

Exodus 11-12

To review, we see the Bible tells us there are several reasons why God sent these plagues upon Pharaoh and Egypt.

- To answer Pharaoh's question, **Who is the LORD?** ([Exo 5:2](#)). In the plagues, God showed Himself greater than any of the false gods of Egypt
- To show the power of God through Moses ([Exo 9:16](#))
- To give a testimony to the children of Israel for future generations ([Exo 10:2](#))
- To judge the false gods - demons, really - of Egypt ([Exo 12:12](#), [Num 33:4](#))
- To warn the nations -- more than 400 years later, the Philistines remembered the LORD God of Israel as the one who plagued the Egyptians ([1Sa 4:8](#))
- As a testimony of the greatness of God to Israel ([Exo 15:11](#), [Deu 4:34](#))

The plagues were also judgments against Pharaoh who thought himself a god and the Egyptians who believed this lie. I have quipped that the so-called gods were powerless against the plagues because they never existed in the first place. But the Egyptians weren't really crying out to the wind as it were, but to demons who were, in spiritual reality, doing or not doing as they were told. The demons fed the Egyptians the only food they could: big heaping bowls of lies mixed with fears, uncertainty, and doubt.

We can also see that the hardening of Pharaoh's heart was on Pharaoh and not God who merely "gave him over" to what the king had already purposed in his own heart, namely, unbelief.

We also have noted that the 9 plagues intensified from "bothersome" to "destructive" to utter darkness which was a perfect picture of their souls before an utterly Holy God. As horrible as these plagues were, the final one would certainly feel more personal. And while many Egyptian's died in the first nine plagues, many would also be spared. It would be like having thousands die of a virus that may have been distant relatives or acquaintances verses having your parent, sibling, or child die. There is something "more real", so to speak, in the latter case than in the former.

Speaking of "more real", it's about to get "really real".

Last week ended with these words:

[Exodus 10:27-29 NKJV](#) But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. (28) Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Take heed to yourself and see my face no more! For in the day you see my face you shall die!" (29) So Moses said, "You have spoken well. I will never see your face again."

God hardens no man's heart who has not first hardened it himself. That's the same, as God giving over a person to his own choices if he or she resists too long. The same thing happens with the Gospel. The Gospel is meant to soften the stony heart but in some, it hardens it even more. The ultimate responsibility is on the person

The first 3 verses seem out of place because verses 4 through 8 are not a separate time that Moses came to Pharaoh to warn him of the 10th plague. Some have suggested that these first 3 verses were inserted here by Moses when he was writing the Exodus story. Perhaps today, we would see these verses as parenthetical **but others believe that the LORD is speaking into Moses while He is in the presence of Pharaoh.**

[\(Exodus 11:1 NKJV\)](#) **And the LORD said to Moses,** "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets *you* go, he will surely drive you

out of here altogether.

This plague was revealed to Moses on his way to Egypt from Midian.

Exodus 4:21-23 NKJV And the LORD said to Moses, “When you go back to Egypt, see that you do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in your hand. But I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go. (22) Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Israel *is* My son, My firstborn. (23) So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn.” ‘ “

(Exodus 11:2 NKJV) Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold.” **(Exodus 11:3 NKJV)** 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.

Verses 2 and 3 reveal God’s grace poured out on His covenant people: The Israelites simply had to ask, and the Egyptians would give them silver and gold. The Egyptians were certainly smarter than their King. They could see the Hand of God on the Israelites and they also saw the greatness of Moses and the utter greatness of the God he served.

(Exodus 11:4 NKJV) Then Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt;

The LORD Himself will go out into all Egypt!

(Exodus 11:5 NKJV) and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who *is* behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals.

Death would come unto all regardless of their station in life: from the lowliest servant to the king himself. And, on top of that, the first born of all the animals would die as well.

Death would come as a result of how the Egyptians treated God’s covenant people whom he called, “Israel My son, My firstborn”. Of all the Nations of the world, God called Israel to birth His own Son 1500 years or so later. It was promised to Abraham some 600+ years before. The Promised One was about 2000 years in the making, that is, His First Coming. The One Who came will come again about 2000 years...we are closer to His return than any generation before us!

(Exodus 11:6 NKJV) Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as was not like it *before*, nor shall be like it again.

This was the promise, but it also contained mercy: It will be done, and it was not like anything that happened before. But there will be nothing like ***this*** again!

(Exodus 11:7 NKJV) But against none of the children of Israel **shall a dog move its tongue**, against man or beast, that you may know that the LORD does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.'

There are several instances in Scripture where the gentiles are referred to as dogs. The Hebrew is “Caleb”. *This has evoked a picture of Yeshua and Caleb the only 2 of the older generation that came into the Promised Land!*

The point is clear: The LORD does make a distinction between the Egyptians and Israel. This difference doesn't mean that Israel is any better, any more righteous, any more in numbers – in some ways we often wonder why God chose these stiff-necked, rebellious, and idolatrous people. The answer is simple: He just did. And Satan has been trying to destroy them ever since!

(Exodus 11:8 NKJV) And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out." **Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.**

And, after declaring the LORD's intention to spare His people, Moses adds fuel to the fire by telling Pharaoh that his servants (all government officials) and all the Egyptians will bow down to the LORD and tell **Him** to "GET OUT". And oh, by the way, take your people with You also!!!

With that, Moses exits the presence of the king.

(Exodus 11:9 NKJV) But the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not heed you, so that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." **(Exodus 11:10 NKJV)** So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

The LORD tells Moses that like all the other times, God's warning will not be heeded by Pharaoh. And like all the other times, the warnings turned into painful realities laid right before their blind eyes and deaf ears.

Jesus experienced that same thing but this time it was at the hands of the very people whom He redeemed so long ago.

John 12:37-40 NKJV But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, **(38)** that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?" **(39)** Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: **(40)** "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HARDENED THEIR HEARTS, LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, LEST THEY SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEARTS AND TURN, SO THAT I SHOULD HEAL THEM."

Quoting from Isaiah 53 and Isaiah 6, Jesus sums up the blindness and hardness of His people to which the LORD gave them over. This happened to the Pharaoh first and Israel had to learn the painful lesson as well.

Verse 10 sums up the whole megillah up to this point: miracles and hardness.

(Exodus 12:1 NKJV) Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

Chapter 12 is the great preparation. The next 10 verses are instructions to the Children of Israel but whether or not the people are aware of why they are doing these things, is unknown. What is hidden is the Messiah whom Paul called, "our Passover" who was sacrificed for us. (1st Corinthians 5:7). **(More on this later)**

Of Moses it was written in [Hebrews 11:28 NKJV](#) “By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them”. Whether the people were told why they were doing this or not, it would still take faith to trust God with their very lives on the promise that the LORD would pass over their houses when He came to destroy the firstborn in all the land.

[\(Exodus 12:2 NKJV\)](#) "This month *shall be* your beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you.

Interesting that the LORD defines this time as the beginning of the year, that is, the first month of the year. Ever since the Babylonian captivity, the Rabbis decided that the 7th month (September/October) would be the Jewish New Year. Why? Because the Babylonians had a pagan holiday during this time and the Rabbis were afraid that the Jews would start to celebrate that holiday. So, they gave them something to distract them – a new years celebration. It worked and Rosh Hashanah became the secular new year (rosh=head, ha-shanah= the year). The problem was, God had ordained this time as the Feast of Trumpets. This great prophetic feast was all but forgotten.

The LORD wanted this month to be memorialized so that the Jews would always know when to celebrate the start of the Feasts of the LORD.

[\(Exodus 12:3 NKJV\)](#) **Speak to all the congregation of Israel**, saying: 'On the **tenth** of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household. [\(Exodus 12:4 NKJV\)](#) And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. [\(Exodus 12:5 NKJV\)](#) Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats.

First, the father had to take a lamb for his household. If there was a small family who could not eat the entire lamb (see verse 10), then multiple households could join together to share in the Passover. The idea behind “you shall make your count for the lamb” is, based on your household and the number that will be eating, if they could not consume the entire lamb, then they were commanded to take some of his neighbors – the Hebrew word for “count” means “estimate or estimation”.

The male lamb was to be no more than 1 year old. It could be from the sheep or from the goats. But it must be pure, that is, no defect including any blemish or spot.

[\(Exodus 12:6 NKJV\)](#) Now you shall keep it until the **fourteenth** day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at **twilight**. [\(Exodus 12:7 NKJV\)](#) 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.

[\(Exodus 12:8 NKJV\)](#) Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it. [\(Exodus 12:9 NKJV\)](#) Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but **roasted in fire**—its head with its legs and its entrails. [\(Exodus 12:10 NKJV\)](#) You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire.

For four or five days (depending on the Hebrew reckoning of when a day begins, that is, at twilight), the one-year old male lamb would be inspected for any defects that would disqualify it. I would suspect that this could be done on the first day.

Many reasons for this killing of the lamb have been given:

The ancient Egyptians worshipped lambs. Taking a lamb, the Egyptians' deity, **into their homes for four days**, with the intention of slaughtering and eating it, was an act that was sure to be noticed by the Egyptians. It was extremely likely that they would be infuriated by this disrespect of their god. This act of courage, standing up for their beliefs and following G-d's command in the face of possible danger, was a merit for the Jews, one that made them worthy of being redeemed.

Some however, do not see the Scripture as saying bring the lamb "into the home". Therefore, they complain that the above analysis is flawed. Along this same line, some believe that the family would grow attached to the cute little booger and add some emotional element to the sacrifice.

One person maintains that God miraculously allowed the Israelites to take lambs **from among the Egyptians** despite the humiliation of their deity (Orach Chaim 430:1). According to this **explanation**, the Israelites told the Egyptians that they intended to sacrifice these lambs by the LORD's command, who would then destroy the firstborn of Egypt.

When the Egyptian firstborn heard this they begged their fathers to let the Israelites go, but their cries were ignored until a civil war broke out in which many Egyptians were killed (Tosafot Shabbat 87b). This warfare is called the "War of the Firstborn" and is considered a great miracle that helped deliver the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. (you can see the difficulty with this, right?)

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On the 14th day at twilight, which would be the 15th of the month, all households would kill the lamb and take his blood and brush it the two doorposts and the lintel (the horizontal beam across the entrance to the house).

Then they had to roast the lamb whole, not removing any of its organs or head. It was forbidden to boil it or eat any of it raw. If there was any leftover, it had to be burned up by morning time.

The Israelites were to eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. These 2 elements were to symbolize the haste in which the Israelites would have to leave **and** to remind them of the bitterness they endured. Why the bitterness? It was a symbol of the bitterness of slavery in Egypt. The common symbol of the unleavened bread was related to the haste with which the Israelites left the country after the death of the firstborn.

(Exodus 12:11 NKJV) 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.

And to be explicit, be ready! For it will be the LORD who passes over all your houses if He sees the blood on the doorposts and lintel.

(Exodus 12:12 NKJV) '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.**

John 5:22 NKJV For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son

(Exodus 12:13 NKJV) 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.

The blood will be a signal (other translations of the Hebrew word "oth" are flag or beacon; it is also translated a mark, omen, token, or sign). It will be a signal to the LORD to pass over this house so that the first born of the house, including the firstborn of the animals would not be killed.

(Exodus 12:14 NKJV) 'So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an **everlasting ordinance.**

(Exodus 12:15 NKJV) Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. **For whoever eats leavened bread** from the first day until the

seventh day, **that person shall be cut off from Israel.** (Exodus 12:16 NKJV) On the first day *there shall be* a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for

you. **No manner of work shall be done on them; but *that* which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you.** (Exodus 12:17 NKJV) So you shall observe *the Feast of*

Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an **everlasting ordinance.**

(Exodus 12:18 NKJV) In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. (Exodus 12:19 NKJV)

For seven days **no leaven shall be found in your houses**, since whoever eats what is leavened, **that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether *he is* a stranger or a native of the land.** (Exodus 12:20 NKJV) **You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.'** "

This concludes the instructions that the LORD gave to Moses and Aaron that started in verse 3!

The instructions are clear:

1. here is when you start this feast and this is when it ends.
2. It is a total of 8 days:
3. the first day is the Passover and the next 7 are the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
4. On the first day and the seventh day they were to assemble together (it would be a meeting) for worship. The only work that can be done is in the preparing and serving of the Passover meal.
5. Eat only unleavened bread!
6. If leaven is found in the home, put the person out of the congregation of Israel. It can also allude to the practice of stoning the person to death.

Twice, the LORD reminds Aaron and Moses that this was an everlasting ordinance to be held throughout their generations.

But the passage also repeats the law that no leavened bread is to be eaten for the entire Feast. Only unleavened bread is to be eaten and no leavened bread is to be found in any household whether a native or foreigner. The repetition is certainly an indication of how important this is from the LORD's point of view. **More on this in a minute.**

With the instructions completed, Moses calls for all the elders of Israel.

(Exodus 12:21 NKJV) Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover *lamb*. (Exodus 12:22 NKJV) And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that *is* in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning. (Exodus 12:23 NKJV) **For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.** (Exodus 12:24 NKJV) And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever. (Exodus 12:25 NKJV) **It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service.** (Exodus 12:26 NKJV) And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' (Exodus 12:27 NKJV) that you shall say, '**It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.**' " So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

The Elders were told what needed to be done for the Passover.

1. Keep the lambs that had no spot or blemish for 4 days
2. Kill it
3. Take the blood from the basin and with hyssop, strike the lintel and two doorposts of the house.
4. Stay in the house until morning
5. This is an everlasting ordinance
6. When you come into Canaan, you will keep this service
7. If asked, tell your kids about it, that is, pass it down throughout your generations.

(Exodus 12:28 NKJV) Then the children of Israel went away and did *so*; just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

Like the other feasts of the LORD, there was an temporal meaning and a hidden prophetic and spiritual meaning. What we read here is certainly the temporal/earthly meaning. It wasn't until Messiah came that the LORD opened up the understanding of this momentous feast.

The timing and the significance for us can be seen even in these descriptions:

This feast is at the beginning of the year in the first month as declared by God.

If one views all of the feasts as a timetable for life, so to speak, this Feast tells us of our primary or **first need for redemption from bondage and from the World systems** that are anti-God, anti-faith, and anti-life. Only when we are redeemed can we live in the Law of Liberty as we walk in the Spirit by grace, through faith.

Next, like the week of Unleavened Bread, we walk in righteousness, forsaking our lives of addictions to all manner of sin.

All of this is possible because the Sinless Son of God was imputed with our sin and suffered the excruciating pain of the slaughter of the Lamb of God. His Blood, when symbolically applied to the doorposts and lintel of our hearts, performs the miracle of salvation which leads to justification before an Infinitely Holy God who dwells in unapproachable Light whom no man has seen or can see. (1 Timothy 6:15)

Once free, the days of “unleavened bread” begin. We begin the walk of sanctification in which our lives are lived without leaven (the symbol of sin). This is the most difficult part of our Christian lives because of our flesh.

Let’s also consider the command to not eat any leaven during the Feast. The LORD says that that person will be cut off from his people. That phrase can have several meanings but is commonly thought to be a death sentence. Why is it so severe? Because of the root of the issue is unbelief which expresses itself in willful disobedience. If you don’t believe, why should you have anything to do with the LORD? In that day, you’d be a pagan. You certainly would have been removed from the nation.

So, what do we do today? It’s more difficult because, under the Law, it became obvious who was or wasn’t following all of the laws, precepts, ordinances, and the like. Today, unless you flaunt your sin, it remains hidden from view. I can’t see if you are a functioning addict or even if you are in an adulterous relationship. And I can’t see if you are holding any heretical views about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit. And unless you start speaking out, I can’t know....but Only God knows.

So is there a NT teaching that this represents this concept of purging out the Leaven?

The best example is from an incident in the Corinthian church. There came to the church about a man who “had his father’s wife”. This women is evidently his step-mother and is not a Christian (no mention of her as to her involvement in the church). But sin is sin.

There was “rampant” leaven in this person’s life and, while the church knew about it, they did nothing about it. I’m sure there were many excuses: oh, we Corinthians are just that way, it’s no big deal. Or, Hey, don’t judge me! Or it’s a victimless crime or Hey, who invited you into my bedroom? There are hundreds of rationalizations...but, sin is sin.

1 Corinthians 5:4-5 NKJV (4) In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, **(5)** deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

So, what did they do? They asked him to leave the church. This is not excommunication whereby the person is considered damned – that only occurs where the church believes that you are saved by the church and they can take it away from you. That’s a lie from the pit of hell!

No, this “destruction of the flesh” by delivering the person to satan is simply removing the person from the protection and spiritual covering of the Church whose Head is Christ. The destruction speaks of his flesh not his body, the destruction of his fleshly nature, that is, dealing with the power of his sinful death. If Satan is the instrument of this, so be it. He will buffet him and to crucify the “old man” with its passions and desires.

The goal is discipline. The goal is preserving his salvation by dealing with his sin.

2 Thessalonians 3:14-15 NKJV (14) And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. (15) Yet do not count *him* as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.

Paul goes on:

1 Corinthians 5:6-8 Your glorying *is* not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? (7) Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. (8) Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

With a clear mind towards the leaven of the Passover, Paul teaches the spiritual meaning of leaven. Just a pinch can be used to leaven an entire new loaf of bread. You are an entirely new loaf of bread declared clean (that is, purged) of its leaven. The slightest pinch of sin will puff you up quicker than a bite of the venomous snake.

Paul says that if you are Christ's, you are already unleavened in the true sense of the Word. The Lamb has been sacrificed. But instead of legalistically keeping the Feast year after year, we keep it continually with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth!