants appear in my presence." This of course happened, with even Pharaoh himself joining in the begging Exodus 12:30-33.

"Shall come down ..." "Going from a nobler place to one of less distinction is called descending.

Exodus 11:9-10 And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt. 10 And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

"And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders ..." This is a summary of all the first nine plagues in which Moses and Aaron had a part.

This Tenth Plague, the death of the first-born, was accomplished by God Himself WITHOUT any human participation. God delivered them without Pharaoh's help, and in spite of him. Throughout this marvelous narrative of the plagues, the thing that stands out is the destruction of Egypt's paganism ... Egypt's false gods are dead!

This is a transitional chapter. Up to this point, Moses has been dealing with Pharaoh, but, with God's judgment and punishment of Egypt about to be finished ... now Moses' concern beginning with Exodus 12 will be with Israel. This section of Exodus ending with this chapter may be called JUDGMENT. The rest of the book of Exodus may be called DELIVERANCE.

God will slay the first-born, and Moses will be busy with instructions concerning what Israel is to do as their deliverance approaches.

The fact that one scholar names one god and others cite different gods is due to the fact that each wonder confronted and discredited multiple pagan deities ... with many of their myths overlapping.

Anuket&Hapi.jpg

Bloody water discredited all the river gods Anuket & Hapi

heket.jpg

Frogs against Heket, the goddess of reproduction.

Geb.jpg

Lice against Geb, god of the earth.

Khepri.jpg

Flies against Khepri the sacred scarab.

Apis&Hathor.jpg

Murrain on Egyptian cattle against their sacred bull Apis, Hathor cow

Isis-Hathor-Nile.jpg

Boils on man and beast against Isis, Hathor and the Nile it' self.

Nut.jpg

Hail Exodus against Nut - Egyptian Goddess of the Sky.

Seth.jpg

Locusts against Seth- the Egyptian god of Storms and Disorder

ra.jpg

Darkness against Ra the sun god.

Ptah.jpg

**10th Plague Death of the first-born against Plah (PLUH), the god of life
Perhaps this was a blanket attack against all the gods of Egypt.**

**After the plague of darkness felt throughout the land was lifted,
Pharaoh resumed his position of "bargaining with the Lord".**

**He offered Moses another "deal." Since virtually all of the Egyptian
animals had been consumed by the judgments of the Lord, Pharaoh
now consented to the request made, to let the people go, but they
must leave their animals behind.**

**This was a totally unacceptable offer, as the animals were to be used
as the actual sacrifice to the Lord and Moses had previously told
Pharaoh he too must furnish animals suitable for sacrifice.**

The Lord is uncompromising when He has set the terms.

**Enraged by the refusal, Pharaoh pronounced the last deadly plague to
be unleashed upon the land from his very own lips as he warns Moses,
"Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in
that day thou seest my face thou shalt die."**

Exodus 11:4ff "And Moses said, "Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it anymore."

It is also observable that all of the plagues without exception, and the last one particularly, were directed squarely against Pharaoh himself, a pagan deity of top rank.

Apophis-Ra-Seth-2.jpg

"Each night, according to Egyptian mythology, the sun fought and overcame the snake, Ap'o-phis, who symbolized the hostile darkness. As a god, Pharaoh was believed to be the incarnation of the sun, and the hostile darkness was his enemy also."

That approaching midnight God had just announced through Moses to Pharaoh would be the ultimate exposure and defeat of pagan god Pharaoh, who himself also would ultimately perish in the Red Sea.

Why were so many plagues necessary? Egypt had many false gods, and it was necessary that all of them should be discredited in the eyes of the people and destroyed.

When God stated that He would slay the first-born ... People say "God is a God of peace and Love and He would never do that" ... You hear it all the time ... People want to remake God in their minds own image. Folks, I've got bad news for you: God will eventually slay the entire human race causing great eternal "wailing and gnashing of teeth"

The sole exceptions to this eternal destruction is the good news that the redeemed "in Christ Jesus our LORD" will be passed over into everlasting life with Him.

God wiped out all mankind except for the single family of Noah.

These facts are fully revealed in scripture. Facts concerning the nature of God, especially His utter abhorrence of all that is evil, and His promise of justice upon the wicked.

This Plague was all God's doing ... no man helped and no dog barked.

What was the purpose of these plagues?

One purpose was the founding of the Messianic nation of Israel through their deliverance from Egyptian slavery and bondage.

Another purpose was that of striking a fatal blow against paganism.

It was also for the purpose of spreading the knowledge of the true God over a world that was turning their backs on their Creator cf: Joshua 2: 9-11 and Rahab's had heard all about the Exodus by the time Joshua sent the 2 spies to Jericho.

The punishment of Egypt for their sins against Israel has also a clear purpose. It was not just Pharaoh who sinned the Egyptian people were far from being innocent bystanders. We ourselves should consider our involvement with the modern Sodom all around us ...

The Egyptians had stood by consenting to the enslavement of Israel and therefore shared in the responsibility for their oppression ... Failure to speak up and protest injustice can be just as great a sin as the sin actually committed by the wicked.

Throughout our studies we have seen that from before the foundation of the world the only remedy for our sin is the death of an innocent victim.

Titus 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

Genesis 3: 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

The Old Testament was a shadow of things to come the future coming New Testament Church.

Hebrews 8:5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, [that] thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

Hebrews 10:1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, [and] not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

Romans 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Likewise the Passover lamb's blood is symbolic of Christ's blood to be shed as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world cf:

Hebrews 9:22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

John speaking of false religion in the Christian age says they are not written in the book of life:

Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world

Christ had to shed His blood once and for all time with the perfect sacrifice cf:

Hebrews 9:26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself

There are many differences in the instructions for this first Passover from later changes that followed the giving of the ordinances of the Mosaic Law, changes made not by priests, but by God Himself.

As for the unbelieving critical scholars who wonder where the offering of a lamb originated, let them read the Genesis account of the sacrifices made by Cain and Abel, where the words "sin lieth at the door" which is a reference to the lamb as a sin offering laying in the door right in front of him.

The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world was typified by the Passover lamb in this chapter, it was typified by the sin offering of Abel ... thus continuing the marvelous figure of "The Lamb Slain from the Foundation of the World," a figure that began in the shadow of the gates of the garden of Eden.

Exodus 12:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

" And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt,..."
These instructions were not ceremonially developed at some later age, but that they were revealed by God and tied to the first Passover before the events was memorialized. The real Passover that is acceptable to God was fulfilled when the LORD Jesus Christ instituted the Lord's Supper, commemorating his death and looking forward to his resurrection.

Exodus 12:2 This month [shall be] unto you the beginning of months: it [shall be] the first month of the year to you.

"This month ... beginning of months ... the first month of the year ..."

According to Exodus 13:4, this was the month Abib.

This was the name of that month used by Israel until after the Babylonian captivity, but following the captivity the Jews began to call it Nisan, as it is today.

If Exodus was written late by the priesthood inventing a history for the Jews they would never have used this word Abib instead of Nisan.

Exodus 12:3 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:

"Congregation ..." the very first use of the term "congregation" for the chosen people, a term later used for the New Israel of God's church

"In the tenth day of this month ... take every man a lamb ..." Notice that the plural "lambs" is generally not used in Biblical references to the Passover ... despite the fact of there were literally thousands and thousands of them sacrificed. This was no accident, but was God's way of indicating that there was only ONE true Passover lamb in HIS mind. That lamb is Christ! Why was the lamb taken on the tenth day? This was four days before its slaughter ... the antitype being:.

Christ entered Jerusalem four days before his crucifixion, and waited 4 days until his crucifixion.

There really is no other explanation of this phenomenal verse.

Each head of a household took the lamb and killed it at the appointed time. If this story had originated late during the Babylonian captivity they would have had all the lambs killed by the Priests.

No ! Moses wrote the account of this the First Passover.

Exodus 12:4 And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take [it] according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.

Exodus 12:5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take [it] out from the sheep, or from the goats:

"a male of the first year:..." Here too the Christ is typified.

It was specifically foretold that the Seed of Woman should crush the serpent's head. A male lamb a year old would be in the prime of life, just as Christ was crucified at about age 33, in the very prime of His earthly strength and maturity. There were also other qualities of a lamb which provided a suitable prefiguration of Christ. One, revealed later was the wonder of a lamb's noiseless submission to death, as the prophet would later say:

Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth

"Your lamb shall be without blemish ..." The best and perfection is a qualification for any sacred use, and was also a shadow of the sinlessness of the Son of God, the coming Christ.

Exodus 12:6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening

"the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it ..." Only the heads of households actually did the killing, but, they represented all of Israel. In this too, one sees the responsibility of all Israel, in the crucifixion of Christ. It was the sins of ALL OF US which crucified Him ... for He died for my sins according to the scriptures ... yours ?

"Kill it at even ..." "Literally, between the two evenings." between 3:00 p.m. and sundown, Christ suffered death at the ninth hour 3:00 p.m., as noted in Matthew 27:46 exactly when the priests were killing the Passover Lambs ... they were also responsible for killing "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world."

Exodus 12:7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike [it] on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

The Lord Jesus Christ is seen in every line of this Passover narrative. Just as the blood of that Passover was sprinkled upon the side-posts and lintels of the doors WE must have the blood of the Lamb on the door posts and lintels of our lives. All who draw near to God in Christ today must do so with the blood of Christ as our Passover being our sacrifice, cleansing and sanctification before God.

Hebrews 10:22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Exodus 12:8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; [and] with bitter [herbs] they shall eat it.

"Roast with fire ..." The instruction to "roast" (not boil) the lamb Justin Martyr, who like a former Rabbi, found the cross of Christ in it. He said that for roasting the lamb, two wooden stakes were used, one passing from end to end length-wise through the animal, and the other an upright thrust through the center and attached to the cross-member, thus forming a cross

"Unleavened bread ..." symbolizing the very HASTE of the people, Also the removal of leaven from their houses which was symbolically sin.

"With bitter herbs ..." a symbols of the bitter slavery and hardships of Israel in Egypt and a shadow of the sufferings and death of Our Lord.

Exodus 12:9 Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast [with] fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.

Exodus 12:10 And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.

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.

"Ye shall eat it in haste ..." Fully clothed, hats, shoes, the outer cloak girded in place, and even a walking staff! "Ready to go.

"Neither shall ye break a bone thereof ..." (Exodus 12:46) We comment on this here, because it is implied here in the fact that head, legs, and all of the animal, even the entrails, were to be roasted in one piece. Oh yes, Christ again shines like the Daystar in this type of our true Passover. Not a bone of Christ was broken, despite the fact of a unit of the Roman army was dispatched with orders to break his legs. And, just as they ate that first Passover "in haste," Israel was in a hurry for the true Passover to die, and the purpose of Pilate's order to "break his legs" was that of HASTENING his death (which had already occurred). See John 19:31-33.

"It is the LORDS passover ..." Passover is mercy. God was the author, not only of the first Passover recounted here, but of the far greater and more wonderful Passover, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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.

I will pass through (Exodus 12:12) ... I will pass over (Exodus 12:13) ...The passing THROUGH was in judgment; the passing OVER was in mercy.

"Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments ..." This night will magnify what God had already done during the first nine plagues. That final and fatal night from the greatest to the lowest in all the land of Egypt died in agony at the midnight hour! Even the pagan god Pharaoh, whose first-born was "heir apparent" to the throne and the darling not merely of the royal family but of all Egypt, was not spared. The judgment of God fell upon the palace and the dungeon alike.

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.

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 forever.

Luke 22: 7-20 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. 8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. 9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare? 10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. 11 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? 12 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. 13 And they went, and found as he had

said unto them: and they made ready the passover. 14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. 15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: 16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. 17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide [it] among yourselves: 18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. 19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake [it], and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. 20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup [is] the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

Sources: KJV Bible, theWord.com, Burton Coffman, BW Johnson, Adam Clark, FF Bruce, McKnight and JW McGarvey, George Faulstich Commentaries, Archaeology & the Old Testament by Alfred Hoerth, On the Reliability of the O.T. K.A. Kitchen, Google Images, Halley's Handbook, Wikipedia.