

OpenTheo

Exodus 11 - 12



Exodus - Steve Gregg

Exodus 11-12 narrates the final plague of three days of darkness, which failed to make Pharaoh relent, and the death of the firstborns in Egypt, including Pharaoh's own firstborn. The Israelites were instructed to mark their doors with lamb's blood and eat unleavened bread and bitter herbs, while the Passover feast and week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread were to be celebrated as memorial events throughout the generations. The Passover ceremony represents Christian life without malice and wickedness and Christ's protection of his followers, and symbolizes the avoidance of spiritual leaven and the embrace of sincerity and truth.

Transcript

Okay, let's turn to Exodus chapter 11. And now we've had the nine preliminary plagues have come upon Egypt and gone again. The last one just lasted three days.

It just ran its cycle. We did not find Pharaoh repenting. We find him under pressure of the final plague, which was three days of darkness.

He sought to negotiate a settlement with Moses, but wanting him to leave his flocks and his herds and so forth behind, which Moses would not do. He wouldn't make any concession to Pharaoh at all. And Pharaoh got to him and responded angrily in verse 28 of chapter 10.

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. Now, Moses said, you have spoken well, I will never see your face again.

How to harmonize that with what happens in the next chapter is not extremely easy. It can be done, I'm sure. But we do have Moses apparently warning Pharaoh after this that the firstborn of Pharaoh is going to be killed in the last of the plagues.

And then Pharaoh will drive them out of the land, not on any compromise terms. It's possible that Moses came back for this announcement. Or I suppose it's possible that Moses, before he left on this occasion, gave this warning.

As when Pharaoh said, get out of my presence, you'll never see me again. Moses said, you're right, I won't see you again. But before I go, here's one final warning.

And that is a possible way to do it here. Otherwise, we'd have to say that Moses did leave, but he did come back and Pharaoh didn't keep his threat to kill him. But Pharaoh does say things rather rashly and back down on them.

And Moses could have possibly had another interview with Pharaoh. That's not entirely clear. In chapter 11, it says, Yahweh said to Moses, I will bring yet one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt.

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In fact, it could be. Maybe it should be translated. The Lord had said to Moses that is, Moses is now being banished from Pharaoh's presence.

And we're now being told that prior to this interview we've just read earlier, God had told Moses what the tenth plague would be. And we have it described here. And then Moses is going to tell it to Pharaoh before he leaves this particular interview.

The Lord said or perhaps had said to Moses, I will bring yet 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.

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. This is repeated. This was stated earlier that this would happen, but now was the time to do it.

And Yahweh 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. So Pharaoh is losing respect in the sight of people.

Quite obviously, I mean, for good reasons, rulers who make disastrous administrative decisions and bring poverty and economic collapse on a country typically are not remembered well or appreciated well by their people, like perhaps modern parallels.

They lose favor and Moses, on the other hand, was respected because he was viewed by the Egyptians as the man who had these powers they probably didn't appreciate that he's bringing these plagues, but they fear him and he was viewed as a great and powerful man. And Moses said, and about this, this is apparently him now speaking to Pharaoh and whether this is coming back to Pharaoh or or on the occasion that he was standing before him in Chapter 10.

Moses said, Thus says Yahweh about midnight. I will go out into the midst of Egypt and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on the throne, even to the firstborn of the maidservant who is behind the handmaid and all the firstborn of the beast. Then there should be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as was not like it before, nor shall be like it again.

But against none of the children of Israel, shall a dog move its tongue, which just means a dog won't even so much as be hostile bark bark at the Israelites. Now, this is not a plague that involves dogs, but it's just given as an example of how unscathed the Israelites will be. They won't have anything to disturb them, even a dog barking at them compared to the Egyptians who will be wailing the death of many of their firstborn.

By the way, this is not just the babies. This could be God's payback for all the babies of the Israelites that Pharaoh had thrown into the river. Pharaoh had, although Moses had been spared, we have to assume that many of his generation had been thrown into the river and killed it at Pharaoh's command.

And now God is taking retribution on the Egyptians for having done that and taking their babies. But the first one would not just be babies. Many of the first born would be heads of households and grown sons and so forth.

There were first born people of every age. So that even in the government, even in the army, in every field, in every home, there might be several dead. A father and a son might both be dead in the same home because they were both the first born of their parents.

In any case, nothing like that will happen to the people of Israel and all these your servant 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 the presence of Pharaoh in a great anger.

So it would appear that perhaps, although he agreed at the end of Chapter 10, that he would not see Pharaoh's face again. He didn't go out from Pharaoh's presence until after making this announcement that would make Chapter 11 verses. One through three, kind of a flashback.

God had told Moses this. And so before Moses left the presence of Pharaoh, he

announced what God had revealed about this. But the Lord said to Moses, Pharaoh will not take, will not heed you so that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.

So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh. This is verse 10. It's kind of a summary of all that's gone on before.

It's a summary of all the things have gone. Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh and Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land. Chapter 11 was very short, only 10 verses, but Chapter 12 is unusually long because God actually tells the Israelites how to become exempt from this particular play.

Now, God had himself just decided not to send the other plagues on the people in Goshen on the Israelites. But he does not make it automatic in this case that the Israelites would be exempt. There's something they have to do.

They can be exempt. Perhaps even even Egyptians could be exempt if they did what was instructed here. Though the instructions were only given to the Israelites.

If the Egyptians perhaps were fortunate enough to overhear these terms and follow them, maybe they would not lose their firstborn either. Remember, God, although he is dealing with Israel primarily as a race, he's willing to accept. Outsiders who will meet the conditions that will even come up in the in what is stated here, because it's not only going to tell how they are to prepare to not have their firstborn die.

But he's going to go on and tell them about their continual annual memorial of this event and how they are to celebrate that. And that's what lengthens this chapter, because it's somewhat interrupts the story of what's actually going on in Moses Day and looks forward to the time where Israel will forever afterward keep the Passover. Now, Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying this month shall be your beginning of month.

It shall be the first month of the year to you. Now, the month is the month of a B or Nissan, and this month is the beginning of the Jewish religious year. That corresponds with our month, March and April.

The month of the Jewish calendar do not correlate exactly with the beginning and ending of our month. And so the month of the B, the month of the Passover corresponds with the spring months, March and April for us or for those south of the equator. I guess those would be autumn, but for us, you know, us in the normal world, we're standing upright.

On the planet upside down. It's springtime and it is relevant springtime is spring for Israel. So we're in sync with the Holy Land here.

We do have Australian amendments, so we do know that they have to adjust to being

upside down about everything. But anyway, it's the springtime that Passover is celebrated in the northern hemisphere and in Israel. And God is saying that's going to be the beginning of the month of your year.

And so technically it should be so. The Jews actually should celebrate the new year at that time, but they don't. They actually celebrate Rosh Hashanah, the new year, six months later, the Jews have kind of two calendars that are jogged by six months apart.

The first day of the first month, a beam is the beginning of the Jewish religious calendar. But six months later, Tishri becomes the beginning of their civil calendar. And so in Israel, they celebrate the first day of the year, actually six months after the Passover rather than at Passover.

I'm not really sure why they did that, because it seems to be a violation of these instructions. But I don't know why. I don't know when this practice began.

It seems like God wanted them to view their calendars beginning in the month of a baby. He says, speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying on the 10th day of this month, every man should take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. Now, the lamb was going to be slain on the 14th day of a baby.

And that is when the Passover is. But they were supposed to take a lamb aside four days earlier to prepare it, which means that although God had announced this to Pharaoh already, there was going to be a bit of a delay before it was actually fulfilled. Unless these instructions had been given earlier before the announcement was made to Pharaoh.

It's hard to say. In any case, the Israelites had to take several days to prepare there to get a lamb set aside. It was going to be the lamb they would eat on the Passover, and they're supposed to set aside four days in advance, perhaps to give them opportunity to examine it, to make sure it's well, to make sure it's a good lamb.

It later became the practice of Jews to really closely examine the sheep that were offered. For sacrifice to them and the Passover, they had to be perfect and that process of looking them over and maybe watching it, you know, for a few days to see if it doesn't have any sickness or lameness or anything. That might be why they had to do it.

But they were on the 10th day of the month, four days before they would kill it. They were to isolate it. One lamb for a household, and if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take, according to the number of the persons, according to each man's need, you shall make your count for the land.

Now, what that means is it hasn't said so yet, but the household's going to eat this lamb, all of it and leave nothing uneaten. Nothing should be left to the next day, and therefore a very small family might find a whole lamb, a little much to eat in one evening. And so

he says, if there's a family too small, you can get a neighbor family to join you, and then two families can eat one lamb together.

Now, the Jews eventually came up with certain hard numbers as to what the right number of people to eat in one household would be, I believe the minimum number to eat one lamb, they think is 10. And the maximum 20, I believe, so I think the observant Jews try to keep the household to between those numbers. Apparently, a lamb is a lot of meat for any any less than 10 people to eat in one night and with smaller portions, they might get as many as 20.

But that number is not given here. That later was developed, I guess, by the rabbis. It says in verse five, your lamb should be without blemish, a male of the first year.

You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. It can be a goat. Now you should keep it until the 14th day of the same month.

Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. And they should take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. Now, the doorposts would be the side frame boards of the door.

The lintel is laid across the top of the doorframe and they were to put the blood of this lamb that they were going to eat the lamb. But they're going to take the blood, drain that out and paint the doorposts and the lintel with the blood. They're supposed to use a branch, which is just a kind of a shrub that grows around there.

You use that like a paintbrush and splattered the blood on the lintel and on the doorposts. Obviously, Christians have suggested this might be indicating kind of the shape of a cross. Although it's not made clear that the doorposts were splattered at equal distance from the ground, such as make a cross configuration.

But it could be it could be that they did this in the shape of a cross and. They shall eat the flesh on that night, roasted in fire with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs, they shall eat it now unleavened bread. We find out later the reason for the unleavened bread is that.

People who are in a hurry don't have time to make bread with leaven because it takes time. Once you put the leaven in the bread, it has to rise. That takes some time and then you bake it.

If you're really in a hurry, you just take the same amount of flour and make dough and you don't put leaven in it. You don't wait for it to rise. You bake it quickly and then you can go fast.

And so the idea of unleavened bread is the haste with which they were going to be

leaving. Now, Christians often try to say that the significance of unleavened bread is that leaven represents sin. This is never said to be true in the Bible in talking about the unleavened bread, although in the New Testament, we are told to eat the piece of unleavened bread without the leaven of malice and wickedness.

And we can talk about that in a moment when we talk more about the piece of unleavened bread, which is described in this chapter also. But suffice it to say, the Bible does not say that the reason they ate unleavened bread is because leaven represented sin. As sometimes it is preached, but rather it'll come out that they eat the unleavened bread because they're in a hurry.

They're going to eat it standing up with their staff in their hand. In other words, they're ready to go, they're all packed, they got their walking stick in their hand while they're eating their food. And the idea is to suggest haste in departure.

It says they will also eat it with bitter herbs. Now, at a Jewish Passover meal today, they have the bitter herbs on the table and they dip the bread in the herbs and the herbs being bitter are supposed to represent the bitterness of the bondage that they had in Egypt. So later generations that had never known that bitterness of bondage would get a little taste of that bitterness.

And they'd be told this represents the bitterness of the bondage our fathers had in Egypt. You know, it's kind of unpleasant, isn't it? And so you got to eat some of that, like your fathers had to eat it for the hundreds of years, they're in bondage. Not that they ate literal bitter herbs when they're in bondage, but rather the very bitterness of the herbs corresponds to the bitterness of the bondage.

Do not eat it raw nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire, its head with its legs and its entrails. Every part of the lamb has to be eaten. You shall let none of it remain until morning and what remains of it until morning.

You shall burn with fire. So it's possible you'll do your best to eat the whole thing, but there's still some. It may be too much or it may be that what's left are the bones and skin and things like that.

But whatever whatever is not eaten is burned up. Thus, you shall eat it with a belt on your waist, with sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. You shall eat it in haste.

It is Yahweh's Passover, 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 for I am Yahweh. Now, he'd already executed judgment against a lot of the gods of Egypt. Egypt is said to have been the most polytheistic country in the world in its day.

They had about, I think, about 80 gods that are known to have been worshipped by the Egyptians, 80 gods. Now, of course, if they'd known about Hinduism, there were more than that. Hindus have thousands of gods, millions of gods.

But that's an entirely different part of the world and probably unfamiliar to anyone who was in Bible times. But but Egypt in that part of the world, at least, was the had had more gods than anyone else. And God is going to judge all the gods.

Now, Pharaoh himself was one of the gods and his firstborn son. And so they're going to come under direct judgment. It would appear that Pharaoh has not come under direct judgment in in as many ways as people have.

We do not read that he had boils on him, but his magicians did. And all the other Egyptians, we don't know. You know, I guess he did have the frogs in his bed and all that.

But this is going to be one that will strike him to the heart, as Moses had said earlier. Because he's going to find himself to be not a god himself, just a man, a man who can lose his son like anybody else. He says in verse 13, now the blood shall be assigned for you on the houses where you are.

And when I see the blood, I will pass over you. And that's where the word Passover comes from. God's going to come through the land of Egypt for the angel.

He's going to send the executioner angels going to go through the land of Egypt. And it's going to kill in every it's going to enter every house and kill the first one, unless there's blood on the doors, in which case he will pass over and will not judge that house. I will pass over you and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

So this day shall be to you a memorial. And at this point. Verse 14, he starts talking about how the Jews forever afterward would celebrate this up to verse 13.

He's just given them instructions about what to do in the present emergency. He's given them four days advance notice, at least four days, because they'd have to take this lamb aside four days before they slay it. And he's telling what to do so that when the death angel comes through, they will be spared.

So this is just the provisions for not succumbing to this plague. But then verse 14 says, and this is going to be an annual memorial. And here's what you're going to do every year after that.

It's a little bit like, I think, in Genesis chapters, chapter one and the early part of chapter two, where we have the story of the creation and then we have Moses saying, therefore, the Lord, you know, sanctified the Sabbath day. And what I understand to be going on

there is Moses, who wrote Genesis and is also the one to whom God gave the instructions that Israel should keep the Sabbath day, he's tying that in when he's telling the creation story because God rested on the Sabbath day. Therefore, God now tells Israel at a later date to keep the Sabbath.

So also there is this continual memorial for Israel of the Sabbath of the of the creation rest. And here there's going to be a continual memorial also of this particular rest, this rest from bondage, this freedom that God gives them. And so he begins to tell them how they will keep this as a ceremony for the rest of their history.

Verse 14, so this day shall be to you a memorial and you shall keep it as a feast to Yahweh throughout all your generations. You should keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.

Now, that's this is going to be actually after keeping the Passover, the Passover kept on the 14th of Nisan or the V. And then for seven days after that, they would have the feast of unleavened bread, which was basically commemorated simply by eating unleavened bread and not having any leaven in their homes. For it says on the first day, you should remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day to the seventh day, that person should be cut off from Israel.

This is serious. The Jews actually go through a ritual of sweeping in the corners of their houses and so forth during this time to get all the leaven out, just in case there's any leaven that's, you know, from previous bread making projects that have gotten on the floor and found its way into the cracks along the edges of the house. They they sweep it.

They scour the house, get all the leaven out. And why? Well, because God said, if you have any leaven, you're going to be cut off from Israel. You see, being born Jewish doesn't make you Israel.

All these people that are being addressed are born Jewish. They're born Israelites, but they could be cut off from Israel. Just because you're born in Israel doesn't mean you're going to die in Israel.

Being in Israel has to do with being faithful to God's covenant. And there are many ways in the law where God said, you know, if anyone does such and such a thing, they'll be cut off from Israel. They'll be cut off from the people.

They've broken my covenant. It's obvious that in the Old Testament, as well as the new, what makes somebody part of Israel, as far as God's concerned, is that they are covenant keepers. And people who violate the covenant do not qualify to be Israel, regardless what their ancestry is.

And that is why in the New Testament, Paul identifies the church as Israel, because the church, though it's made up of Jews and Gentiles. Is made up of all those who are

covenant keepers. They are in the new covenant that God has established that has replaced the old covenant.

And so now those who keep the new covenant are what we call Christians today. And they are Israel, because that is the covenant keeping community. It has nothing to do with race.

I shouldn't say nothing to do, but it has very little to do. It was certainly because of the race of these people that God entered into the covenant with them, but he did not exclude it to them. As it did not exclude others from it.

Those who are not Jews could keep the covenant, and those who were Jews, if they broke the covenant, could be removed. Israel, therefore, is a category that refers to those who do not do the things that exclude someone from Israel and who do the things that include people in Israel. Regardless of their birth is, as we will find even in this chapter, he's going to say a stranger, a foreigner can eat it with you if he gets circumcised.

In other words, if he becomes part of Israel, if a non-Jew becomes part of Israel, he can be part of this. If a Jew eats leaven during that time, he's cut off. So I'm not sure where people get the idea that Israel somehow refers to a race.

In God's economy, it refers to a covenant keeping people regardless of their race. So anyone who eats leaven from the first day to the seventh day will be cut off from Israel on the first day. Verse 16, there should be a holy convocation and on the seventh day there should be a holy convocation for you.

That means a gathering, a meeting, a worship meeting. So what you really have is Passover is kept on the 14th day of the month. The next day is the first day of unleavened bread, which runs seven days.

So the 15th day of the month, they have a holy convocation. It's a religious meeting of worship. That day is treated like a Sabbath day.

They do no work in it. And then for the next six days, they just don't eat any leaven. They don't have to do anything else special.

They just don't eat any leaven. But then on the seventh day of unleavened bread, they have another meeting like that. And that ends the week of unleavened bread.

No matter, it says, no matter of work shall be done on them. It is the middle of verse 16, but that which everyone must eat. That only may be prepared by you so they can prepare their food on those days that they can't do any other work.

They have to treat those days like Sabbath days, even if they're not falling on a Sabbath Saturday. So you shall observe the feast of unleavened bread for on the 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. In the first month on the 14th day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the 21st day of the month at evening 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.

Native of the land means the land of Israel. This is looking forward to the time when Israel would be in the land. At the time these instructions are given, of course, none of the Israelites were natives of the land.

They were actually natives of Egypt. They'd all been born in Egypt. But the time would come that a generation not too far hence would be in the land and many generations will be born in the land.

And that's what it's referring to. Those who are native Israelites born in the land or foreigners, doesn't matter. They can be cut off if they eat leaven.

You shall eat nothing leavened in all your habitations. You shall eat unleavened bread. And so we're going to find Moses calls the elders in verse 21 and tells them to do this.

But I want to talk about this piece of unleavened bread for a moment, because I said I would. And the reason I want to is because Paul mentions it as being pertinent to us as Christians in First Corinthians, chapter five. We saw this, I believe, during the introduction I gave to Exodus.

But it's now since we're talking about the passage in Exodus that pertains to it. I'd like you to look at this again and be reminded of it. First Corinthians, chapter five relates to a problem that was going on in Corinth, a moral problem.

There was a notorious instance of incest being practiced in the church. Unrepentant, undisciplined by the church, a man having sex with his father's wife, his stepmother, in all likelihood, rather, or else it would have said his mother, but probably his stepmother. But the church basically felt that they had understood the doctrine of grace so well that they ignored.

They felt a little under grace and they were actually proud of themselves for being so tolerant of such things. And Paul says your glorying is not good. And he says, you actually need to discipline this situation.

But in the midst of talking about this sin in the church, he says in verse six, your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? That is apparently just a proverb. It takes a little bit of leaven to leaven a whole lump.

Jesus had said that in the parable of the leaven when he said the kingdom of God is like leaven, which one put into three measures until the whole was leaven. It doesn't take very much leaven to leaven a whole lump. And what Paul's getting at here is that the church itself can be infiltrated with with leaven, a bad kind of leaven sin.

And he says, therefore, purge out the old leaven. Now, what he's referring to is kicking out the unrepentant sinner from the church. We know that because he says the same thing in different terms.

In verse 13, he says at the end of verse 13, put away from yourselves that wicked person. The wicked person is an unrepentant, immoral man. And the church has not disciplined him, has not has not required him to repent, has not addressed it, has not put him out, and therefore, they are to purge out of the church.

This leaven, you know, when the church does not discipline its unrepentant sinners. Now, everybody's a sinner, so you can't really discipline repentance sinners. We're all repentance sinners, but but but unrepentant sinners, people who are living in sin and just expecting to get away with it and not, you know, they just they want to have the best of all worlds.

They want all this and heaven to, you know, they want to live according to their lusts and also, you know, have salvation. That's not permitted when a person is living in sin and wants to be in the church. They are not to be fellowship with.

Later in this chapter, Paul says that in verse 11, he says, Now I've written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother. That is someone who's called himself a Christian is in the church who is a fornicator or covetous or an idolater or reviler or a drunkard or an extortioner, not even to eat with such a person. That means they couldn't come to your love feast.

They couldn't take communion with you. They cannot fellowship with you. And since the early churches meetings were around, the love is basically saying, Don't have them in your church.

Put them out just like in verse 13. Put away from yourself that wicked person. So Paul says that if someone is claiming to be a Christian, that is, they're trying to be part of the congregation, but they are any of these things.

Fornicators, covetous, an idolater, a reviler, a drunkard, an extortioner. Now, many people in the church have done those things, but are repentant. And that's not what Paul's talking about.

Paul's talking about people who are doing those things and obviously wanting to get away with it. Says don't let them get away with it. If they're going to do those things, they have to do it outside the context of the body of Christ.

They can't be members of the body of Christ if they're going to reject Christ and his lordship. That's what he's saying. And basically saying the same thing that's said in Exodus 12.

If these people will eat leaven, which in Paul's analogy here is sin. If you're going to want to eat the leaven, you're going to be cut off from Israel. Because we in our Christian lives are doing the equivalent of keeping the feast of unleavened bread.

And that's what Paul goes into in verse seven and eight of the same chapter. Therefore, purge out the old leaven that you may be a new lump since you are truly unleavened. For indeed, Christ, our Passover was sacrificed for us.

Therefore, let us keep the feast. He means the feast of unleavened bread, which is kept after Passover. But he's not saying let us Christians, us Gentile Christians, let us keep the Jewish feast.

He makes it very clear. He means we keep what is the Christian counterpart, the Christian fulfillment. The feast of unleavened bread was a type and a shadow of what it is we are supposed to be doing.

We are keeping the feast in the real sense, not in the shadow sense. We do not keep it with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness. Malice and wickedness are like leaven.

If they're permitted to be in the church, they will spread. If the church compromises on its message of discipleship and of repentance and of holiness and people are allowed to just get away with that without repenting, without reforming. Well, then that spreads.

People, they will. He can do. I can do it.

Look, he's a member in good standing in the church. Why can't I do what he does? And then the behavior spreads like leaven until the church is corrupted. And that's what we have in the modern churches.

In many cases, we have churches that don't discipline, and therefore, the church becomes a place that is reputed for being a place you can be religious but not righteous. And then, of course, the church becomes something different than what it's supposed to be. It attracts people who want the benefits of religion, but they don't want the rigors of being Christian.

And so he says we need to purge out the old leaven. We keep the feast of unleavened bread. That is, our life is like a feast of unleavened bread.

The seven days, seven is the number of perfection. It means completeness. Our complete life after Christ, our Passover has been sacrificed.

The rest of our life is a keeping of a feast of unleavened bread in the spiritual sense. It is the avoidance of the spiritual level of malice and wickedness, and we keep it by, you know, the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. So Paul sees the spiritual counterpart of the Jewish feast as being something entirely different.

You see, the Jews kept it seven days. We keep it for all our lives because the seven days represents the completeness of our lives. Christ is the Passover.

We have been delivered out of Egypt. His blood is that which we count on for God to pass over us when he judges the world on the Day of Judgment, when he condemns the wicked, he will see the blood and he will pass over us. That's what we assume.

That's what the Passover ceremony was suggesting. That's what Paul sees in it. And it's not just the Passover that's significant, but the feast of unleavened bread that follows the Passover represents the Christian life.

A life that is to be without the leaven of malice and wickedness. But of course, just as in the feast of unleavened bread, it was that anyone who eats leaven will be cut off from Israel. So Paul saying this person is eating leaven.

He should be cut off from the church. Cast him out. Don't have fellowship with him.

Don't eat with him. Paul says. And so this is the basis of Paul's teaching on church discipline that we are supposed to be in our lives, fulfilling the spiritual counterpart of the feast of unleavened bread.

Now, back to Exodus 12 and verse 22, 21. 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. And you shall take a bunch of his up, 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 base.

And none of you shall go out of a door of his house until morning, for Yahweh will pass through and strike the Egyptians. And when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, Yahweh will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses and strike you. And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever.

It will come to pass when you come to the land which the Lord will give you, just as he promised that you should keep this service and it shall be when your children say to you, what do you mean by this behavior, this service that you shall say it is the Passover sacrifice of Yahweh who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when he struck the Egyptians and delivered our household. So the people bowed their heads and worship. Now, this time, the people of Israel were believe in Moses.

Remember, last time he talked to them as a group, the leaders. You know, they weren't

really pleased with him. They had accepted his initial promise of deliverance, but then things had gotten worse.

Pharaoh increased their burdens and and they said, oh, you know, the Lord judge between us. You've only brought the Pharaoh's hand down heavier upon us. And that's the last we heard of the interaction between Moses and the leaders of Israel.

But now they've seen nine plagues and they've seen God spare Israel and judge the Egyptians. Certainly, the Israelites have had occasion to be excited while this is going on. We haven't really read about their reactions.

We've read about Egypt's reactions, especially Pharaoh and his servants. But we haven't read about Israel's reactions. They certainly must have been getting encouraged and ecstatic.

And now when Moses says, OK, this is the last plague now and then God's going to let us go. They believed him. They had every reason to believe him.

And they bowed their heads and worshiped. And the children of Israel went away and did so just as Yahweh had commanded Moses and Aaron. So they did.

Now, he tells them that they they need to put the blood on their doors and then they need to stay behind those doors to stay under the roof. They shall not go out all night out of their door. Probably that's because in the symbolism of this, their house represents the place that's protected, standing behind Christ.

You know, outside the door is the judgment of God. Inside the house are the people of God. And between the judgment of God and the people of God is the door.

And it's got the blood on it. It is Christ. Christ's blood stands between God's people and the judgment.

If the people go outside of Christ, outside of the place of protection, well, then they'll find that being the people of God isn't enough. They put themselves in harm's way. It's not enough just that you identify yourself as a Jew or as a Christian.

If you don't stay in Christ. You don't have anything guaranteed. There's not some kind of unconditional security that you have just because you went into the house and there's blood on the door.

You have to stay in the house. So you said you have to abide in me. I'm the vine.

You're the branches. Every branch that abides in me produces fruit. But if any man does not abide in me, does not remain in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withered and men gather them and burn them.

The point here is that if you don't abide or stay in Christ, you know, whatever benefit you had from being in him before is gone. You stay behind the blood. You stay under Christ's protection.

You stay in Christ. The house no doubt represents being in Christ. And so they can't go outside.

Now, it's interesting that a similar requirement was made of Rahab, the Canaanite woman in Jericho when she spared the spies and she asked them to show favor and to spare her in her household. When when when Yahweh judges her town, they said, well, put a red cord out of the window so we can see it from outside and bring every one of your family members into your house and everyone who's in the house will be spared. But if anyone out of the house, we can't make any guarantees.

Anyone who's not in your house is going to get wiped out. This is going to be a total slaughter. But again, the red cord on the outside of the house, the house being the place of protection, no doubt had the same symbolism as this.

You've got a house that's a protected place and protected by the blood. Or in this case, they didn't make her kill an animal and put blood on her window. They just hang a red cord out there.

I will do as a symbol of that. OK, so they did it now. Verse 29, it came to pass at midnight that Yahweh struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt from the first one of Pharaoh who sat on the throne to the first one of the captive who was in the dungeon, which is rather sad since the captive in the dungeon couldn't very well put blood on his doorpost.

But, you know, people say, well, that you know how cruel of God to to kill these people who are essentially innocent, even babies, probably. I'm sure there were first born babies that died. But you have to understand.

Every one of those people is born under a death sentence, just like we are. We're going to die, too. Our children are going to die also.

Our parents are going to die. We're going to die. Everybody's going to die.

We think it's strange when a person dies young and innocent or when they die in the middle of their life. We think, well, why did God do that? We act as if God has to justify his actions. Now, the only action he would have to justify is the fact that he's going to kill us all or at least life is going to kill us all.

Life is going to kill us all off. That's because we've all sinned. If anyone here hasn't sinned, you won't die.

If you're if you never committed sin, then you can complain if God lets you die because

you don't deserve it. But if you have sinned, then you deserve to die and you can't complain. Now, even babies who have not sinned do die.

But we have to remember that death in the Christian worldview is not the end. There is a judgment. There is a resurrection.

There is a reckoning. And innocent people will be treated as innocent at the judgment. If a child has committed no sin, then at the judgment, he doesn't ever there's no charges.

It will be clear there's no charges against him. Only those who have sinned and deserve to be punished will be ultimately punished. But all whether they've sinned or not, little children, babies, even babies in the womb, all experience at one point in their life, physical death.

And if physical death was all there was, then there would certainly be seemingly injustice in God because certain innocents do die. But you see, life is this. This life is the smaller part of life and almost infinitesimally small.

Because 100 years on this planet compared to gazillions and gazillions of years, which are only the beginning of eternity, that 100 years, you know, as eternity wears on, we remember the years we live on this life, if it was 80 or 100 years, you know, it's going to get vanishingly small as the as the billions of years pass. We're going to barely have a memory. This life, this whole lifetime will be like our infancy, which we hardly remember today.

Because it's so small compared to the rest of our life, and it's so remote. And therefore, we make a big deal about when a person dies. The more important factor is that everyone dies and that they must die prepared to meet God.

These people, I'll bet some Egyptians died ready to meet God. Some of them were probably babies. Some of them might have even been believers in Yahweh at this point because of the plagues that had come.

It's not only bad people who die. And that people die young or old is not even that important, because in eternity, it won't matter to you whether you live one month or 100 years before you die. In eternity, all that's going to matter is whether you died on good terms with God or not.

And, you know, the difference between 100 years of living or not is going to be like no difference at all in eternity. So God has every right to take people out if he wants to. And he does judge nations as a whole.

And he judges them often by their people dying. That was the case here. God has every right to decide when a person will die since they're all going to.

God has the right to decide at what point in life they will. So it says in verse 30, Pharaoh rose 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.

Wow. How disruptive that would be to the morale, for one thing, but also just to the functioning of the nation, since there'd be, as I said, people who were of all ranks in society who happened to be the firstborn of their families who are now dead. Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night and said, Rise and go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel, and go and serve Yahweh, as you have said.

Also, take your flocks in your herds, as you have said, and be gone and bless me also. And the Egyptians urged the people of Israel that they might send them out of the land in haste, for they said, We shall all be dead. The people should have revolted against their Pharaoh, it seems to me, because everyone should know that Pharaoh is the one who brought the death of their firstborn and brought all the other damages come.

But at this point, they're just grieved. They're afraid of what more may happen. They just get these people out of our land and they willingly give the Israelites whatever they ask for.

And chase them off, just like God said they would drive them out. So the people took their dough before it was leavened. That's easy.

They took their dough before it was leavened, having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders. Now, the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold and clothing. And Yahweh had given people favor in the sight of the Egyptians.

So that they granted them what they requested. Thus, they plundered the Egyptians or the King James says they spoiled the Egyptians like there was much else the Egyptians had. Their cattle were gone.

Their crops were gone. Their firstborn were gone. All they had left was their jewelry and things of value.

Now, Israel took that to. This was apparently God's idea of giving Israel back pay for hundreds of years of service without pay. The Egyptians really owed this to them.

It's just a shame they had to pay it all in one day. Would have been easier to pay it on regular increments. But to have to pay up on 215 years worth of unpaid debt all at once is pretty expensive.

And so the Egyptians were plundered. You know, this idea of spoiling the Egyptians became came to have a metaphorical use in the minds of some theologians and preachers with Augustine around 400 AD. Augustine took this story of how the Israelites

plundered the Egyptians, and he applied it to how the church needs to plunder the Egyptians in the sense.

Of theologians, Christian theologians need to borrow Greek philosophy, the best of it, the best of Greek philosophy and bring it in as to mix it with our theology so that we're we're plundering the best of Egypt, you know, the pagan world and taking their philosophy and mixing it together, and that's where he came up with the doctrines we now call Calvinism. Everyone knows even Calvinists know that Augustine is the inventor of Calvinism and no one before him taught it, but he did so by taking Greek philosophy and mixing it with Christian teaching, which prior to that, all the church fathers thought was an illegitimate practice. That's usually called syncretism.

Syncretism is not a good thing. That's when you make elements of two or more religions to make an amalgam. And God had told, for example, Israel never to do that.

He said, when you go into the land, I'm giving you don't ask how these people worship their God so that you can worship Yahweh that way. No, you do it the way I say. Syncretism was strictly forbidden to the Israelites and and the early Christian fathers were also against it.

They they believed it was an evil to mix Manicheanism and and other pagan ideas with Christianity. But that changed with Augustine because he said, well, no, it's not wrong. It's actually what the Israelites is plundering Egypt.

This is the wealth of the Greeks is their philosophy. We will plunder it. We'll take their philosophy and give it sort of a Christian twist and we'll make it our theology.

Which is kind of a strange application of this principle, it seems to me. For one thing, because plundering the Egyptians in this case in the Bible was taking from the Egyptians things that were of value. Or as plundering Greek philosophy and pagan ideas is taking something that's of no value to us, it's the deception that the pagans were under without God.

Why should we borrow their deceptions and make them our own? Verse 37. Then the children of Israel journeyed from Ramesses to Succoth, about 600,000 men on foot besides children, a mixed multitude went up with them also and flocks and herds, a great deal of livestock. And they baked unleavened cakes for the dough, which they had brought out of Egypt.

Apparently, and roadside fires and makeshift ovens. They baked this bread. They hadn't had time to bake it at home because they were driven with haste out of Egypt.

Apparently, after they ate the Passover, they stayed up all night. I mean, they ate it with their staff in their hand and their shoes on their feet. Ordinarily, they didn't wear shoes indoors.

In the Middle East, as in most Asian societies, they take you take shoes off when you go indoors, but not on that night. They had their shoes on. They had their staff in their hand.

They had their kneading bowls wrapped in their clothes. They were packed and ready to go. And they apparently stayed up all night and left in the middle of the night and did not take the time to bake the bread.

So when they got out of apparently a Goshen or whatever in route, they stopped apparently long enough just to bake some bread for themselves. But it says, for it was not leavened because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves. So this is really the reason for eating unleavened bread.

Apparently, that is given in exorcist because they left in haste, because they couldn't wait. They were in a hurry. And it's not said to be related.

Also, Levin being, you know, simple in this particular situation. Now, the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. We talked about that.

Remember, some people think this means that from the time Jacob and Israel with him went into the land of Egypt in the days of Joseph at the end of Genesis from that till this point was four hundred thirty years. But there's a lot of chronological factors that make that seemingly an implausible way of understanding this, especially since Paul said in the third chapter of Galatians, Chapter three, verse 17, that the time between God making the promise to Abraham and giving the law was four hundred and thirty years. He's no doubt quoting from this verse, which gives us the number.

The time was four hundred thirty years. But Paul makes that four hundred years from the time God made the promise to Abraham to the exodus and the giving of the law. Now, that being so, that means that you have to subtract from the four hundred thirty, whatever the number of years was from Abraham receiving the promise to the time Jacob went into Egypt.

And that was two hundred fifteen years, exactly half of the four hundred thirty. So half of that four hundred thirty years was spent as sojourners in the land of Canaan and the other two hundred fifteen. The other half was as sojourners in Egypt.

And the way it's worded here is now the sojourning of the children of Israel was four hundred and thirty years. Well, that includes their sojourning in both Canaan and Egypt. Now, it says the children of Israel who lived in Egypt.

Well, that's where they lived at this point in time. At the end of the sojourn, they were living in Egypt, but they hadn't sojourned in Egypt all that time. That's what we have to

understand.

And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred thirty years on that very same day, which makes it sound like it was four hundred thirty years to the day. Like it was maybe on this day, four hundred thirty years earlier that God made the promise to Abraham. That's what to this on the very same day seems to suggest, because it says four hundred thirty years on that very same day, it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.

It is a flight of solemn observance to Yahweh for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is the night of Yahweh, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations. This, of course, Moses added as an editorial comment, because he wants them to know that I'm not just telling you history here.

I'm telling you this is a basis for an obligation. We have all of our generations forever to observe this day, this very day. And Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron, this is the ordinance of the Passover.

No outsider shall eat it. Now, I'm not sure why this is given at this point. It may be that God said this at this point or that he said it on another occasion and Moses sticks it in here since he's talking about the subject.

But this is the ordinance of the Passover. No outsider shall eat it. But every man's servant who is bought for money when you have circumcised him, then he may eat it.

So this means pagans, Gentiles, they can eat it if they get circumcised. That is, if they become Israelites. You can become an Israelite if you're not a Jew.

A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it in one house. It shall be eaten. You should not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break one of its bones.

Now, the statement that not a bone, not one of its bones should be broken is quoted in John chapter 19. When it is told that Jesus on the cross was between two thieves and in order to hasten their death, the Roman emperor ordered another Roman emperor, the Roman procurator, Pontius Pilate, ordered that the bones of the crucified man would be broken to hasten their death. Well, they did break the bones of the two thieves, but they didn't break Jesus bones because he was already dead.

And so in John 19:36, it says, for these things were done that the scripture should be fulfilled, not one of his bones shall be broken. The scripture that was fulfilled is Exodus 12:46. In other words, what John is saying is it wasn't a prophecy so much that was given some of the Old Testament that Jesus bones were broken.

It was a command concerning the Passover and Jesus is the Passover. And therefore, it did his not having his bones broken was a fulfillment of this particular provision of

that law. All the congregation of Israel shall keep that verse 48.

And when a stranger sojourns with you and wants to keep the Passover of Yahweh, let all his males be circumcised. Let him come near to keep it, and he shall be as a native of the land for no uncircumcised person shall lead it very clearly. A Gentile can become just like a native Jew.

He just has to be circumcised and all his kids because Jews have to circumcise their kids. Well, he's got to circumcise all his males. Once he's done that, he's just like a native, just like a native Jew.

No difference. One law shall be for the native born and for the stranger who sojourns among you. Thus, all the children of Israel did as Yahweh commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

So it came to pass on that very same day that Yahweh brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, according to their armies. This last word is interesting. That is referred to as armies, although they were not trained as armies at all.

Nor were they necessarily armed as near as we know. It may be that among the things they took from the Egyptians would include maybe some weapons, but they were not an armed and armored group. But they were, in fact, once they were delivered from Egypt, they were armies nonetheless.

Now, and God would defend them. The battles, their battles were the Lord's. But you see, when you become a Christian, you join the army.

You know, you're in a warfare. The Christian life on one in one sense is envisaged by the unleavened bread of living a life of truth and sincerity. But there's other aspects, other images.

And the Bible is very clear that when you come into the kingdom of God, you come in as a participant in a war between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness. So those who left Egypt, although they had not fought any battles yet and weren't even equipped at this point to fight any battles, they are already identified as God's armies because they're going to be fighting the Canaanites. They're going to be fighting the Amalekites.

Now, they did get on shortly after this, because after the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea, Josephus at least believed that that's where the Israelites got their weapons and their armor from the dead Egyptians. They just plundered the Egyptians that way, too. They took their armor, took their weapons, and then Israel then had the things necessary to fight wars for themselves.

Anyway, there we go. We're going to we're going to stop there. And, of course, come

back after we take a break.