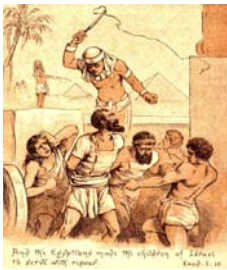


LEAVING MITZRAIM



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THE ISRAELITES IN MITZRAIM



The Israelites were in bondage to the Egyptians. Note – Egypt’s economy is based on slavery.

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SHEMOT CHAPTER 11 – WARNING OF THE PLAGUE OF THE FIRST BORN.



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Shemot 11:4 – 5

And Mosheh said, “Thus said Yahweh, ‘About midnight I am going out into the midst of Mitsrayim,

and all the first-born in the land of Mitsrayim shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the first-born of the female servant who is behind the handmill, and all the first-born of cattle.

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V4-5 – Moshe tells Israel that Yahweh will kill the firstborn of ALL Egypt. Even the animals.

All of Egypt benefited from the slavery of Israel – even the firstborn of foreign captives would die so that they would not attribute their survival to their idols.

The firstborn of animals because Egypt worshipped them,

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Shemot 11:7 – “...Yahweh distinguishes between Egypt and Israel.”

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THE PESACH OF YAHWEH AND THE HEBREW CALENDAR

The commemoration of Israel’s liberty from Egypt is Rosh Chodesh and Pesach.

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Rosh Chodesh – The first commandment given to Israel.



NB – During the Maccabean period under Syrian-Greek persecution, Rosh Chodesh was one of 3 forbidden commandments. The other 2 were Shabbat and circumcision.

Rosh Chodesh determines the observance of all other feasts and many other commandments.

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THE PESACH OFFERING



Pesach means “to pass over”. It commemorates Yahweh’s mercy toward Israel on the night of Pesach in Egypt.

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פסח

Some parts of these commandments concerning the Pesach lamb apply only to that ONE time in Egypt.

The lamb was chosen because it was an Egyptian deity.

The lamb had to come into the house on Aviv 10. It had to be “without blemish” or “without defect”. It is to be a male, one year old – from the sheep or the goats.

It was to be kept until the 14th of Aviv. Killed at dusk or in the afternoon. Some of the blood was put on the 2 sides and the top frame of the entrance to the house. The WHOLE lamb was to be eaten with matzah and maror (bitter herbs) that evening.

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Israel – at that time – was to be dressed to leave. Though the rest of history, they recline.

That night, “about midnight” Yahweh would pass through the land and kill the first born.

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Shemot 12:12

*‘And I shall pass through the land of Mitsrayim on that night, and shall smite all the first-born in the land of Mitsrayim, both man and beast. And on **all the mighty ones of Mitsrayim I shall execute judgment. I am Yahweh.***

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Shemot 12:13

And the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I shall pass over you, and let the plague not come on you to destroy you when I smite the land of Mitsrayim.

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The blood serves as a sign that Yahweh will pass over the whole house.

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CELEBRATING THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

Shemot 12:15-20 discusses the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Verse 17 is THE KEY verse which tells us why Yahweh designated this feast.

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Shemot 12:17

‘And you shall guard the Festival of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I brought your divisions out of the land of Mitsrayim. And you shall guard this day throughout your generations, an everlasting law.

Shemot 12:17 says, “You are to guard the festival of matzah...”. This seems to be where most chumashim stop. The Stone Edition Chumash says, “You shall safeguard the matzos...” and the commentary concentrates on safeguarding the matzos while it is being made in order to prevent moisture from causing it to become leavened. The S. E. Chumash, and others, seem to be concentrating on the matzah part of this verse and ignoring the second part of the verse.

However, Yahweh tells us EXACTLY why we are to “[guard](#) or [observe](#) the festival of matzah” in the rest of Exodus 12:17. In verse 17, Yahweh uses the word “ki” (כִּי) which means “for” or “because” to tie the first part of the verse to the second part of the verse.

Yahweh continues with “...FOR on this day I brought your [divisions](#) out of the land of Egypt...”. Yahweh’s REASON for celebrating or observing the festival of matzah is because He brought “your divisions” out of Egypt. The word here translated “divisions” is “tza-vah” (צָבָא) which means “host, army, multitude”. Who is this “division” or “multitude” – IT IS THE WHOLE OF ISRAEL.

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The Festival of Unleavened Bread is a reminder that Yahweh brought ISRAEL – as an army or multitude – a whole nation – out of Egypt.

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EGYPTIAN ISRAELITES



We are putting on the sandals of the Israelites in Egypt. Let's look around and see who and what we are.

We are 430 years from the time when Jacob and his whole family entered Egypt. We are 430 years from the time when Joseph saved all of Egypt. There is not a single one of us alive that can remember those days. We are slaves to the Egyptians and none of us remembers "freedom". All we have is legends and stories about the patriarchs. Some of us might know about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and how they spoke to Yahweh. We might know that we are descended from the sons of Jacob or Israel and some of us might know what family line we are in.

Because we are slaves to the Egyptians, we do not have our own Belief System and we do not practice the Belief System of the patriarchs. We are idolaters just like our Egyptian masters. Some of us might reject the Egyptian religion and try to keep the religion of our forefathers, but most of us do not even know these things. None of us are circumcised. We have no hope in Yahweh because we are slaves to the Egyptians not only physically but also spiritually.

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MOSHE TELLS US ABOUT YAHWEH



For some time now (Scripture is not clear on how long), we have been hearing Moshe teaching us about what Yahweh has said to Him. Moshe has told us that we are to leave Egypt and be Yahweh's people. We really don't know who Yahweh is but we see that He is more powerful than the gods the Egyptians worship. The Egyptians have never mentioned Yahweh to us.

Great and terrible plagues have happened to the Egyptians at the hand of Yahweh, but not to us. Moshe tells us about this last great event, the death of the firstborn of Egypt, and that Yahweh will “pass over” us and we will not die. Moshe tells us what we must do for this “pass over” and how we are to remember this event for the rest of our generations. As we hear these words from Moshe, we bow our heads and worship Yahweh.

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LEAVING MITZRAIM



Just like Moshe told us, at midnight on that night, while we are still eating lamb, Yahweh goes through the land of Egypt and kills the firstborn. Egyptians, foreigners, and even animals die during the night. We are afraid but none of our people die because we have put the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of our homes.

There is a great commotion and Moshe tells us we are to quickly leave Egypt. We gather our things and even the bread dough before it is even baked. Some of the Egyptians give us silver and gold things to send us on our way. We group together in our family groupings. Most of us are just followers and we really don't know what's happening but we are leaving Egypt. Everyone is headed East. Men, women, children, all of our animals and even some others not of our people. We are a great mixed crowd and we are not Egyptian slaves anymore!

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COMMENTARY ON THESE EVENTS



Shemot 12:37 & 38 tells us “The people of Israel traveled from Ra’amses to Sukkot, some 600,000 men on foot, not counting children. A mixed crowd also went up with them, as well as livestock in large numbers, both flocks and herds.” Verse 41 tells us, “... all the divisions of Yahweh left the land of Egypt.” And verse 51 tells us, “... Yahweh brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their divisions.”

Notice something here. In a little over two columns of Torah, Yahweh uses the word tzavah for divisions or hosts or armies three times to refer to Israel. He is saying that He is dealing with the WHOLE of Israel – that is the descendants of the twelve sons of Jacob. Remember “Jacob had twelve sons” (Genesis 35:22), NOT one son. Yahweh brought the WHOLE HOUSE OF ISRAEL out of Egypt.

SOUP OR SALAD



I was thinking about this whole event and trying to picture myself and my family in this great crowd of people. I think what I see is that this group of people called Israel has more or less, lost their identity. They have assimilated into Egyptian culture even as slaves and have adopted Egyptian culture as their own. They might be Israel by birth or ancestry, but they are Egyptian in everything else. Also, I see that foreigners have joined themselves to these Israelite people and might have mixed with them by marriage. I'm sure that there were also some Egyptians in this “mixed crowd” that left Egypt.

For those of you that know me, you might know that I like to use a lot of food comparisons. So if we were to look at this group of people, what would we see? I don't think we would see a “salad” type group. A “salad” group is a group of very distinct peoples. A salad is made up of pieces of cut-up vegetables that are distinct but mixed together. You can take any one piece out of a salad and it will have a distinctive taste.

On the other hand, soup is made up of vegetables that have been cooked together. Each piece of vegetable has most of its own taste and the tastes of the rest of the soup. Each piece is not completely distinct but has some of the flavoring of the rest of the soup.

Using this analogy, I think that what left Egypt was a soup, not a salad. It was a mixture of peoples that had some distinctness but was also flavored with the whole of the people.

Yahweh did not cook this soup. Egypt cooked this soup. Egypt took the basic ingredients of the descendants of Israel and added their own spices and flavors. They made a vegetable soup and put a whole horseradish root in it to make it bitter. They added wood shavings and gravel in the form of idols. They spiced it so strong to hide the memory of Yahweh.

Yahweh was going to take this people into the wilderness and make them His people. He was going to do something only He can do. He was going to take out all of the ingredients of the soup and put it back together His way. He would return the vegetables. He would add His Torah as the sauce that holds the whole soup together. He would spice it with His spices and he would remove any unwanted flavors.

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LEAVING MITZRAIM TODAY

Today, Yahweh is removing us from a type of Egypt. We have been slaves to sin and idolatry. We have been slaves to a Belief System that filled with idolatry and paganism. We are a mixed crowd and we do not know who we are.

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CONCLUSIONS

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Yahweh distinguishes between Israel and the rest of the world.

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Yahweh executed judgment on the mighty-ones of Mitzraim and He will execute judgment on the mighty-ones of the world.

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The Festival of Unleavened Bread is a reminder that Yahweh brought all of Israel out of Egypt.

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Yahweh is removing the “Egypt” from His people Israel.

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Yahweh will restore Israel as His people His way and according to His commands.