

Exodus 13

[Exodus 12:51 NKJV](#) And it came to pass, on that very same day, that the LORD brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt according to their armies.

It might read like a movie script. Two hundred and fifteen years in the making. From the heights of plenty to the depths of want. From the freedom of choices to the bondage of slavery. And while we know little of their lives from the time that Joseph died to this moment, we know it was horrific – as any bondage is. For the children of Israel it was just a part of their lives, that is, it wasn't historical, it wasn't prophetic, but even to the most cynical heart, it was certainly miraculous. It was by the Hand of the Great I AM that their exit from Egypt was achieved. Moses and Aaron were just men. But they were men on a mission from God, empowered by the Almighty to be the instruments of His great and supernatural acts. And though it's been said of many situations throughout our lives, "it was easier to take the Israelites out of Egypt than it was to take Egypt out of the Israelites".

Going forward we will read history and we will read the Law. We will be reading prophesy, and we will learn spiritual lessons as we see ourselves, our inner selves lived out in the lives of God's people chosen to bring the Christ into the world.

[\(Exodus 13:1 NKJV\)](#) Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, [\(Exodus 13:2 NKJV\)](#) "Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, *both* of man and beast; it is Mine."

The LORD begins this chapter with more instructions that are related to the Exodus. The word "consecrate" is, in the KJV and elsewhere, translated "sanctify" in most cases. "Consecrate" has its own Hebrew word. While similar, sanctify carries the meaning of "to make holy" whereas the word "consecrate" has a connotation of anointing or "filling up" as with the Holy Spirit.

However, what the LORD means isn't explained until verse 11. We will get to that in a moment.

But the idea of this sanctification is tied to what happened to the Israelites to set them free. The Israelites were set apart, made Holy so to speak so the LORD would not touch a single soul under the blood of protection that was applied to the doorways of their houses. Whosoever was not under the blood lost the firstborn of their household and the firstborn of every animal they owned.

Next comes another reminder to Remember!

[\(Exodus 13:3 NKJV\)](#) And Moses said to the people: "**Remember** this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; **for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out of this place**. No leavened bread shall be eaten. [\(Exodus 13:4 NKJV\)](#) On this day you are going out, in the month Abib. [\(Exodus 13:5 NKJV\)](#) And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the **Canaanites** and the **Hittites** and the **Amorites** and the **Hivites** and the **Jebusites**, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall keep this service in this month. [\(Exodus 13:6 NKJV\)](#) Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day

there shall be a feast to the LORD. (Exodus 13:7 NKJV) Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters.

And once again, the Feast of Unleavened Bread was to be obeyed, specifically the prohibition of eating bread made with leaven.

This must mean more than a remembrance of that last night in Egypt. The recall of that night must not neglect the LORD's mighty right hand. The recollection wasn't just their release from their bonds to the Egyptians but more importantly, who it was that performed it.

But it would be many years before its prophetic significance could be seen. And, the seven days of remembrance certainly prophesize the totality of what Jesus did 1400+ years in the future for it was His unleavened body and pure blood that achieved a perfect, once for all sacrifice for all who would bow the knee of the heart and confess with their lips that Jesus is the Son of God who took away the sin of the world.

Any church who offers Communion with leavened bread certainly has lost its understanding of the sinless body of Christ. How can one take in leavened bread when confessing that it is a symbol of His Body broken for us?

(Exodus 13:8 NKJV) And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, '*This is done* because of what the LORD **did for me** when I came up from Egypt.'

For every future generation, **what the LORD did**, he did for them as well. Every Israelite was freed from the bondage of the Egyptians whether they were there or in the loins of their ancestors. For the Jews, they are to make it personal, that is, "this is done because of what the LORD did for **ME**, when **I** came up from Egypt.

But this picture of redemption was a shadow of the true redemption in Christ: *Jesus is an ever-present Savior ready to free anyone in bondage to their sin. This "new thing" isn't national and physical salvation as it was with the Israelites, no, we are under a better covenant built on better promises that were eternally instituted by God the Son with His Father.*

But the admonition is the same: tell someone of the greatness of God who sent His Son to be "... the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. (1 John 2:2 NKJV).

(Exodus 13:9 NKJV) It shall be as a sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the LORD's law may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt. (Exodus 13:10 NKJV) You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year.

Judaism has been called a "show and tell" religion because there are so many things that are done to demonstrate the various things the LORD gave them.

In this case, the Israelites created phylacteries (called Tefillim in Hebrew). They are two small leather boxes that were tied around the left arm (closest to the Heart) and around the head.

Inside the boxes are 4 passages of OT Scripture:

1. The Shema (**Deuteronomy 6:4 NKJV**) "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! Plus:
 - a. **Deuteronomy 6:5-9 NKJV** You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. (6) "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. (7) You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. (8) You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. (9) You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
2. **Deuteronomy 11:13-21** - expressing G-d's assurance to us of rewards that will follow our observance of the Torah's precepts, and warning of retribution for disobedience to them.
3. **Exodus 13:1-10** - the duty of the Jewish people to always remember the redemption from Egyptian bondage.
4. **Exodus 13:11-16** - the obligation of every Jew to inform his children on these matters.

Growing up, the male child was given phylacteries when he reached the age of accountability (13). I was given them and was never taught what was inside the boxes or the significance of wearing them. This is typical of modern Judaism.

One of the boxes (the "hand Tefillin") is placed upon the left arm so as to rest against the heart - the seat of the emotions, and the suspended leather strap is wound around the left hand, and around the middle finger of that hand. The other box (the "Head Tefillin") is placed upon the head, above the forehead, so as to rest upon the cerebrum. In this manner our attention is directed to the head, heart and hand. It teaches us to dedicate ourselves to the service of G-d in all that we think, feel and do. It is also to teach us not to be governed solely by the impulse of the heart, lest that lead us into error and transgression. Nor are we to be governed by reason alone, for that may lead to harsh materialism.

(**Exodus 13:11 NKJV**) "And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you, (**Exodus 13:12 NKJV**) that you shall **set apart to the LORD all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males shall be the LORD's.** (**Exodus 13:13 NKJV**) But every firstborn of a **donkey** you shall redeem with a lamb; and if you will not redeem *it*, then you shall break its neck. And all the **firstborn of man** among your sons you shall redeem.

The command is to set apart every first-born male from a clean animal. This is related to Verse 1 and there's a more complete description in Numbers 18:

Numbers 18:15-18 NKJV "Everything that first opens the womb of all flesh, which they bring to the LORD, whether man or beast, shall be yours; **nevertheless the firstborn of man you shall surely redeem, and the firstborn of unclean animals you shall redeem.** (16) And those redeemed of the devoted things you shall redeem when one month old, according to your valuation, for five shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, which *is* twenty gerahs. (17) But the firstborn of a cow, the firstborn of a sheep, or the firstborn of a goat you shall not redeem; they *are* holy. You shall sprinkle their blood on the altar, and burn their fat *as* an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD. (18) And their flesh shall be yours, just as the wave breast and the right thigh are yours.

A donkey - The donkey could not be offered in sacrifice, being an unclean animal. The donkey was possibly the only unclean animal **domesticated** among the Israelites at the time of the Exodus. It is thought to be of high value in terms of work and travel. This principle was extended to every unclean beast; see [Num 18:15](#).

Thou shalt redeem - The lamb, or sheep, was sacrificed and the meat was given to the priest for the service of the sanctuary.

Firstborn of man - The price of redemption was fixed at five shekels of the sanctuary:

GUZIK: If the firstborn was unacceptable to sacrifice (an unclean animal **or a human**) a substitute was offered to **redeem** the firstborn from God. If the firstborn was an animal the substitute was a clean animal. If the firstborn was a human, the substitute was money.

[\(Exodus 13:14 NKJV\)](#) So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, '**What is this?**' that you shall say to him, 'By **strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt**, out of the house of bondage. [\(Exodus 13:15 NKJV\)](#) And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, **that the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all males that open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.**' [\(Exodus 13:16 NKJV\)](#) It shall be as a sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes, for by strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt."

The parents were not to look upon themselves as interested in their firstborn, till they had first solemnly presented them to God, recognized his title to them, and received them back, at a certain rate, from him again. (from a leading Orthodox Jewish website).

In addition, remembering the cost of their redemption, they were not to gloat but to learn to be compassionate towards the strangers in their midst.

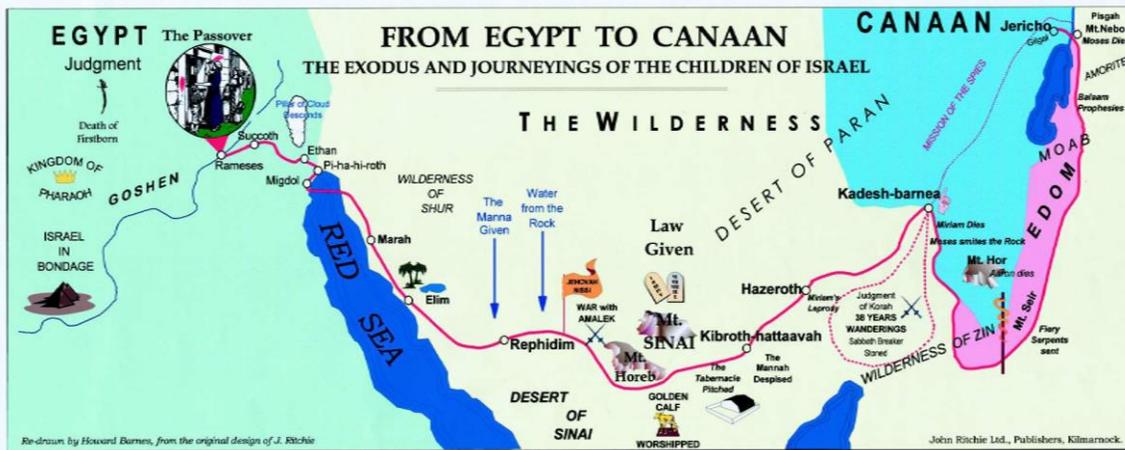
[\(Exodus 13:17 NKJV\)](#) Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, **that God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines**, although that *was* near; for God said, "Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt." [\(Exodus 13:18 NKJV\)](#) **So God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea.** And the children of Israel went up in **orderly ranks** out of the land of Egypt.

In my notes is a picture of the route that many scholars believe that the Israelites took to the Promised Land. As it says here, the shortest route would have been up the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. That wasn't a good route because of the Philistines and the Egyptian armies that were there.

Besides God told them where they needed to go:

[Exodus 3:12 NKJV](#) So He said, "I will certainly be with you. And this *shall be* a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

Therefore, the route shown in the picture is the most reasonable.



Some erroneously think that the people went in groups of 5 across but it was estimated that line of people would have been at least 68 miles long and that was calculated with just the 600,000 men! The idea of orderliness is related to their ancestral tribe defined by the 12 sons of Jacob.

(Exodus 13:19 NKJV) **And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him**, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you." (Exodus 13:20 NKJV) So they took their journey from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness.

After so long, Joseph's request was honored. Even to this day, Jews want to be buried in a "Jewish" cemetery. When applying for citizenship, my son had to prove that his grandparents were buried in such a cemetery. My Messianic Rabbi said that he wanted to be buried in a Jewish cemetery to make a testimony of who he was. Personally, I don't care; recently I decided that it doesn't really matter whether I am buried or cremated. I'll be with the LORD and God is certainly able to raise me up from ashes.

(Exodus 13:21 NKJV) And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. (Exodus 13:22 NKJV) He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night *from* before the people.

These pillars of cloud and fire were certainly signs of the LORD's presence. He led them and protected them through their trek through the desert. Note that v21 says "the LORD went before them by day **IN** a pillar of cloud and fire". And He remained with them, neither forsaking them nor leaving them alone.

The Exodus has begun. Their redemption from Egypt is complete but there's a journey to be taken that will end up consuming 40 years of their lives. An entire generation failed to enter because of unbelief.

Joshua 5:6 NKJV For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people *who were* men of war, who came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD—to whom the LORD swore that He would not show them the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers that He would give us, "a land flowing with milk and

honey."

Our redemption is also complete. But our journey is similar. We too are walking towards the Promised Land. The Israelites fixed their eyes on the here and now, on the doing of the Law to receive material blessings and to avoid His cursings. The land of Israel was their goal. But ours is a "heavenly country". In the OT, it was seen by only those who had the **faith** to see it.

Hebrews 11:13-16 NKJV These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. (14) For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. (15) And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. (16) But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

Hebrews 3:16-19 NKJV For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, *was it* not all who came out of Egypt, *led* by Moses? (17) Now with whom was He angry forty years? *Was it* not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? (18) And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? (19) **So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.**

I think it's the same today. Those who called themselves Israelites but did not have the faith to believe, never entered their rest. Those who call themselves Christians but **do not have the faith** to truly believe in Jesus – all that He said, all that He did, especially His sinless life and sacrifice for all sin – these will not enter their rest; If they were not **born again of the Spirit** who seeks to transform you and to conform you into the image of the Son, these will not enter their rest.