

Exodus 12-13 - “Passover”

Chapter 12 of Exodus is a very important chapter. Before moving to the 10th plague, God gives a parenthetical account that was to instruct the Israelites in future observances of their deliverance out of Egypt, yet also provide specific instruction for their present situation in Egypt and their upcoming deliverance.

The Passover story becomes a key narrative throughout the Bible. A lamb that would be sacrificed to provide a covering and deliverance for God’s people in Egypt, was all leading up to the Lamb of God that would take away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Throughout Scripture the theme of a lamb is evident. In heaven John sees a Lamb as though it had been slain – speaking of Jesus (Revelation 5:6).

- Why is a lamb such a used picture? It speaks of innocence, purity, gentleness. The sacrifice of a lamb all perfectly foreshadowed what Jesus would do for us (Isaiah 53:7, *“He was led as a lamb to the slaughter...”*).

12:1-2 - *Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ² “This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.*

This will become the beginning of the year for Israel and the beginning of this nation in a spiritual sense. The calendar system will be changed, just as when Christ came (B.C. to A.D. – ‘Anno Domini’, Latin for: ‘in the year of our Lord’).

- We serve a God of new beginnings. He desires to bring us into a fresh start in and through Him.
- **2 Corinthians 5:17**, *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”*

This month was the month of Abib which later was named Nisan (the name was changed during the Babylonian captivity).

12:3-4 - *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. ⁴ 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.*

Interestingly it never says that the lamb might be too small. Rather it says that if the household is too small, share with others. The lamb would be sufficient!

- Jesus is sufficient for us. We'll never be lacking or left for want when we trust Jesus. He's all we need!

12:5-7 - *Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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.*

A blemish was an acquired defect. A spot is an inherited defect.

- **1 Peter 1:19**, *"but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."*

This lamb would be brought into the family and was under close watch and scrutiny for these 4 days (vs. 3 says it was on the 10th of the month that they selected the lamb and it would be sacrificed on the 14th). This lamb would become a very precious sacrifice that would be cherished and mourned.

- It's wonderful to see the timing of this and the way Jesus fulfilled everything so accurately. Jesus came riding into Jerusalem on the 10th day and for 4 days was under close scrutiny and observation by the religious authorities. He was handed over and was sacrificed on the 14th day. Accurately fulfilling the instructions given for the Passover lamb.
- This would mean Jesus came into Jerusalem on the Sunday and was crucified on the Thursday (4 days later).

...take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel...

Placing the blood on the two doorposts and the top cross beam had intriguing significance. God said this would be a sign (vs. 13). It would be a sign **for you**, it says. How so?

It would be a picture of sacrifice needed, and a blood sacrifice at that. Life would be given for life to be spared. We know the idea of this.

But as they covered the doorposts, perhaps these Hebrews would be seeing more than meets the eye.

There are three Hebrew letters that could potentially be seen by applying the blood in this way:





Hey

Chet

Tav

Hey = Breath

This is seen in God's creative power in speaking forth the world into existence. He breathes into us and gives us life.

The numeric value of this letter is 5 – which speaks of grace in the Bible.

This work of God seen at Passover is a work of His grace towards us. Just as Jesus died for us to provide salvation. None of us deserve it, we simply receive it freely by His grace.

Chet = Life

The numeric value of this letter is 8 – which represents a new beginning, meaning a new order or creation.

Eight is also an integral part of Jesus' sacrifice. Like the Passover lamb, Jesus was selected as the Lamb to take away man's sins on Nisan 10. He was crucified on Nisan 14. His resurrection occurred three complete days after he was buried, which was at the end of the weekly Sabbath day that fell on Nisan 17. Nisan 17 was day 8, counting inclusively, from the time Christ was selected as man's sacrificial Lamb. All this bears record of Jesus' perfect sacrifice and His complete victory over death.

Tav = Mark, Covenant, or Sign

“The third letter, and final letter of the alephbet is the *tav*. The original pictograph for the *tav* was a cross – its origin is thousands of years before the Romans began using crucifixion as a form of death penalty! Jesus' blood shed on the cross was the ultimate and final atonement for sin. The painting of the doorposts was a foreshadowing, a dress rehearsal for the all-consuming sacrifice of our Passover Lamb. As He gave up His spirit, Christ declared “It is finished.” It's fascinating that the final letter of the Hebrew alphabet is the *tav*, as it signifies Christ's completed, finished work through the covenant of His blood!”

- <https://livingstone2017.wordpress.com/2017/04/10/blood-in-the-letters/>

The numeric value of the *tav* is 400. We read in Genesis 15:13 that as God makes His covenant with Abraham He says to him, “*Know certainly that your*

descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years."

- Interestingly, the ancient Hebrew letter for *tav* was the shape of a cross.



I certainly don't want to add more meaning than is intended. But it's interesting to see some of the correlation. And we know God to be a God of great design and perhaps these were all there to bring further reminders to all that God was doing and would do.

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

'eat the flesh' – this has to be taken in and applied personally.

- **John 6:53–55**, *"Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵ For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed."*

'roasted in fire' – this pictures the judgment for our sin. Jesus bore that fire for us on the cross as He took the judgment and fire of God's wrath for our sin.

'bitter herbs' – this is a reminder of what our sin is like. It may be fun for a season, but it will leave a bitter taste in your mouth and leave you discontent.

'you shall let none of it remain' – this sacrifice was not to be applied in part, it was to be wholly consumed. Jesus is not just someone we apply in part, we are to take all of Him. He is the one we put our faith completely in. Jesus said on the cross, *"It is finished"* (John 19:30). Jesus isn't performing a continuing work or process of sacrifice. It's complete, and we must receive Him completely.

Anything that remains that is not of Him will be burned with fire (1 Corinthians 3:13-15).

12:11 - *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 thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded...” (KJV)

In this day the men wore these long robes that they would pull up and tuck into their belt when they were getting ready to travel or work. God is saying, ‘*Get ready for this exodus out of Egypt.*’ He says to you and me, be ready for this exodus out of the world. Jesus has paved the way; let’s now take this journey.

- Note the element of faith that is involved here. They are told to get ready to go, yet they are not necessarily free at this point from Pharaoh’s rule. But they are to get out of Egypt and God will lead them and allow them to do so.
- We’ve been put in a similar place. When we come to Christ and accept His sacrifice and salvation, we are not to linger in the world any longer.
- Now there may be issues that arise and things that need to be dealt with, but we are to take that journey in faith and begin to move forward in all that God has for us. He’s in control and is working all those things out.

12:12-13 - *‘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. ¹³ 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 firstborn was a position of prominence and favour. Especially in Pharaoh’s household, the firstborn son would have been treated as a god and viewed as having divine properties. But God is showing all of Egypt that no one is safe without obedience to, and application of, His means of salvation. When God is finished, Egypt will know that their gods have been powerless to save them.

The only thing that would spare households was when God saw the blood applied. It wasn’t enough to just take in a lamb, or to sacrifice the lamb. The blood of the lamb had to be applied, it had to provide that covering.

- Jesus has shed His blood for the world, but not all the world is saved. People need to move from just believing that Jesus was, and they need to personally acknowledge their need for that sacrifice. They need to apply the blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins.

“This is where some people start to get squeamish, including many contemporary theologians. They like to talk about Jesus as a Savior and Teacher, but they would rather not talk about His blood. Charles Spurgeon was responding to this attitude when he wrote:

‘We do not subscribe to the lax theology which teaches that the Lord Jesus did something or other which, in some way or other, is in some degree or other, connected with the salvation of men.... We firmly believe ... the doctrine of the atoning death of our great Substitute.... We stand to the literal substitution of Jesus Christ in the place of his people, and his real endurance of suffering and death in their stead, and from this distinct and definite ground we will not move an inch. Even the term “the blood,” from which some shrink with the affectation of great delicacy, we shall not cease to use, whoever may take offense at it, for it brings out that fundamental truth which is the power of God unto salvation. We dwell beneath the blood mark, and rejoice that Jesus for us poured out his soul unto death.’”^{7 1}

12:14-20 - ‘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.¹⁵ 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.¹⁶ 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.¹⁷ 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.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 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.²⁰ You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.’ ”

⁷ Charles H. Spurgeon, “The Sacred Love Token” (No. 1251), *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* (Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim, 1971), 21:483, 484.

¹ Ryken, P. G., & Hughes, R. K. (2005). *Exodus: saved for God’s glory* (pp. 332–333). Crossway Books.

The feast of Unleavened Bread is now instituted, and this ran right after Passover. This would last for 7 days (15-21 of Nisan). Feast of Firstfruits came during this time as well (16 of Nisan). These feasts have all been incorporated into the celebration of Passover, and reference to the Passover can speak of all three feasts.

The feast of Unleavened Bread was a time for them to purge their homes of all leaven. They were to bake their bread without leaven as they had no time to wait for their bread to rise. Their exodus would be immediate and done in haste.

Leaven is of course a picture in the Bible of sin. After receiving salvation and deliverance from the Lord, we should no longer be living a life of sin. It should be cut away as we live pure and holy unto the Lord.

- **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."*

12:21-28 - *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. ²² 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. ²³ 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. ²⁴ And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever. ²⁵ 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. ²⁶ And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' ²⁷ 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. ²⁸ Then the children of Israel went away and did so; just as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

This memorial is being established that will continue on throughout their generations and indeed is celebrated today. It's the major theme of God's Word – redemption and deliverance from bondage and slavery into life and salvation through God (the term 'out of Egypt' is repeated 62 times through the Bible). This sacrifice would be repeated millions of times throughout history.

- Josephus, the ancient historian, said that during Passover, several hundred thousand lambs were brought through the streets of Jerusalem. Imagine all that blood that would be shed. And yet that blood was insufficient to remove the sins of the people. We needed something greater – someone greater.
- **Hebrews 10:3-5; 9-10**, *"But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. ⁴ For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. ⁵ Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. ⁹ then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. ¹⁰ By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."*

It's important to note that when the destroyer (either an angel of the Lord, or a figurative personification of God Himself) came over each house, he wasn't looking to see how good the people were inside the house, he was only seeing if they had applied the blood on the outside of the house.

- Our salvation and righteousness is not based on our worthiness, it's based on what Jesus has provided for us. You are either standing in Christ and are safe, or you are relying on some other means for salvation and sadly not experiencing safety.

12:29-32 - *And it came to pass at midnight that the Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock. ³⁰ So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, 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. ³¹ Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the Lord as you have said. ³² Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also."*

This 10th and last plague came with fullness, finality, and fury.

Pharaoh has been obstinate and has even brashly asked, *'Who is the Lord?'* (Exodus 5:2). Now Pharaoh knows clearly who the Lord is. And he's even asking now for Moses (more so the God of Moses) to bless him!

- Pharaoh's heart has been hard. And God brought him to a place of brokenness. Sadly, this was not a breaking unto salvation, but rather a brokenness of seeing his own weakness and futility.
- God's purpose is to lead us to repentance. This is about changing our mind and turning to Him. Pharaoh desired to do this on an intellectual level seeing all that God has done. But his heart was still not ready to bow down and yield to the Lord.

So Pharaoh tells Moses and his people to go. Not just go and serve the Lord, but ***rise, go out from among my people...***

Just as God had earlier said: **Exodus 11:1**, *"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."*

12:33-42 - *And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead."* ³⁴ ***So the people took their dough before it was leavened, having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders.*** ³⁵ ***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.*** ³⁶ ***And the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.*** ³⁷ ***Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children.*** ³⁸ ***A mixed multitude went up with them also, and flocks and herds—a great deal of livestock.*** ³⁹ ***And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.*** ⁴⁰ ***Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years.*** ⁴¹ ***And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and 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.*** ⁴² ***It is a night of solemn observance to the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of the Lord, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.***

The Israelites received great compensation for their years of service in Egypt. Could you imagine this scene of these Egyptians out burying their dead, and the Israelites with their families intact marching along. The Egyptians were probably happy to see them leave and hoped this would be an end to all their troubles. They were more than willing to aid them in their expenses.

- But the idea behind them being plundered (vs. 36) has in mind a victorious Israel over a defeated Egypt.
- **Numbers 33:3–4**, *"They departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover the children of Israel went out with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians. ⁴ For the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn, whom the Lord had killed among them. Also on their gods the Lord had executed judgments."*

Notice the exactness of how God leads. On the very day of their 430th anniversary in Egypt, God led them out (vs. 41). And as they come out we see again the accuracy and fulfilment of God's Word.

- We see the fulfillment of **Genesis 15:14**, *"And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions."* (vs. 35-36).
- We see the fulfillment of **Genesis 12:2**, *"I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing."* Here they come out with 600,000 men (vs. 37). This family of 70 has grown over the years. Perhaps with women and children the number was 2 million?
- We see the fulfillment of **Genesis 12:3**, *"I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."* As they come out of Egypt a mixed multitude is with them (vs. 38). These are ones that aren't descendants of Abraham. But they saw the work of God and believed. And they were ready to follow God's people in hope than remain in Egypt without hope.

12:43-51 - And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it. ⁴⁴ But every man's servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then he may eat it. ⁴⁵ A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it. ⁴⁶ In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break one of its bones. ⁴⁷ All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. ⁴⁸ And when a stranger dwells with you and wants to keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep

it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it. ⁴⁹ One law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who dwells among you.” ⁵⁰ Thus all the children of Israel did; as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did. ⁵¹ 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.

Anyone that wanted to participate in the Passover observance needed to be circumcised. Why so?

This was more than just a mere observance. Celebrating the Passover didn't make one right with God. It was faith in the promises of God that were given to Abraham. Circumcision was the sign of those promises – the Abrahamic covenant.

So to participate in the celebration of what God has done, one needed to put their faith in what God has already declared. Basically no stronger way than showing your faith than by getting circumcised.

- It's much like Communion today (not the circumcision stuff) but how we encourage unbelievers to not partake of communion. This is something we do in remembrance of the salvation that Jesus has provided for us through His death on the cross and resurrection.

...nor shall you break one of its bones. Blood is produced in the bone marrow. Don't ever think that Christ's atonement is limited. Just as this lamb would have no broken bones, so too Jesus did not have 1 broken bone. John 19:36 makes reference to this.

13:1-2 - Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine.”

God spared the firstborn of Israel in Egypt, and now they are to be consecrated to Him. This simply means to be set apart. In Exodus 4:22-23, God says that Israel is His son, His firstborn. Whatever or whomever God has delivered, He wants them to be set apart for Him. God doesn't save us to free us to do our own thing. He saves us to set us apart for Him!

- In Ch. 12, the lamb died for the deliverance of life. The firstborn was redeemed! The price was paid. We too have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ! We are not our own, but we've been bought at a hefty price. When we consider what was done for us, being indebted to

Christ is not too much to ask. Giving Him our best shouldn't even be an after thought.

Moses once more gives a reiteration and expansion of the Feast of Unleavened Bread along with the proper observance of it.

13:3-10 - *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. ⁴ On this day you are going out, in the month Abib. ⁵ 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. ⁶ Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the Lord. ⁷ 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. ⁸ 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.’ ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year.*

The feast of unleavened bread followed the Passover, just as we cannot expect to live free from sin until we've first experienced the deliverance through the blood of Jesus.

It's interesting that this week long feast will end in a feast. It will be a cause of celebration.

- Some think that living consecrated lives to the Lord is going to be boring and mundane. But it's the life that is lived in the Lord and for the Lord that experiences true joy and peace.

And we should be living our lives in a way where we get to proclaim all that God has done for us. This feast was not something to do in private, it was something to be celebrated with others. Let it be an occasion to share of the great things God has done in your life – ***This is done because of what the Lord did for me when I came up from Egypt.*** (vs. 8)

Now we see in vs. 9 where the practice of wearing phylacteries came into play. This was not meant to be done physically, but practically in a spiritual sense. The Pharisees abused this and did it for show (Matthew 23:5). Satan will look to counterfeit it (Revelation 13:16).

3:11-16 - “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, ¹² 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. ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ 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.’ ¹⁶ 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 law would take effect when they entered the Promised land. It would be at that time that the reminder of what God had done for them would be more necessary and needed.

In verse 12 the term **set apart** is literally ‘cause to pass over’.

All first born animals shall be given to the Lord. But all donkeys will be redeemed by a lamb. If it’s not redeemed it will perish (if Jesus is the lamb, then I guess we’re a bunch of donkeys).

All the firstborn sons also were also to be redeemed. “This was originally to be a memorial of God's redemption from Egyptian slavery, as were the feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread (cf. 12:14).” (Constable).

Later we read in Numbers 18:15-16 that it was through the payment of silver that they will be redeemed.

3:17-22 - 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.”¹⁸ 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.¹⁹ 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.”²⁰ So they took their journey from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness.²¹ 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.²² He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people.

God would lead the Israelites in a longer route, by way of the wilderness. It would be a time for teaching and preparation. You see it was easy getting the people out of Egypt, but it will be much more challenging getting Egypt out of the people. If they were to travel the easy route, they would have encountered opposition and enemies and retreated from God’s best for them.

- The Lord knows the journey and each step along the way. Trust Him to guide you in that which is ultimately for your good. It may seem like the more challenging route at the time, but we often fail to see the pitfalls of the route we would rather take.

They left from Succoth, which means ‘tents’ or ‘booths’. They were getting ready to be on a journey; a pilgrimage.

Their next stop was Etham which means ‘with them; their strength’. Though it wasn’t going to be an easy journey, God was going to be with them and help them. This is so clearly seen in verses 21-22.