

Yahweh Prepares Israel for the Exodus (1 Nisan [March/April] 1446 BC)

Exodus 12:1–20, 43–49

Instructions Concerning the Passover

1 Now the LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt,

2 “This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you.

3 Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a lamb for each household.

4 Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons *in them*; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb.

5 Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

6 You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight.

7 Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.

8 They shall eat the flesh that *same* night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

9 Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, *both* its head and its legs along with its entrails.

10 And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire.

11 Now you shall eat it in this manner: *with* your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the LORD’s Passover.

12 For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the LORD.

13 The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.

Instructions Concerning the Feast of Unleavened Bread

14 ‘Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it *as* a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it *as* a permanent ordinance.

15 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.

16 On the first day you shall have a holy assembly, and *another* holy assembly on the seventh day; no work at all shall be done on them, except what must be eaten by every person, that alone may be prepared by you.

17 You shall also observe the *Feast of Unleavened Bread*, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a permanent ordinance.

18 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.

19 Seven days there shall be no leaven found in your houses; for whoever eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether *he is* an alien or a native of the land.

20 You shall not eat anything leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.’”

Additional Instructions Concerning Participation in the Passover

43 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the ordinance of the Passover: no foreigner is to eat of it;

44 but every man’s slave purchased with money, after you have circumcised him, then he may eat of it.

45 A sojourner or a hired servant shall not eat of it.

46 It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it. [cf. [John 19:36](#)]

47 All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this.

48 But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it.

49 The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you.”

Eighth Plague—Locusts (c. 2–7 Nisan [March/April] 1446 BC)

Exodus 10:1–20

1 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may perform these signs of Mine among them,

2 and that you may tell in the hearing of your son, and of your grandson, how I made a mockery of the Egyptians and how I performed My signs among them, that you may know that I am the LORD.”

3 Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, “Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, that they may serve Me.

4 For if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your territory.

5 They shall cover the surface of the land, so that no one will be able to see the land. They will also eat the rest of what has escaped—what is left to you from the hail—and they will eat every tree which sprouts for you out of the field.

6 Then your houses shall be filled and the houses of all your servants and the houses of all the Egyptians, *something* which neither your fathers nor your grandfathers have seen, from the day that they came upon the earth until this day.” And he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

7 Pharaoh’s servants said to him, “How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God. Do you not realize that Egypt is destroyed?”

8 So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh, and he said to them, “Go, serve the LORD your God! Who are the ones that are going?”

9 Moses said, “We shall go with our young and our old; with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds we shall go, for we must hold a feast to the LORD.”

10 Then he said to them, “Thus may the LORD be with you, if ever I let you and your little ones go! Take heed, for evil is in your mind.

11 Not so! Go now, the men *among you*, and serve the LORD, for that is what you desire.” So they were driven out from Pharaoh’s presence.

12 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up on the land of Egypt and eat every plant of the land, *even* all that the hail has left.”

13 So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD directed an east wind on the land all that day and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts.

14 The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and settled in all the territory of Egypt; *they were* very numerous. There had never been so *many* locusts, nor would there be so *many* again.

15 For they covered the surface of the whole land, so that the land was darkened; and they ate every plant of the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Thus nothing green was left on tree or plant of the field through all the land of Egypt.

16 Then Pharaoh hurriedly called for Moses and Aaron, and he said, “I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you.

17 Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once, and make supplication to the LORD your God, that He would only remove this death from me.”

18 He went out from Pharaoh and made supplication to the LORD.

19 So the LORD shifted *the wind* to a very strong west wind which took up the locusts and drove them into the Red Sea; not one locust was left in all the territory of Egypt.

20 But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go.

Ninth Plague—Darkness (c. 8–10 Nisan [April] 1446 BC)

Exodus 10:21–23

21 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even a darkness which may be felt."

22 So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days.

23 They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, but all the sons of Israel had light in their dwellings.

Moses Warns Pharaoh About the Final Plague (c. 11–13 Nisan [April] 1446 BC)

Exodus 10:24–29; 11:1–10

God Tells Moses About the Tenth and Final Plague (flashback)

11:1 Now the LORD said to Moses, "One more plague I will bring on Pharaoh and on Egypt; after that he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out from here completely.

2 Speak now in the hearing of the people that each man ask from his neighbor and each woman from her neighbor for articles of silver and articles of gold."

3 The LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Furthermore, the man Moses *himself* was greatly esteemed in the land of Egypt, *both* in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.

Pharaoh Bargains With Moses

10:24 Then Pharaoh called to Moses, and said, "Go, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be detained. Even your little ones may go with you."

25 But Moses said, "You must also let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice *them* to the LORD our God.

26 Therefore, our livestock too shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for we shall take some of them to serve the LORD our God. And until we arrive there, we ourselves do not know with what we shall serve the LORD."

27 But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he was not willing to let them go.

Moses Warns Pharaoh About the Tenth Plague (flashback)

11:4 Moses said, "Thus says the LORD, 'About midnight I am going out into the midst of Egypt,

5 and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of the Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones; all the firstborn of the cattle as well.

6 Moreover, there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been *before* and such as shall never be again.

7 But against any of the sons of Israel a dog will not *even* bark, whether against man or beast, that you may understand how the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.'

8a All these your servants will come down to me and bow themselves before me, saying, 'Go out, you and all the people who follow you,' and after that I will go out."

Pharaoh Refuses to Listen

10:28 Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Beware, do not see my face again, for in the day you see my face you shall die!"

29 Moses said, "You are right; I shall never see your face again!"

11:8b And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.

Summary Statement

11:9 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that My wonders will be multiplied in the land of Egypt.”

10 Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh; yet the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go out of his land.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) The instructions concerning the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are recorded after the fact in Exodus 12. Clearly, God had told the Israelites what to do at the beginning of the month so they had time to prepare (see the command to choose a lamb on 10 Nisan in Exodus 12:3). Exactly how many plagues had passed before Nisan (the first month of the Hebrew calendar) is not known—I place it after the 7th plague which seems reasonable given the time involved in the final plagues.
- 2) The verses of Exodus 11:1–10 are a flashback to earlier events. My arrangement follows the order suggested by Davis.¹

¹ John J. Davis, *Moses and the Gods of Egypt, Second Edition*, (BHM Books, 1986), 139–40.