

BO (Enter/Go)

10 PLAGUES מִכּוֹת עֶשֶׂר

	שָׁחִין Boils		דָּם Blood
	בָּרָד Hail		צְפַרְדֵּי Frogs
	אַרְבֵּה Locusts		כִּנִּים Lice
	חֹשֶׁךְ Darkness		עָרוֹב Wild Animals
	מִּכַּת בְּכוֹרוֹת Slaying of the Firstborn		דָּבָר Cattle Disease

Exodus 10:1 And יהוה said to Moses, go in to Pharaoh: for I have hardened **את** his heart **את** and the heart of his servants, that I might show My signs before him: 2 And that you may tell your son and your son's son, **את** what I have done in Egypt **את** and My signs which I have done among them; that you may know that I am יהוה. C-MATS

Question: Why did יהוה harden Pharaoh and his servants' heart? The reason why **את** hardens Pharaoh's heart is so that Moses may tell his descendants what **את** did in Egypt, so that the Israelites and Egyptians may know יהוה Father. **Romans 9:17** For the scripture said unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore has he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens. C-MATS

Question: Was it unjust for יהוה to harden the heart of Pharaoh and then punish Egypt for what Pharaoh did as a result of his hardened heart? Pharaoh was not an innocent or righteous man. He was a brutal dictator overseeing the terrible abuse and oppression of the Israelites, who likely numbered over 1.5 million people at that time. The Egyptian pharaohs had enslaved the Israelites and ordered male Israelite babies be killed at birth. (**Exodus 1:16 And he said, When you serve in the office of a midwife to את- the Hebrew women and see them upon their stools; if it is a son, then you will kill אתו him: but if it is a daughter, then she will live.**) Pharaoh and Egypt had horribly sinned against יהוה. It would have been just if יהוה had completely annihilated Egypt. The plagues, as terrible as they were, actually demonstrate יהוה's mercy in not completely destroying Egypt, which would have been a perfectly just penalty. We have all sinned against יהוה (**Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of Elohim.**), and the just penalty for that sin is death (**Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of Elohim is eternal life through Yahusha haMashiach our Adonai.**). Therefore, יהוה's hardening and punishing a person is not unjust; it is actually merciful in comparison to what the person deserves.



Exodus 10:3 And Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh and said to him, יהוה Elohim of the Hebrews said, How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go that they may serve Me. 4 If אתה you refuse to let go את- My people, tomorrow I will bring locusts onto your coast. C-MATS

Question: Why did יהוה send locusts to punish Egypt? יהוה punishes “measure for measure.” The Egyptians forced their Hebrew slaves to grow crops, so the locusts devoured the crops. *Chumash*

Exodus 10:5 And they will cover **את** the face of the earth, so that no one will be able to see **את** the earth: and they will eat **את** the rest of what has escaped which remains from the hail and they will eat **את** every tree which grows in the field: 6 And they will fill your houses and the houses of all your servants and the houses of all the Egyptians; neither your fathers nor your father's fathers have seen *this*, since the day that they were upon the earth to this day. And Moses turned and left Pharaoh. 7 And Pharaoh's servants said to him, How long will this man be a snare to us? Let go of **את** the men that they may serve **את** יהוה their Elohim; don't you know that Egypt is destroyed? 8 And they were brought again **את** Moses **וְאֶת** and Aaron to Pharaoh: and he said to them, Go serve **את** יהוה your Elohim: *but who will be going?* C-MATS

Question: How was the Yah-head working together in this verse? It is rare that you see the wording “**את** יהוה and Elohim” mentioned all together in scripture but in Exodus 10:7-8 Pharaoh's servants tells Pharaoh to let go of **את** men so that they may go serve **את** יהוה their Elohim. Again this is a perfect picture of the Yah-head, יהוה Father working through **את** Yahusha, together as ONE. C-MATS

Exodus 10:9 And Moses said, We will go with our young and our old, with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds; for we *must hold* a feast to יהוה. C-MATS

Question: Why must all the men, women, and children go worship יהוה? The Torah requires the same of every boy and girl once they come of age as it does for the men and women. All commandments are equally binding on everyone, and when the nation is asked to bring offerings to יהוה, everyone must participate. *Chumash*

Question: Why did Pharaoh only want the men to go with Moses? Pharaoh was willing to let the men go, as long as the children remain behind; because as long as the younger generation remains "in Egypt", there would be no future for the people of Israel. *Chumash*

Exodus 10:10 And Pharaoh said to them, יהוה *must* be with you as I will let go, **אתכם** you **וְאֶת** and your little ones! Watch out because evil is before you (*I cannot trust you*). C-MATS

Question: What did Pharaoh see in the future? There is a star named Evil (Ra'ah). Pharaoh's astrologers had shown him that that star signifying a bloody end would govern Israel's destiny in the Wilderness where they were seeking to go. Moses alluded to this prediction after the sin of the Gold Calf. As part of his prayer, he said that if יהוה destroyed the Hebrew people, the Egyptians would say that Pharaoh's astrologers had foretold Israel's bitter end, for they would say יהוה took them out under the astrological influence of the star called Evil. The truth was that the "blood" would be that of the mass circumcision of the nation under Joshua's leadership after Israel crossed the Jordan into Israel. *Chumash*

Exodus 10:11 *It will not happen!* Go now with the men and serve **את** יהוה; for **אתה** that **אתם** you did desire. And **אתם** they were driven out **מֵאֶת** from presence of Pharaoh. 12 And יהוה said to Moses, stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come upon the land of Egypt and eat **את** every herb of the land, *even את* all that the hail has left. C-MATS



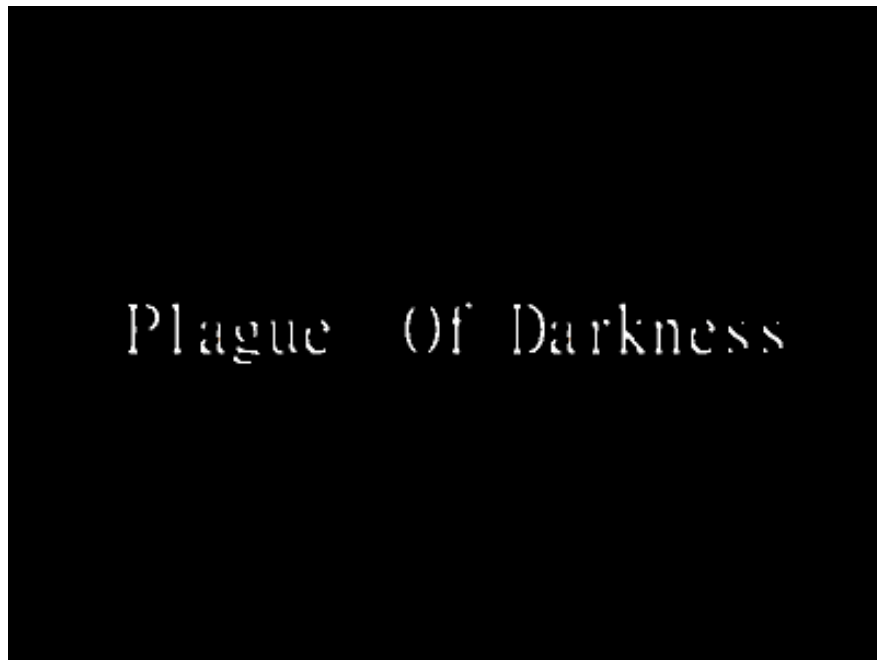
And stretched forth Moses **את** his rod

Exodus 10:13 And stretched forth Moses **את** his rod over the land of Egypt and **ויהוה** brought an east wind upon the land all that day and all *that* night; and *when* it was morning, the east wind brought **את** the locusts. 14 And the locusts went *out* over all the land of Egypt and rested on all the coasts of Egypt: *they were very terrible*; there were never locusts like these and neither *will there be again*. 15 For they covered **את** the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they ate **את** every herb of the land **וְאֵת** and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained no green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field through all the land of Egypt. 16 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron *quickly*; and he said, **חַטָּאתִי** *I sinned* to **ליהוה** your Elohim and against you. 17 Now please forgive **חַטָּאתִי** *my sin* only *this* once and to **ליהוה** your Elohim that he may take away from me *this* **את** death. 18 And Moses went out from Pharaoh and asked **יהוה**. 19 And **יהוה** turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away **את** the locusts and cast them into the Red sea; there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt. C-MATS

Question: Why did **יהוה** turn the locusts away from Egypt? Jasher 80: And **יהוה** sent and brought numerous locusts into Egypt, which devoured all that the hail had left remaining. Then the Egyptians rejoiced at the locusts, although they consumed the produce of the field, and they caught them in abundance and salted them for food. And **יהוה** turned a mighty wind of the sea, which took away all the locusts, even those that were salted, and thrust them into the Red Sea; not one locust remained within the boundaries of Egypt.



Question: What gods of Egypt were defeated through the plague of locusts? There were many gods associated with the crops of Egypt, for the crops and the Nile were the source for all life in the country. There was Nepri, the god of grain; Ermutet, the goddess of childbirth and crops; Thermuthis, the goddess of fertility and the harvest; and Seth, another god of crops. There have been discoveries of many amulets in the shape of a locust that were probably worn by the Egyptians to ward off the swarms that would ravage their crops. The locusts were so numerous that Exodus 10:15 says **For they covered אֶת־ the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened.** The locusts would not have just destroyed crops but also the trees and the fruit of the land.



Exodus 10:20 But hardened יהוה את- the heart of Pharaoh, so that he would not let go את- Children of Israel. 21 And יהוה said to Moses, Stretch out your hand toward heavens, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness which may be felt. C-MATS

Question: Why did יהוה bring darkness upon the Egyptians? Jasher 80: At that time many of the people of Israel died who had rebelled against יהוה and who would not listen to Moses and Aaron, and did not believe in them that יהוה had sent them. And who had said, "We will not go out from Egypt lest we perish with hunger in a desolate wilderness," and who would not listen to the voice of Moses. And יהוה plagued them in the three days of darkness, and the Israelites buried them in those days, without the Egyptians knowing about them or rejoicing over them. And the darkness was very great in Egypt for three days, and any person who was standing when the darkness came, remained standing in his place, and he that was sitting remained sitting, and he that was lying continued lying in the same state, and he that was walking remained sitting upon the ground in the same spot; and this thing happened to all the Egyptians, until the darkness had passed away.

Exodus 10:22 And stretched forth Moses את- his hand toward heavens; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. C-MATS

Question: When Moses stretches forth his hand, it is actually את hand of authority that brings the plague of darkness upon Egypt for 3 days. This is a beautiful picture of man walking in covenant with את יהוה because we become an extension of the Yah-head. BUT why have a Plague of Darkness and why 3 Days? This could only be a type and foreshadow of את Yahusha our Messiah's death at Calvary and 3 days later His resurrection provides freedom to all those who repent and enter into covenant through His blood with Father because right after את Plague of Darkness is the death of the first born and Israel is SET FREE! C-MATS



Question: What gods of Egypt were defeated with the plague of darkness? The plague would have been a direct attack against Pharaoh, for he was the divine representation of the sun god Ra. Ra was the chief deity of Egypt and the sun god and their son Khons was the god of the moon. The sun god Ra was considered to be a great blessing to the land for his faithfulness in providing the warmth and light of the sun each day without fail. He was usually represented as a falcon-headed man wearing a sun disk as a crown.



Question: Does the Christian church still worship the sun god today? Emperor Constantine was a pagan sun-worshipper. To bring order to his kingdom he set up a law to make all people rest on Sunday and close all workshops on March 7, A.D. 321. The Roman Catholic Church adopted this practice and the sun god symbols under pressure from Constantine. This practice of worshipping on Sunday with the sun god symbols has continued in error to this day.

Exodus 10:23 They *could* not see one **את** another, neither *could* anyone get up from his place for three days: but all *the* Children of Israel had light in their houses. **24** And Pharaoh called to Moses and said, Go and serve **את** יהוה; only let your flocks and your herds stay: let your little ones also go with you. C-MATS

Question: Why did the Hebrews have herds? Even in enslavement, the Hebrews maintained the right to own herds, and they had considerable wealth. Wealth is no guarantee that there would be no persecution-or even the murder of their children. *Chumash*

Exodus 10:25 And Moses said, **אתה** You must give us *our* sacrifices and burnt offerings that we may sacrifice to ליהוה our Elohim. **26** Our cattle will go with us also; not a hoof *will* be left behind; because we must take *them* to serve **את** יהוה our Elohim; because we will not know *how* we must serve **את** יהוה until we arrive there. **27** But hardened **את** יהוה the heart of Pharaoh and he would not let them go. **28** And Pharaoh said to him, Go away from me; be careful not to come before my face any more; because in the day that you see my face, you will die. **29** And Moses said, You have spoken well I will *not* see your face again. C-MATS



Borrow from your neighbor jewels

Exodus 11:1 And יהוה said to Moses, I will bring one *more* plague upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt; then he will let **אתכם** *you* go: when he lets you go, he will drive **אתכם** *you* out of here completely. 2 Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow **מאת** *from* his neighbor, and every woman **מאת** *from* her neighbor, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold. 3 And gave יהוה **אה-** *favor* the people in the sight of the Egyptians. Moses *was* very great in the land of Egypt in the sight of Pharaohs servants and in the sight of the people. C-MATS

Question: Moses was the greatest person who ever lived, yet he was also the most humble. How could this be? Moses was well aware that he had talents and attributes beyond any of his peers. However he also realized the source of those talents: יהוה. So he didn't take his greatness 'personally', as a reason to be haughty, rather he felt privileged that יהוה had chosen to give them to him, and this made him extremely humble.

Exodus 11:4 And Moses said, יהוה said about midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt: 5 And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sits upon his throne to the firstborn of the female servant that *is* behind the mill and all the firstborn of beasts. C-MATS

Question: Why did יהוה carry out the plague? יהוה Himself, not an angel, would carry out the plague, for two reasons: 1) because of His love for Israel, and 2) since even the firstborn of males would die. Only יהוה could know their identity. *Chumash*

Question: Why were the firstborn sons of the female Egyptian servants killed? The servants were also enslaving the Israelites and were happy about their misfortune. *Chumash*

Question: Why were the firstborn animals killed? Because the Egyptians worshipped them, and when יהוה punishes any nation, He punishes its deity. *Chumash*

Question: Which gods of the Egyptians were defeated during the death of the firstborn? This plague was directed against “all of the gods of Egypt” (**I will execute against all the gods of Egypt judgment: I am יהוה**. Exodus 12:12) and would show the total inability of the gods of Egypt to protect their subjects in the face of unparalleled tragedy. The death of the firstborn son would cripple a family legally and emotionally. This would have been humiliating to Isis, the winged goddess of fertility; Meskenet, the goddess who presided at the birth of children; to Hathor, one of the seven deities who attended the birth of children; to Min, the god of procreation; to Selket, the guardian of life; and to Renenutet, the cobra-goddess and guardian of Pharaoh. Not only is this an attack against the gods but also against the Pharaoh. It undermined his immortality through his inability to protect his son, who was a god as well, and it undermined his ability to provide unity and protection over the land of Egypt.



The Angel of Death, a painting by Jules-Elie Delaunay.

Exodus 11:6 And there will be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as never heard before and never will be heard ever again. **7** But a dog will not growl against any of *the* Children of Israel or against man or beast that you may know that יהוה does put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. **8** And your servants will come down to me and bow down themselves to me saying, Get out **אתה** you and all the people that follow you: and after that I will go out. And Moses went out from Pharaoh *with* great anger. **9** And יהוה said to Moses, Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt. **10** And Moses and Aaron did **את** all these wonders before Pharaoh: and hardened יהוה **את** the heart of Pharaoh, so that he would not let **את** Children of Israel go out of his land. C-MATS



Death Angel

Exodus 12:1 And יהוה spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt saying, **2 This month will be the beginning of months: it will be the first month of the year for you. C-MATS**

Question: What does the word “**month**” in Hebrew mean? Month means renewal. Just as the moon disappears at the end of each month, but returns and grows to fullness, so Israel may suffer exile and decline, but it always renews itself until the coming of the Messiah. The Hebrew calendar is based on the moon, and it is regulated by the sun. The length of the months is 29 or 30 days. A “leap year” adds a thirteenth month to the year seven times every nineteen years so that Nissan always remains in its proper season. *Chumash*

Question: Why was the lunar calendar changed to a solar calendar? The ancient Egyptians used a lunar calendar exclusively until they adopted the first solar calendar. The Egyptians changed the calendar based on their worship of Ra, the sun god. Julius Caesar adopted the Egyptian calendar and spread the Julian Calendar through the Roman empire, and later forced it on the Jewish people who lived in the Roman Empire.



Exodus 12:3 Speak to all the congregation of Israel. saying, In the tenth *day* of this month every man will take a lamb according to house of their אֲבוֹתָם *fathers*, a lamb for *each* house. C-MATS

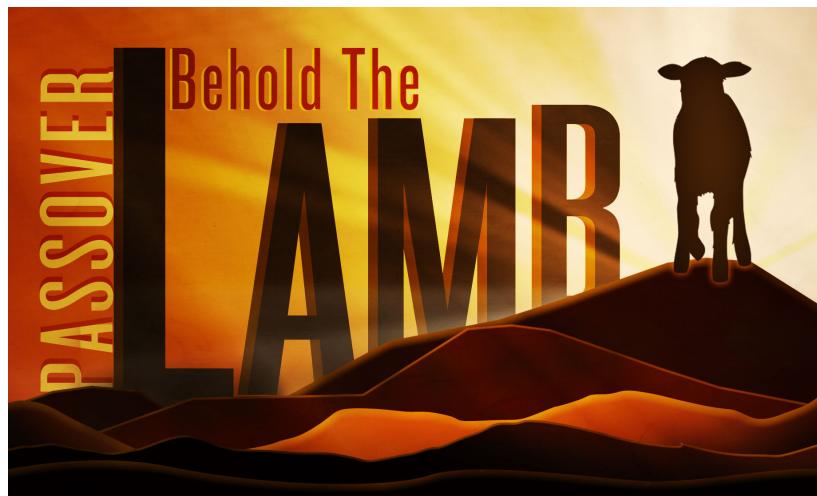
Question: What does the word “**lamb**” mean here? The Hebrew word refers to both the young of both sheep and goats. There is no one-word translation in English. *Chumash*

Question: What is meant by “**house of their אֲבוֹתָם fathers**”? The father’s house is what is known today as an extended family, such as grandparents with the families of their children. If this group was so large that one animal would not provide the minimum required amount of meat for each participant, then an animal should be used for each household. *Chumash*

Exodus 12:4 And if the household is *too* small for one lamb, then let him and his neighbor next to his house *share it* according to the number of persons; *dividing it* according to the number of people eating the lamb. **5** Your *animal should* be without blemish, a one year old male: you can take it from the sheep or goats: *Prophecy Fulfilled-Ex. 12:5 A Lamb without blemish-1 Pet. 1:19.* **6** And you will keep *it* until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel will kill אֹתוֹ *it (him)* in the evening. C-MATS

Question: Why was it important to calculate how many lambs were to be prepared for each house? The people who will participate in the eating of each offering must be calculated according to how much they can eat, because all of the meat must be eaten that night or thrown away. יהוה does not want you to waste any food. *Chumash*

Question: Why was Moses fearful to slaughter the lamb in Egypt? Now the Egyptians had a strange custom: they worshiped sheep. No one dared to do anything to offend a "holy" sheep. To actually eat one was unthinkable. So when יהוה told Moses to tell the Israelite people to all take sheep and publicly roast and eat them to celebrate their going out of Egypt, the people were afraid. "But what will the Egyptians think?" they asked. "Don't worry," said Moses, "יהוה wants to show the Egyptians once and for all that their 'sheep-gods' have no power at all and that it's foolish to worship an animal instead of the Creator." On that night יהוה slew the Egyptian firstborn and the Israelites slaughtered their Passover lamb and ate it. *Chumash*



Exodus 12:7 And they will take the blood and *smear it* on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses in which they shall eat **אתו** *it (him)*. 8 And they will eat **אתו** the flesh that night roast *it with fire* and eat *it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs*. C-MATS

Question: Whose flesh were the Israelites eating that night? It was **את** flesh they will be eating that night as the Passover Lamb. Exodus 12:23 **When he sees אתו the blood upon the lintel and on the two side posts, יהוה will pass over the door and will not allow the Destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.** The blood of Yahusha brought salvation to the Israelites. C-MATS

Question: Why should you eat bitter herbs? He commanded them to eat bitter herbs in commemoration of how the Egyptians treated the Israelites. **“And they made bitter אתו their lives with hard bondage” Exodus 1:14.** (Chumash) Bitter herbs mentioned in the Bible likely used by the Hebrews during Passover are Chicory, Coriander, Dandelion, Endive, Horehound, Mint, Sorrel, Sow-thistle, Wild lettuce, and Wormwood. The bitter herbs commonly used today during Passover are horseradish and (Romaine) lettuce. Also bitter herbs were used to improve digestion and counter inflammation, so יהוה was teaching us how to properly digest our food when eating meat.

Exodus 12:9 Do not eat it raw or boiled in water but roast *it with fire*; its head with its legs and with its *organs* in it. 10 And you will let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remains until the morning you will burn with fire. 11 You will eat **אתו** *it (him)* with your loins girded (*belt*), your shoes on your feet and your staff in your hand; and you will eat **אתו** *it (him)* quickly; it is to ליהוה Passover. C-MATS

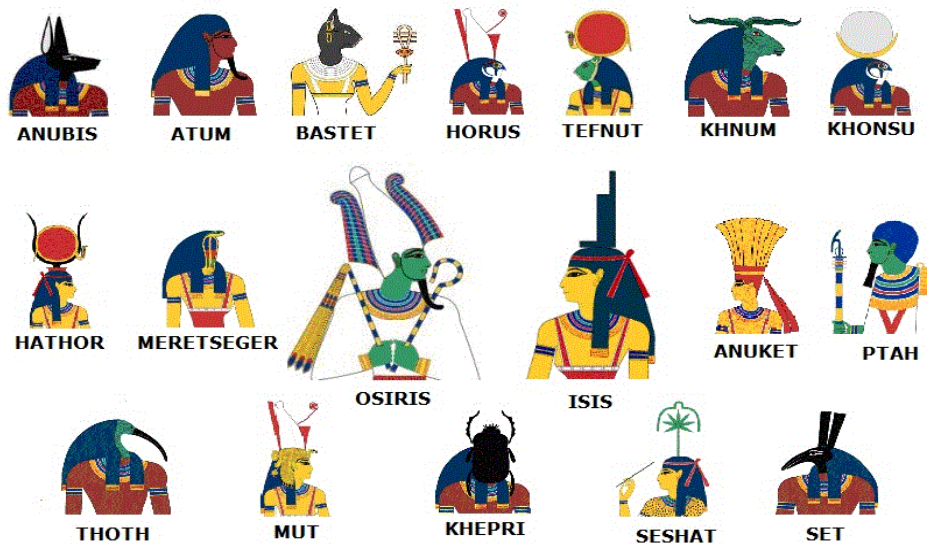
Question: Why is the festival called **Passover**? יהוה brought death to the firstborn of Egypt, but he “passed” or “skipped” over the homes of the Hebrew people. *Chumash*

Question: What does it mean “**loins girded**”? The Hebrews should have their belts tightened, and be dressed as if they were ready for an immediate journey out of the country. *Chumash*

Exodus 12:12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night and will kill all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and I will execute against all the gods of Egypt judgment: I am יהוה. C-MATS

Question: I will execute against all the gods of Egypt judgment. What gods were judged and defeated during the plagues? The Egyptians worshiped over 2000 gods and goddesses, because they were constantly looking for explanations why events happened. Deities represented natural forces and phenomena, and the Egyptians supported and appeased them through offerings and rituals so that these forces would continue to function according to divine order. The authority to perform these tasks was controlled by the pharaoh, who claimed to be the representative of the deities and managed the temples where the rituals were carried out. Egyptians prayed for divine help, used rituals to compel deities to act, and called upon them for advice. Humans' relations with their deities were a fundamental part of Egyptian society. יהוה wanted to show Egypt that there were only ONE Almighty יהוה, and He controlled all things and could destroy Egypt and all their gods at any moment.

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN GODS



Question: What judgment was placed on their idols? The idols made of wood will rot, and the idols made of metal will melt and flow to the ground. The demonic spiritual forces that guided and protected the destiny of Egypt were struck in this plague, so that Egypt would be completely defenseless. *Chumash*

Exodus 12:13 And the blood will be אֶתְּ a sign upon the houses where אַתְּ you are: and when I see אֶתְּ blood, I will pass over you and the plague will not come upon you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. *Prophecy Fulfilled-Ex 12:13 The blood of the Lamb saves from wrath-Romans 5:8.* 14 And this day will be a memorial for you; and you will keep it as a feast to לִיהוּה throughout all your generations; you will keep this feast as an ordinance forever. 15 Seven days you will eat unleavened bread; on the first day you will take away leaven out of your houses: whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day will be cut off from Israel. C-MATS

Question: When should you take all the leavened bread out of your house? The leaven must be removed before the Pesach-offering may be offered (or cooked). *Chumash*

Exodus 12:16 And on the first day there will be a sacred assembly and on the seventh day there will be a sacred assembly for you; no work will be done in those days, except that which every man must do to prepare his food to eat, you may only do that. C-MATS

Question: What kind of work can be done on the first and seventh day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread? The necessary work for food preparation is allowed. No other kind of work may be performed on these days, even though work can be performed on the other days of the feast. *Chumash*

Exodus 12:17 And you will observe אֶתְּ Unleavened Bread; for in this day I have brought אֶתְּ your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore, you will observe אֶתְּ day, in all your generations by an ordinance forever (*owlam*). 18 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you will eat unleavened bread until the twenty first day of the month at evening. 19 Seven days no leaven will be found in your houses: for whoever eats that which is leavened will be cut off from the Congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or born in the land. C-MATS

Question: What punishment is given to the person who eats leavening during the Feast of Unleavened Bread? A person will suffer premature death by the hands of Heaven or have no children if he eats leavening during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The sinner must be aware of what he is doing and does so willingly, but one is not liable to this curse if he is unaware that what he is doing is forbidden. *Chumash*

Exodus 12:20 You will eat nothing leavened; in all your houses you will eat unleavened bread. 21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, Take a lamb according to the number in your family and kill the Passover lamb. 22 And you take a אֶתְּ bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin and smear the lintel (*overhead door*) and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin; וְאַתְּ and you will not go out of the door of your house until the morning. 23 For יְהוּה will pass through to kill אֶתְּ the Egyptians; and when he sees אֶתְּ the blood upon the lintel and on the two side posts, יְהוּה will pass over the door and will not allow the Destroyer to come into your houses to strike you. C-MATS



Question: What symbol were the Israelites painting on the doors of their homes? Chai (יח) is a Hebrew word and symbol that means “life. “Let these live” was painted on the door posts. Chai is pronounced as if you were saying “hi” in English.



Exodus 12:24 And you will observe **את** *this* matter as an ordinance for you and your sons forever (*owlam*). 25 And it will come to pass, when you have come to the land which יהוה will give you, as He has promised, that you will keep **את** *this* **הזאת** service. 26 And it will come to pass, when your children will say to you, what *do you mean by* **את** *this* **הזאת** service? 27 That you will say, it is the sacrifice to ליהוה Passover, who passed over the houses of *the* Children of Israel in Egypt, when He struck **את** *the* Egyptians **ואת** *and* our houses *He* delivered. And the people bowed their heads and worshipped. *Prophecy Fulfilled-Ex. 12:21-27 Messiah is our Passover-1 Cor. 5:7.* 28 And *the* Children of Israel went away as had commanded יהוה **את** Moses and Aaron, so they did. C-MATS

Death of the Firstborn



Exodus 12:29 And it came to pass at midnight and **יהוה** killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive that *was* in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of *the* cattle. **30** And Pharaoh rose up 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 one *was not* dead *in it*. C-MATS

Question: Why did every house have a corpse in it? Jasher 80 And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry throughout Egypt in that night, for there was not a house in which there was not a corpse. **יהוה** also killed the firstborn who were not known to everyone, like those who were the products of incest and immorality. Also the likenesses of the first born of Egypt that were carved in the walls of their houses were destroyed, and fell to the ground. Even the bones of their firstborn who had died before this and whom they had buried in their houses, were raked up by the dogs of Egypt on that night and dragged before the Egyptians and cast before them. All the Egyptians saw this evil, which had suddenly come upon them, and all the Egyptians cried out with a loud voice. All the families of Egypt wept upon that night, each man for his son and each man for his daughter, being the first born, and the cries of Egypt was heard at a distance on that night.

Exodus 12:31 And Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron by night and said, Rise up and get out from among my people, both **אתם** *you* and *the* Children of Israel; and go serve **אהי** **יהוה** as you have said. **32** Also take your flocks and your herds as you have said and be gone, but bless **אהי** *me* also. **33** And the Egyptians were urgent *with* the people *that* they might send them out of the land quickly; because they said, We *will* be all dead men. C-MATS



The Death of the Firstborn by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema



Middlebrow Answer: Death of the First-Born (10th)

Question: Was Bathia, the woman who raised Moses, afflicted by the plagues? Jasher 80: And Bathia the daughter of Pharaoh went out with the king on that night to seek Moses and Aaron in their houses, and they found them in their houses, eating and drinking and rejoicing with all Israel. And Bathia said to Moses, "Is this the reward for the good which I have done to you, who have raised you, and you have brought this evil upon me and my father's house?" And Moses said to her, "Surely ten plagues did יהוה bring upon Egypt; did any evil come to you from any of them? Did one of them affect you? And she said, "No." And Moses said to her, "Although you are the first born to your mother, you shall not die, and no evil will reach you in the midst of Egypt." And she said, "What advantage is it to me, when I see the king, my brother, and all his household and subjects in this evil, whose first born perish with all the first born of Egypt?" And Moses said to her, "Surely your brother and his household, and subjects, the families of Egypt, would not listen to the words of יהוה, therefore did this evil come upon them."

Question: When did Pharaoh beg Moses to remove the plagues? When the plague was life-threatening Pharaoh begged Moses to take away the plague.

- 1) Blood-the plague was not life threatening, because the Egyptians could buy water from the Hebrews or find their own water by digging new wells.
- 2) Frogs-the frogs actually crept into the innards of the Egyptians and threatened their lives.
- 3) Lice-the plague was uncomfortable but not dangerous.
- 4) "Swarms"-Pharaoh feared for his life when surrounded by beasts of the wild.
- 5) Epidemic-only animals died, not people
- 6) Boils-the plague caused extreme discomfort, but killed no one.
- 7) Hail-the loud thunder and flames from heaven terrified everyone, making them fear that they would suffer the same total destruction as Sodom had in Abraham's time.
- 8) Locusts-Pharaoh said explicitly, remove this death from me.
- 9) Darkness-during the first 3 days of the plague the Egyptians could have used lanterns, thereafter, they could not move. This plague was not life threatening.
- 10) First-born-Pharaoh's resistance broke down completely; for he was also a firstborn. *Chumash*

Exodus 12:34 And took the people **את** their dough before it was leavened and wrapped their kneading *bowls* in their clothes on their shoulders. **35** And *the* Children of Israel obeyed the word of Moses; and they borrowed *from* the Egyptians jewels of silver and gold and garments. C-MATS

Question: Why did the Egyptians give the Hebrews all their wealth? When the Hebrews came to ask their neighbors to borrow various items, the Egyptians gave them lavish gifts and forced their wealth on them, just so they would leave the country. *Chumash*

Exodus 12:36 And ויהוה gave **את** favor *to* the people in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them *as much* as they required. And they plundered **את** *the* Egyptians. C-MATS

Question: Who gave the Israelites favor with the Egyptians? It is **את** that gives the Israelites favor with the Egyptians and **את** who also allows them to plunder the Egyptians. C-MATS

Exodus 12:37 And *the Children of Israel* journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about 600,000 men on foot, *not counting the children*. C-MATS

Question: How many Hebrews left Egypt? 600,000 adult males did not include women, children, and elderly males, which indicates that a total population of about 3,000,000 people followed Moses into the Wilderness. *Chumash*

Exodus 12:38 And a mixed multitude went up אִתָּם *with them*; flocks, herds and cattle in very large numbers. C-MATS

Question: Who were the “mixed multitude” that went with the Hebrews into the Wilderness? A multitude of people of various nationalities converted to worship יהוה and accompanied the Hebrews out of Egypt. *Chumash*

Exodus 12:39 And they baked אֶת־הַדָּגָהּ the dough which they brought out of Egypt, unleavened cakes, because it was not leavened since they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, neither had they prepared for themselves any meat. C-MATS

Question: What does this verse say about the faith of the Israelites? Israel did not say, “How will we go out into the desert without provisions?” Instead they believed and left. **Jeremiah 2:2** I remember you, the kindness of your youth, אָהַבְתְּ אֶת־אֵשֶׁתְּךָ you loved your espousals, when you went after Me in the wilderness, in a land *that was not planted*. C-MATS

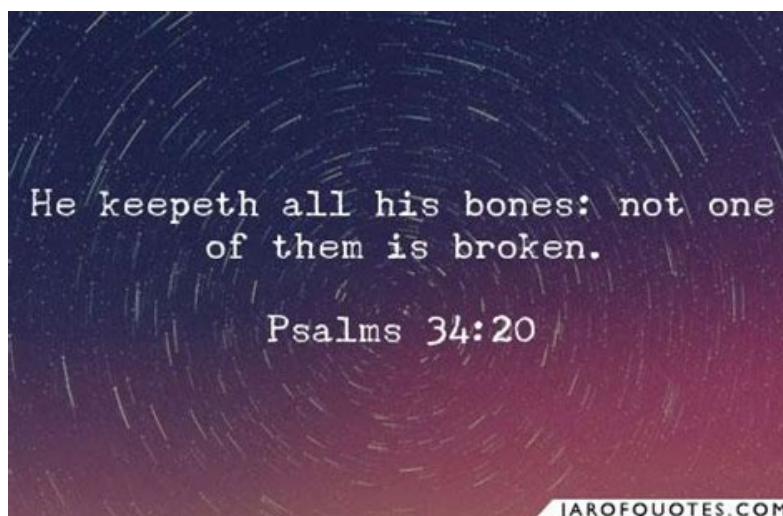
Exodus 12:40 Now the time *the Children of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years*. 41 And it came to pass at the end of *the 430 years*, on the very same day, it came to pass *that all the* צְבָאוֹת *hosts of יהוה went out from the land of Egypt*. C-MATS

Question: What does this mean “*the time the Children of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years*” when they really weren’t in Egypt that many years? The Covenant between the Parts took place 430 years before the Exodus, and that is the period referred to in this verse. At that time, יהוה foretold Abraham that his offspring would endure 400 years during which there would be exile, persecution, and servitude-but not necessarily all of them at the same time. Thirty years later those 400 years began with the birth of Isaac, since the prophecy referred to Abraham’s offspring. Thus the Exodus was perfectly calibrated to conform to the prophecy to Abraham, for Isaac was born on the fifteenth of Nissan and exactly 400 years later precisely at the deadline of the prescribed time the Hebrews were liberated. The actual exile in Egypt lasted 210 years. *Chumash*

Question: How many years did the Israelites suffer hard labor? **Jasher 81** And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides the little ones and their wives. Also a mixed multitude went up with them, and flocks and herds, even much cattle. And the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in the land of Egypt in hard labor, was two hundred and ten years. And at the end of two hundred and ten years, יהוה brought out the children of Israel from Egypt with a strong hand.

Exodus 12:42 This night *was* observed by יהוה for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is the night to ליהוה to be observed by all *the* Children of Israel in their generations. 43 And יהוה said to Moses and Aaron, זאת *this* is the ordinance of the Passover: No stranger will eat it: 44 But every man's servant *that* is bought for money, *after* you have circumcised אתו *him*, then he will eat it. 45 A foreigner and a hired servant will not eat it. 46 In אהת *one* house it will be eaten; you will not carry *any* of the *meat* out of the house; neither will you break any of the bones. *Prophecy Fulfilled-Ex. 12:46 Not a bone of the Lamb to be broken-John 19:31-36. C-MATS*

Question: How did Yahusha, our Passover lamb, fulfill this scripture? John 19:31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the stake on the Sabbath day, for that Sabbath day was a high day, besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. 32 Then came the soldiers, and broke the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 33 But when they came to Yahusha, and saw that he was dead already, they broke not his legs: 34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and came there out blood and water. 35 And he that saw it bore record, and his record is true: and he knows that he said true, that you might believe. 36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. C-MATS



Exodus 12:47 All the congregation of Israel will celebrate אתו *it (him)*. 48 And when a stranger settles with אתך *you* and keeps the Passover to ליהוה, let all his males be circumcised *first* and then let him come and keep it; and he will be as one that is born in the land: no uncircumcised person will eat it. 49 The *same laws* will be for him that is native and the stranger that settles among you. 50 So *the* Children of Israel did all as commanded by יהוה את- Moses ואת- and Aaron. 51 It came to pass the very same day, brought יהוה את- *the* Children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies. C-MATS

Question: Who brought the Israelites out of Egypt? Both יהוה and את lead the Children of Israel out of the land of Egypt together manifesting physically as the cloud by day and pillar of fire by night that lead them...יהוה Father is represented by FIRE and את Yahusha by the CLOUD, the same manifestation when Abraham was making covenant with the Yah-head that passed over the sacrifices in Genesis 15:17 It came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark that a smoking furnace and a flaming torch passed between those pieces of *meat*. C-MATS

Question: When did the Israelites leave Egypt? What did they take with them? Jasher 80: And the children of Israel delayed going out at night, and when the Egyptians came to them to bring them out, they said to them, "Are we thieves, that we should go out at night?" (They would not even wait until daylight.) And the children of Israel asked of the Egyptians, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and the children of Israel stripped the Egyptians. And Moses rose up and went to the river of Egypt, and brought up the coffin of Joseph and took it with him. The children of Israel also brought up each man's father's coffin with him, and each man the coffins of his tribe.



Redeeming a first born son on the 31st day

Exodus 13:1 And יהוה spoke to Moses saying, 2 Sanctify (*set aside*) for Me all the firstborn; whatever opens the womb among *the* Children of Israel, *both* of man and beast: *this is* Mine. 3 And Moses said to the people, Remember **את** day this *in* which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage. *The* strength of יהוה hand brought אתכם *you* out from this *place*: no leavened bread will be eaten. 4 This day אתם *you* came out in the month of Abib. 5 And when יהוה 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 will keep את service within הזאת *this* month. 6 Seven days you will eat unleavened bread and in the seventh day *will be* a feast to ליהוה. 7 Unleavened bread will be eaten *for* את seven days; and no leavened bread *will be* seen with you *throughout your territory*. 8 And you will tell your son in that day saying, *This is done* because of what יהוה did for me when I came out of Egypt. 9 And it will be for ל^את sign (*a mark*) for you upon your hand and for a reminder between your eyes that יהוה Torah may be in your mouth: with a strong hand יהוה has brought you out of Egypt. 10 You will keep הזאת *this* את ordinance in His sacred festival (*appointed time*) from year to year. 11 And it will be when יהוה brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and to your fathers and will give it *to* you, 12 that you will set apart to ליהוה all that opens the matrix (*womb*), every first born male that comes from a beast which you own *will be* יהוה. C-MATS

Question: Who needs to be Redeemed? A father is obligated to redeem his son who is a firstborn to his mother. If the mother is the daughter of a Levite or a Cohen, or the father is a Levite or a Cohen, 'redemption' is not needed. If the mother is a daughter of a Cohen but married a non-Jew, the son still needs to be redeemed. A child born through a cesarean birth does not need to be 'redeemed'. If a daughter is born first, then no redemption of a subsequent male child is necessary. *Chumash*

Question: Who should redeem the first born son and when? The obligation to redeem the firstborn son is the father's. A firstborn male who reached adulthood and has not been redeemed is obligated to redeem himself. A child is not considered "established" until the thirtieth day after his birth, so on the thirty-first day he is to be redeemed. *Chumash*

Question: How much should you pay to redeem him? The Torah says the child can be redeemed for five Selaim. Today it is acceptable to use five US silver dollars. This amount may be given to the Cohen in silver or it is deemed invalid.

Question: Did Yahusha keep this commandment? **Luke 2:22** **And when the days of her purification according to the Torah of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to יהוה; 23 As it is written in the Torah of יהוה, Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to יהוה; 24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the Torah of יהוה, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.** C-MATS

Exodus 13:13 **And every first born male of a donkey you will exchange with a lamb; and if you do not exchange *it*, then you will break his neck: and all the firstborn males among your children will you buy back.** C-MATS



Redeeming a first born donkey

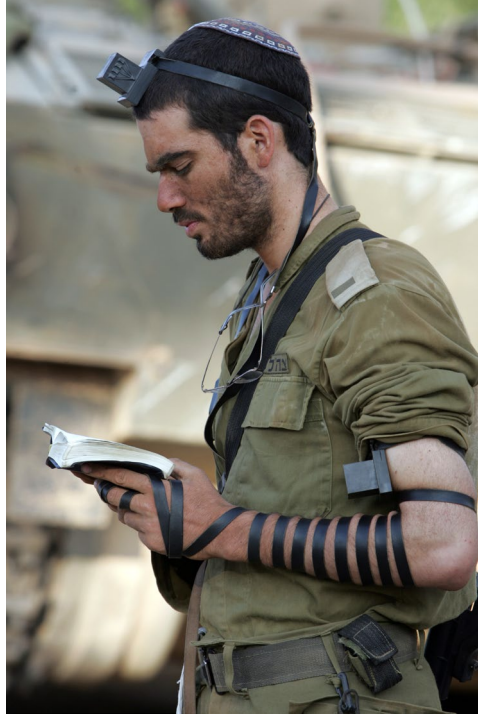
Question: What happens if the donkey or other firstborn animals were not redeemed? If a man denied redeeming the firstborn of his animals, he would suffer loss for every animal that he did not redeem. When יהוה says, "It is Mine," then He will take it. *Chumash*

Exodus 13:14 And it will be when your son asks you *in the days* to come saying, What is **זאת** *this*? **ואמרת** *And you say* to him, by *His* strength of hand יהוה brought us out of Egypt, from the house of bondage. C-MATS

Question: When are we commanded to tell the story of the Exodus? Only at the Passover Seder is it required that the story be told, but at other times one should be ready to respond in the event that your children may ask you a question about the Exodus. *Chumash*

Exodus 13:15 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would not let us go, that יהוה killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast: therefore, I sacrifice to ליהוה all *the* males *that* open the womb; but all the firstborn of My children I buy back. 16 And it will be **לְאֹת** *sign (a mark)* upon your hand and for frontlets (*on the forehead*) between your eyes: by strength of hand יהוה brought us out of Egypt. C-MATS

Question: What does this verse mean? This law also occurs in **Deuteronomy 6:4** Hear, O Israel: יהוה our Elohim *is* one יהוה: 5 And you will LOVE **את** יהוה your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 And these words, which I command you this day, will be in your heart: 7 And you will teach them diligently to your children and will talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up. 8 And you will tie them as **לְאֹת** *sign* on your hand and they will be in front of your eyes. 9 And you will write them on the *door* posts of your house and on your gates. **Deuteronomy 11:18** Therefore, you will store up **את** My words in your heart and in your soul and bind **אתם** *them* as **לְאֹת** *sign* upon your hand, so that they may be kept before your eyes. 19 And you will teach **אתם** *them* **את** to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you get up. 20 And write them upon the door posts of your house and upon your gates: 21 That your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land, which יהוה swore to your fathers to give them as long as there is sky above the earth. The meaning of the command to the Israelites was that they should keep them distinctly in view and carefully attend to them. But soon after their return from Babylon they began to interpret this injunction literally, and had accordingly portions of the law written out and worn about their person. These they called tephillin or "prayers". The scripture written out on strips of parchment were these, Exodus 12:2-10; 13:11-21; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:18-21. They were then "rolled up in a case of black calfskin, and put into four little cells within a square case, which had on it the Hebrew letter called shin, the three points of which were regarded as an emblem of יהוה." This case tied around the forehead in a particular way was called "the tephillah on the head". We should not interpret this scripture literally, but we should read the scriptures daily and keep them in our heart, so we will not sin against יהוה. **Psalms 119:10** With my whole heart have I sought You: Oh let me not wander from Your commandments. 11 Your word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against You. C-MATS



Tefillin on the forehead and arm

Morning prayer

Phylacteries, called tefillin in Hebrew, are worn by observant Jewish men each weekday morning during prayer.

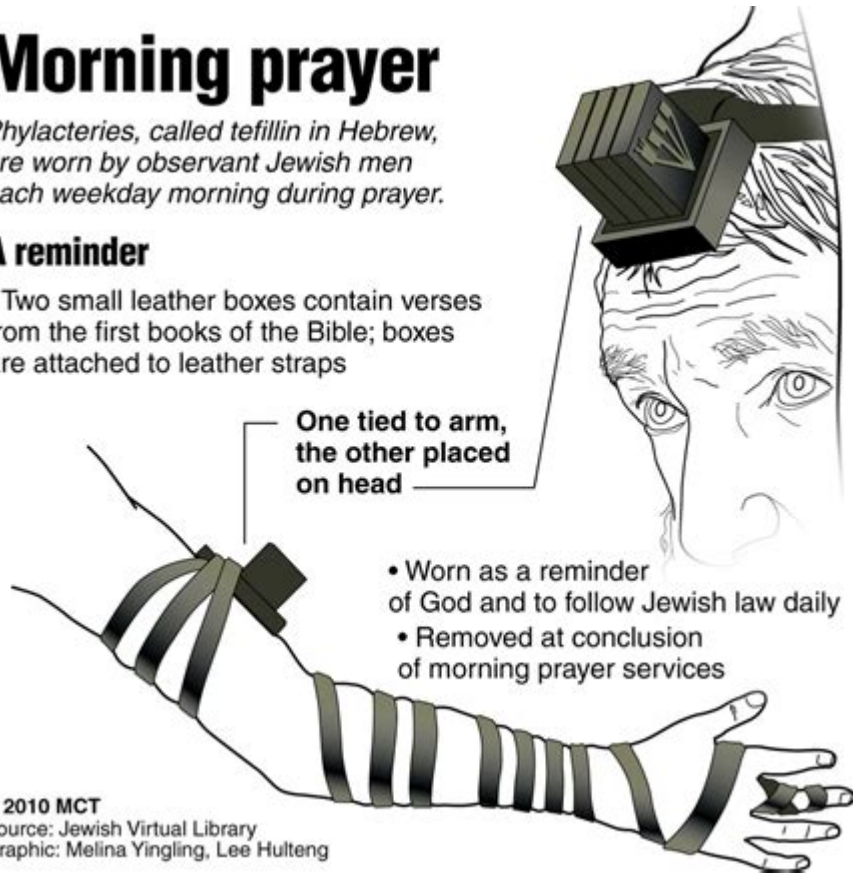
A reminder

- Two small leather boxes contain verses from the first books of the Bible; boxes are attached to leather straps

One tied to arm,
the other placed
on head

- Worn as a reminder of God and to follow Jewish law daily
- Removed at conclusion of morning prayer services

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Graphic: Melina Yingling, Lee Hulteng





John Martin - One of the Seven Plagues of Egypt

Do You Know?

1. The eighth plague was ___ that ate every green thing left in Egypt.
2. יהוה sent the locusts away with a strong west ____.
3. The ninth plague was ___ that could be felt.
4. The land of Egypt was dark for ___ days.
5. The tenth plague was the death of the ____.
6. יהוה came at ____ (what time?) to kill the firstborn.
7. The Israelites asked the Egyptians for their ___ before they left.
8. The Passover sacrifice must be a ___ year(s) old male animal.
9. The Passover sacrifice could be either a ___ or ____.
10. The Passover animal was killed on the ___ day of the first month.
11. יהוה asked the Israelites to smear ____ on their doorposts to keep the Destroyer away.
12. The Passover meal was made up of ___ meat, unleavened ___, and bitter ____.
13. The Passover sacrifice was roasted with ____, not boiled or raw.
14. The Passover sacrifice had to be completely eaten before ____.
15. The Feast of Unleavened bread lasts for ___ days and no one can eat unleavened bread during this time.
16. The Israelite had to leave at ____ (what time?) from Egypt, as quickly as they could.
17. ____ (how many?) Israelite men left Egypt, not counting women and children.
18. The Israelites lived in slavery for ___ years in Egypt.
19. An ___ person could not eat the Passover meal.
20. A sign that you love יהוה is keeping seventh-day ___, keeping the ___, and redeeming the ____.

Answers

1. locusts
2. wind
3. darkness
4. 3
5. firstborn
6. midnight
7. riches
8. one
9. lamb, goat
10. 14th
11. blood
12. roasted, bread, herbs
13. fire
14. morning
15. seven
16. night
17. 600,000
18. 210
19. uncircumcised
20. Sabbath, Passover, firstborn

Haftorah

In this week's Haftorah Jeremiah continues his prophecy of the destruction of Egypt. This is the obvious connection to our Parsha in which the proud and arrogant Pharaoh is brought to his knees by the awesome hand of יהוה. So too, Babylon, acting as יהוה's agent, would punish Egypt for her continued arrogance and pride. The Israelites would be directly impacted by Egypt's destruction; however, they are reassured that יהוה will ultimately deliver them, so long as they keep their faith and trust in יהוה's promise.

Jeremiah 46:13 The word that יהוה spoke to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon should come *and* strike **את** the land of Egypt. **14** Declare this in Egypt and proclaim in Migdol and proclaim in Noph and in Tahpanhes: say, stand fast and prepare yourselves; for the sword will devour all around you. **15** Why are your valiant *men* swept away? They stood not, because יהוה drove them away. **16** He made many to fall, yea, one fell upon another: and they said, Arise and let us go again to our own people and to the land of our nativity, from the oppressing sword. **17** They did cry there, Pharaoh King of Egypt *is but* a noise; he has passed the time appointed. **18** *As I live*, said the King, whose name *is* יהוה of **צבאות** *Host*, certainly as Tabor *is* among the mountains and as Carmel by the sea, *so* will he come. **19** O you daughter living in Egypt, prepare yourself *to go into* captivity: for Noph will be wasted and desolate without an inhabitant. **20** Egypt *is like* a very fair heifer, *but* destruction comes; it comes out of the north. C-MATS

Jeremiah 46:21 Also her hired men *are* in the midst of her like fatted bullocks; for they also are turned back and are fled away together: they did not stand, because the day of their calamity had come upon them and the time of their punishment. 22 The voice of it will go like a serpent; for they will march with an army and come against her with axes, as cutters of wood. 23 They will cut down her forest, says יהוה, though it cannot be searched; because they are more than the grasshoppers and are innumerable. 24 The daughter of Egypt will be confounded; she will be delivered into the hand of the people of the north. 25 יהוה of צבאות *Host*, the Elohim of Israel said; I will punish the multitude of Thebes and Pharaoh and Egypt, with their gods and their kings; even Pharaoh and *all* them that trust in him: 26 And I will deliver them into the hand of those that seek their lives and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of his servants: and then it will be inhabited, as in the days of old, says יהוה. 27 ואתה *and you*, fear not, O My servant Jacob and be not dismayed, O Israel: for, see, I will save you from afar off ואתה *and your* seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob will return and be in rest and at ease and none will make him afraid. 28 Fear ואתה *you* not, O Jacob My servant, says יהוה: for I *am* ואתה *with you*; for I will make a full end of all the nations (*gentiles*) among which I have scattered you: ואתה *and you*, I will not make a full end *of*, but correct you in measure; though I will not leave you entirely unpunished. C-MATS

Brit Chadashah

Question: Did Yahusha celebrate the Passover feast as יהוה commanded? Luke 22:7 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed. 8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, **Go and prepare us the Passover that we may eat.** 9 And they said unto him, Where will you that we prepare? 10 And he said unto them, **Behold, when you are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he enters in.** 11 And you shall say unto the Goodman of the house, **The Master says unto you, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?** 12 And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. 13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover. 14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. 15 And he said unto them, **With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer:** 16 **For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of Elohim.** 17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, **Take this, and divide it among yourselves:** 18 **For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of Elohim shall come.** 19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave unto them, saying, **This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.** 20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, **This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for you.** 21 **But, behold, the hand of him that betrays me is with me on the table.** 22 **And truly the Son of man goes as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!** 23 And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing. 24 And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. 25 And he said unto them, **The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.** 26 **But you shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that does serve.** 27 **For which is greater, he that sits at meat or he that serves? Is not he that sits at meat? But I am among you as he that serves.** 28 **You are they which have continued with me in my temptations.** 29 **And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father has appointed unto me;** 30 **That you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** C-MATS

Question: How did יהוה bring the Israelites out of Egypt? Acts 13:16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and you that fear Elohim, give audience. 17 The Elohim of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm (mighty power and many miracles) brought he them out of it. C-MATS

Question: How should a man examine himself so he is worthy of partaking in the Passover Seder? I Corinthians 11:20 When you come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Master's supper. 21 For in eating everyone takes before other his own supper: and one is hungry and another is drunk. 22 What? Have you not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise you the assembly of Elohim, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. 23 For I have received of Adonai that which also I delivered unto you, That Adonai Yahusha the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, **Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.** 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, **This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do you, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.** 26 For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Master's death till he come. 27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Master unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Master. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Master's body. 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of Adonai, that we should not be condemned with the world. 33 Wherefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, tarry one for another. 34 And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that you come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come. C-MATS

Question: Will the plagues that destroyed Egypt also destroy the world in the coming judgment? Revelation 8:6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. 7 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and a third part of the land and trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. 8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; 9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. 10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; 11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. 12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. 13 And I beheld, and heard an eagle flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to those who inhabit the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound! Revelation 9:1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. 3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

Revelation 9:4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth or any green thing or any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of Elohim in their foreheads. 5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he strikes a man. 6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. 7 And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. 8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. 9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. 10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. 11 And they had a king over them which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue has his name Apollyon. 12 One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter. C-MATS

Revelation 16:1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of Elohim upon the earth. 2 And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. 3 And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. 4 And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, You are righteous, O יהיה, which are, and was, and shall be, because you have judged thus. 6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. 7 And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, יהיה our Elohim, El Shaddai, true and righteous are your judgments. 8 And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. 9 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of Elohim, which has power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory. 10 And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, 11 And blasphemed the Elohim of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. 12 And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. 13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of Elohim Almighty. 15 **Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.** 16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. 17 And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. 18 And there were voices, and thunders, and lightning; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. 19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before Elohim, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. 20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21 And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed Elohim because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great. C-MATS

Question: Why should we continue to tell our children about the miracles that were performed in Egypt to deliver us from slavery? Psalms 78:40 How often did they rebel against Him in the wilderness and grieve Him in the desert! 41 And they turned again and tempted Elohim and provoked the Holy One of Israel. 42 They do not remember אֶת His hand, nor the day when He redeemed them from the adversary; 43 How He set His signs in Egypt and His wonders in the field of Zoan, 44 And turned their rivers into blood and their streams, so that they could not drink. 45 He sent among them swarms of flies, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them. 46 He gave also their increase to the caterpillar and their labor to the locust. 47 He destroyed their vines with hail and their sycamore-trees with frost. 48 He gave over their cattle also to the hail and their flocks to hot thunderbolts. 49 He cast upon them the fierceness of His anger, wrath and indignation and trouble, a band of angels of evil. 50 He made a path for His anger; He spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence, 51 And destroyed all the first-born in Egypt, the chief of their strength in the tents of Ham. Psalms 105:27 They set among them His signs and wonders in the land of Ham. 28 He sent darkness and made it dark; and they rebelled not against אֶת His words. 29 He turned אֶת their waters into blood and killed אֶת their fish. 30 Their land swarmed with frogs in the chambers of their kings. 31 He spoke and there came swarms of flies and lice in all their borders. 32 He gave them hail for rain and flaming fire in their land. 33 He destroyed their vines also and their fig-trees and broke the trees of their borders. 34 He spoke and the locust came and the grasshopper and that without number, 35 And did eat up every herb in their land and did eat up the fruit of their ground. 36 He destroyed also all the first-born in their land, the chief of all their strength. C-MATS

Finding Courage

It took a lot of courage for the Hebrew slaves in Egypt to do things that publicly showed that the false gods of their Egyptian masters were meaningless to them. And it takes a lot of courage for *us* to publicly stand up for what's true and right even when it's not popular. But that's just what יהוה asked of them - and just what He asks of us.

HOUSE CALLS

Wendy was taking in the sights as she scurried along with her classmates walking home from school. The other kids, who were used to the walk, hardly paid attention, but for Wendy, who'd just moved to town, everything was still new and interesting. With one eye on the scenery and the other keeping track of which way the kids were turning so she wouldn't get lost, Wendy suddenly felt a tug on her sleeve.

"Crazy Lady's house! Quick, cross the street!" Paula said as she and the others all crossed over to the other side of the street.

"Is anything wrong? Why did we just cross? Who's 'Crazy Lady'?" Wendy asked nervously.

"Oh, we're okay now," Paula laughed. "Crazy Lady - that's the old woman who lives in that little house up ahead - can't reach us now. For the last month or so, whenever we walk by this lady comes limping out the front door of her house and yells, or more like croaks at us with the weirdest voice - but then again," she smiled, "what do you expect from somebody who's crazy?"

Sure enough, as if on cue, Wendy heard a door swing open and a bent-over old woman came limping out the doorway, making strange, loud noises while pointing back inside her house.

"There she is!" the kids half shrieked and half giggled. "She wants to catch us."

"Cra-zee, cra-zeee!" one kid taunted, while banging on the nearby trash dumpster as the others laughed.

Getting over her initial shock, Wendy slowed down and watched the woman closely. It sounded like she was trying to say the words 'help me.'

"Do you think she's okay?" Wendy asked. "Of course not. She's crazy!" Paula sputtered.

"No, I mean, she looks like she needs help or something. Maybe we should go over there and see."

"Go to scary Crazy Lady's house? No way!" squealed Kate. "Anyone who does that must be as crazy as she is!" Wendy felt bad for the woman and also felt it wasn't right the way the kids were making fun of her. She wanted to go try to help, but if she did, what would the others think of her?

The kids, still laughing, began to move on. Wendy was about to join them, then looked back. The woman, now quiet, had put down her arms and looked very sad. It would be easier to just ignore her, but it wouldn't be right...

"Guys, I'm just going over there for a minute to see if she's okay," Wendy called out to their astonished faces. She slowly walked closer to the house and when she was just outside the fence, she smiled and said, "Hello ma'am, can I be of help to you in any way?"

The woman looked up, nodded her head and pointed inside like before. Wendy edged closer to the front door and smelled a bad smell. She peeked inside the house and saw a big pile of sealed-up garbage bags that seemed to take up half the room.

"T-too h-h-hea-vy..." the woman stuttered. "I-I-I had a st-str-stroke and now c-can't lift tr-tra-trash!" Wendy noticed tears streaming down the woman's face. She went on to explain that she lived alone and each day since she'd gotten home from the hospital after the stroke, it was hard for her to walk and to speak clearly. When she'd see the group of school kids passing by she would call to them, hoping they could help her carry out the trash. But they just seemed to laugh at her and run away so now, with no choice, she had to leave all her trash piled up inside her house.

Immediately Wendy grabbed two of the bags and briskly carried them out and across the street to the dumpster. She explained to her friends, who had waited around to see what would happen and they immediately joined her. They felt bad for the woman ... and ashamed of the way they'd acted. From then on, when the kids would walk home, instead of crossing the street to avoid 'Crazy Lady,' they made it a point to stop in and ask 'Sweet old Mrs. Simmons,' as they discovered was the woman's real name, if she needed any help - all thanks to Wendy's courage to care.

Question: What life-lesson do you think someone could learn from this story? When Wendy, a new kid in school, saw the rest of the kids making fun of the old woman, she could have taken the easy way out and joined them or at least said nothing. But she bravely took a stand and tried to help and in the end they all saw that it was the right thing to do.

Question: How can a person learn to become courageous like that? One way is to ask ourselves in every situation 'What is the right thing to do?' instead of asking ourselves 'What will people think?' It takes courage, for sure, but we'll see that most of the time, people will also think better of us, when we show we have the guts to do what is right.

Question: What is your definition of 'courage'? There may be many definitions, but there is no greater courage than to be willing to live life according to our deepest values and convictions regardless of what other people think.

Question: How can a person discover what his or her deepest convictions are? One wise man advised to consider what we would be willing to die for - and then go out and live for these things!

Spiritual Exercise: What would you be willing to die for? Walk boldly in what you believe.

Question: What should you do when things seem to be getting worse instead of better? Sometimes the good things that come our way are very clear and easy to see. However, there are other times when the good that יהוה sends us comes in a way that at first glance doesn't seem to be good at all. This is what happened to the Hebrew people, as יהוה was preparing to take them out of their slavery in Egypt. In this week's Torah portion, when Moses and Aaron approached Pharaoh to set the people free, not only did he refuse, but he even threw them out of the palace, and threatened to have them killed if they dared to appear to him again! It seemed like things were getting worse instead of better. But this was really all part of יהוה's plan, and in the end, He brought the people out of Egypt with great miracles. We can learn from here that even when things in our lives seem to be going wrong, don't panic. Realize that things often seem to get worse before they get better, and if we're patient and see it through, we will ultimately come to see the good that's on the way.

"VIEW FROM ABOVE"

Michael sat staring at his teacher with a look of total shock on his face, not believing what he was hearing. "Another exam?" he thought. "How can that be? We just had a huge test. What more is there possibly to learn?"

The whole class was buzzing and reeling over the announcement. Juniors were extremely busy with all their activities. Constantly studying for geography tests was not among their favorite pastimes. Some of it was interesting, like learning about all the different kinds of rock formations and mountains, but enough was enough.

"I just don't know what's gotten into Mr. Barker. He's usually pretty easy-going. What could he be thinking about, giving us another big test only three days from now?"

Joe and Manny, his two buddies, just shook their heads with a forlorn look on their faces. "I don't know," said Joe. "But there goes baseball practice this week." The boys groaned and tried to settle down to do their homework.

Michael just couldn't concentrate. "I don't want to study again and you know what? I'm not going to. Just because Mr. Barker got in a bad mood doesn't mean that I have to suffer for it. See you later guys. I'm going to ride my bike!" Joe and Manny were speechless.

The three boys had been best friends since second grade, and did most things together, including studying for tests. They all took their schoolwork seriously, even though they liked to play. This was the first time anything like this had happened, and they didn't know what to do. They decided to wait and see if their buddy Mike would change his mind.

The next day on the bulletin board in the lobby of the school, the boys saw a notice addressed to the Seniors. They were going to be having a great trip to the big mountain range upstate to explore all the different rock shapes and types. There would be a special guide, a big tour bus, and the best of all - there would be a helicopter ride to see the mountain range from above! The school had never made a trip like this before and the boys wondered excitedly if they would have it again next year when they would be Seniors. That day Mr. Barker mentioned the upcoming exam again and told the kids how important it was that they all do well. "You won't regret the extra work you put into it," he promised. Joe and Manny passed a meaningful glance between them. Would Mike take the teacher's words to heart?

That afternoon Joe and Manny seriously hit the books and Mike was seriously hitting the ball at baseball practice. He had a good time, but it was boring without his pals. Being alone gave Mike plenty of time to think. He thought about how strange it was having another test so soon, and about his teacher's cryptic comments. It all really didn't make sense. He was right to blow it off. Or was he? "There must be some reason this is happening," he thought. "This is also part of **יהוה**'s plans, and it must be for the best. I can't really change the situation, so maybe I really should just try to see it through." Mike pictured his friends, and thought about them studying together and how great they would feel, and how he would feel too when they pulled good grades. The more he thought about it, the more convinced he got. He decided to run over to Joe's. "Hi guys," he said, as he walked into Joe's room. "Got room for one more?" The three exchanged hi-fives all around and settled down to study. Only one more day until the test, and Mike had a lot of catching up to do. Later that night, Mike went to sleep happy.

The day after the test, Mr. Barker was all smiles. "Good news!" he said. "I'm sure you all saw the poster for the school trip planned for the Seniors. When I heard about it, I asked the principal if I could bring the Juniors since we were learning the same thing and we all enjoyed the material so much. The principal wasn't sure, but finally he said to me, 'Look. Let's see how seriously they take it. Give them a test, and any student who scores above 90 will be welcome to come on the trip.' I couldn't tell you because the principal warned me not to. I'm happy to say that every single one of you will be going on the trip!"

Mike breathed a big sigh of relief. Now it all made sense. Was he ever glad that he had decided to study after all! He had almost missed this great trip. Mike realized that even if we sometimes don't understand it, everything that happens is truly for the best, as long as we don't get in our own way!

Question: What made Mike change his mind and decide to study? He considered the situation, and realized that even though having to take a second test seemed strange, and unfair, that it must be concealing some sort of hidden good that יהוה wanted him to experience. He followed this intuition, studied hard, and ended up winning in the end.

Question: Does this mean that a person should simply accept whatever happens to him, and not try to change things for the better? Not at all. יהוה wants us to be active participants in our lives, and the world. However, there are times when there is really nothing practical to be done to change what is going on. In such cases, rather than panicking, or letting ourselves get down, we should surrender our will to יהוה's, and the situation He has given us, knowing that it is truly for the best.

Question: Why do you think that יהוה often conceals the good things He's doing for us, rather than giving them to us straight out? A lot depends upon how you define 'good'. If we equate good with being easy or comfortable, indeed it would seem like the straight path would be preferable. However a much deeper and more satisfying form of 'good' is attaining character development, and a spiritual outlook on life. The very process of grappling with challenges, holding strong to our trust in יהוה, and seeing the good emerge, helps develop and acquire this ultimate spiritual good.

Question: What personal qualities do you think would help a person to be able to successfully navigate through confusing times, when the good in his life is hard to see? One very important quality is humility, or an ability to admit to one's self that there are things that are simply beyond our capacity to understand. By realizing that we can't understand the reasons for everything that happens and building a more trusting relationship with יהוה, we will have achieved a much deeper spiritual outlook on life that will serve us well, both in good times and times of darkness.

Spiritual exercise: Can you think of something that seemed bad at first but then turned out to be good? **And we know that all things work together for good to them that love Elohim, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28.** יהוה will only bring good to you, His child. You may feel at times like TOO MANY things have happened that don't look very good to you. You will eventually find out that they were ALL good for you. Look for the good in things that happen to you that may seem to be bad today. Be more appreciative of all you have this week.

Question: Should a person always keep his promises? A person's word is more valuable than gold and we should always try to keep our promises. Unlike the cruel Pharaoh who, in this week's Torah portion, kept promising to free the Hebrew slaves and then reneging, the Torah way is to be trustworthy and keep our word.

"BIG DEAL"

"Hey Tim, where do you think you're going?" cried out a shocked Suzy as her brother, basketball tucked under his elbow, went prancing toward the front door. "To the opera! Where do you think, genius? I'm going out to play some ball. You have a problem with it?" "No problem at all, bro ... *after* you clear the dishes off the table and wash them, like you said you would. We switched days because I had to go out, remember?" Tim let out a noise that was like a combination laugh and snort. "Dream on. You think I want to mess up my dribbling arm with dishpan hands? I'm outta here. Anyway, when I said it, I had my left hand behind my back when I said I'd switch, so it didn't count. Have fun." "But, Tim, you prooommissed!!!!" Suzy, who was dressed way too formally to tackle a sink of dishes, called out as her laughing brother slammed the door behind him. Tim was on his way to the park to meet his friends at the time they'd arranged, when a sign with an arrow on it caught his eye. SPORTS CARD COLLECTOR'S FAIR. TODAY ONLY!

If Tim liked one thing better than playing ball, it was collecting sports cards. As he made a sharp turn on his bike toward the sale and away from the park where his friends were waiting, the thought briefly entered his mind that he was the one who said he'd bring the ball today and if he didn't show, the guys would be stuck. *But ... it really was no big deal*, he thought. *A kid's allowed to change his mind, isn't he? And anyway the guys would just find another ball ... somehow.* The thought of his friends searching for a basketball in an empty playground or his dressed-up sister doing dishes was the furthest thing from Tim's mind as he walked excitedly into the auditorium packed wall-to-wall with tables offering all kinds of sports cards. He looked over a couple of tables - nothing special. Then his eyes stuck like glue to a card on display on the next table. He couldn't believe it - a kid he knew from school and had traded with before was selling a rare card for which he'd been looking for years! It was a miracle that no one had snapped it up yet. "Hey, Ken, buddy - how's it going?" Tim said in his best butter-up voice. The kid nodded. "Um, how much you want for that card in the corner over there?" he asked, pointing to his prize. "Dunno. Five bucks I guess." Tim couldn't believe it. What a steal! This was his lucky day! Suddenly a lump fell from his throat into the pit of his stomach. He didn't have any money on him. "I'll take it!" he said. "But I'll have to bring you the cash in a few minutes -that's not a problem, right?"

Ken shook his head and Tim started to panic. "But ... but, hey listen. Let's say you just put the card aside for me until I come back. I'll really be back in five minutes." "Yeah, sure, just like that trade we made last summer, right? We worked it all out and even shook hands on it. I turned away three other kids who wanted my cards and then at the last minute you said the deal was off and that you didn't owe me a thing..." Tim started to blush as the memory came back to him. "Cash *up front* or no deal." Seeing he had no choice, Tim raced back home on his bike as fast as he could. He got to his house, dashed wordlessly past his frowning sister who was drying the last dish, grabbed his wallet and groaned. *Only three dollars!*

He ran back downstairs. "Suzy ... um can you lend me a couple of dollars? I really need it and I'll pay you back when I get my allowance tomorrow." The girl wrinkled up her face. "What nerve! Why should I think you'll pay me back this loan any more than the last ones I've been waiting for, for over a month?" "But I promise!" "Huh! *You* promise? What is *your* promise worth? I'm sure your hand is behind your back, or your toes are scrunched up or you're making one of the other million and one 'signs' you have, not to have to keep your promise. No way! I'm going out now - finally. You can go sell your promises somewhere else!" Tim, now alone in the house he stomped out of just a little while ago, sat down on a stool, dejected. He felt bad he'd lost out on the baseball card, he felt bad he hadn't been able to borrow the money, but he felt worst of all about how nobody believed him any more and that was truly his own fault. After a minute he got up. He was tired, but maybe the guys were still waiting for him in the park. He decided it was time to be true to his word and bring them his ball - just like he said he would.

Question: What life-lesson do you think Tim learned that day? He discovered that keeping one's word is the right thing to do, and it is important to be someone who others feel they can believe what you say you will do.

Question: Do you think Tim's use of 'secret signs' to cancel his promises were legitimate? Why or why not? Being trustworthy and keeping our word is a very important value and the fact that a person makes up a 'sign' does nothing to lessen his commitment. In the future if Tim wasn't sure if he could really keep his commitment he could say something like 'I'll try, but I can't promise,' etc.

Question: Do you think it's ever legitimate for a person to change his mind and not do something after he's already committed to do so? It depends. While there are times that circumstances or sober second thoughts make it legitimately hard or unwise to follow through on something we've committed to do, we should take our words and commitments very seriously and only go back on them rarely and for truly legitimate reasons.

Question: Moses had a good reputation among the Hebrews and Egyptians. The 'crown of a good name' is more valuable than a monarch's crown of rulership. How do you understand this idea? A big part of having a good 'name' or reputation is being someone others know they can trust to keep his word. When we are straight, honest and trustworthy, we give great pleasure to יהוה, influence others to do the same and help in a real way to improve society and the world. **Proverbs 22:1 A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches and loving favor rather than silver and gold.**
C-MATS

Spiritual Exercise: Keep a good name by always being honest and keeping your promise.

Question: Pharaoh kept making the same mistake of not listening to Moses and letting the Hebrew slaves go free, so he had to pay the price of not listening by plagues destroying Egypt. Why do you think people repeat mistakes? A big reason is that they don't think about what went wrong the first time, and why. So when the same circumstances arise, they're bound to make the same wrong choice. With a little reflection and forethought, a person can save himself a lot of grief.

Question: A wise person learns from his mistakes. Do you think there can be an even higher wisdom than that? While it's good to learn from mistakes, a real wise person doesn't have to live them - but can rather observe the mistakes others make, see where they went wrong and take steps not to fall into the same trap.

Question: Does learning from mistakes mean that we should try to accomplish something once, and then if it fails, never try the same thing again? While we should learn from 'what went wrong' and adjust things if we can - sometimes it just takes persistence and a lot of tries before things work out.

Question: Pharaoh was stubborn and would not let the Hebrews go. What is the difference between being principled and being stubborn? Being principled means having a clear set of well thought out values and being willing to make sacrifices to uphold them. It is a very positive trait. Stubbornness is the negative trait of being unwilling to compromise or change one's mind simply out of a desire to have one's own way.

Question: If we run into a stubborn person how can we help him get 'unstuck'? Often a person's stubbornness is his way of saying he feels like he isn't being heard. If we make an extra effort to try to understand his point of view and let him know we do, he will often become much more open to hearing our side of things. We should also be willing to compromise wherever we can, and be sure we aren't acting a bit stubborn ourselves

Question: What should a person do if he feels himself growing haughty, and wants to eliminate this negative trait? One effective technique is to temporarily go to the other extreme, and act extra humble. For instance, we could let people go ahead of us in line, even if we don't feel like it. Another thing is to try to grow in our awareness of יהוה. The more we become aware of His greatness and awesome power, we will realize that we don't have that much to be haughty about.

Question: Are there things that are genuinely necessary for us to be happy? Happiness, in truth, is an attitude that comes from within. One person can have everything and still feel miserable. Someone else can seem to have nothing yet feel happy and content. So what is necessary for our happiness is essentially to develop the attitude of appreciating what you have, rather than relying on any specific circumstances. By learning to rely on יהוה and to be happy with whatever situation He sends us, we can literally always be happy.

Question: Who do you think would maintain a greater appreciation of life: someone who is blessed with many good things like good health, wealth, etc., or someone who is lacking these things? At first glance it would be reasonable to expect that the more a person has been blessed with, the more appreciative he or she is. In fact, often the opposite is true. Often, when we lack something that others may take for granted, do we come to appreciate how valuable these things really are. Sometimes, the lacks in our lives are opportunities to develop an appreciation for life's many gifts.



Question: We should make special blessings thanking יהוה before and after eating and drinking. What do you think is the purpose for this? How might it affect our level of awareness and appreciation? When we stop and make a blessing before partaking in something we enjoy, we acknowledge יהוה as having provided it for us. When we do this we become keenly aware of the fact that we are receiving a gift. This process, each time we repeat it, builds our sense of appreciation and gratefulness to all the good that יהוה has given us. Furthermore, as we grow into more aware and appreciative people we come to recognize and acknowledge the people in our lives and all they have done for us. Living life in this way feels great as we come to view everything as a "blessing".

Question: When we feel and express our gratitude to a person who have helped us in the past, is it only for their benefit or do we gain something as well? When we teach ourselves to feel and express our appreciation of others, we begin to transform our lives. When we think about it, we start to see how much good we have received from so many people in our lives. This helps us to feel good about them, which in turn leads them to feel good about us. We begin to go about our day feeling surrounded by kindness and in turn begin to act more kindly to others as well. This is a big step toward making the world a better, more pleasant place to live.

Spiritual Exercise: Express your gratitude to a person who has helped you in the past or recently this week. Give him a call or write him a note. Do something in return for him.

Question: It's good to know how to be quick and not procrastinate. יהוה took the Israelites out of Egyptian slavery so fast that they don't even have time to make regular bread. To remember this miracle, the Torah tells us to make the matzah for each Passover so quickly that its dough can't rise. From here we can learn the positive trait of alacrity - doing things quickly - which will help us to get more done and make the most out of life. What is the advantage of having alacrity? On a practical level, we simply get a lot more accomplished when we move fast. Besides this, doing things quickly can fill us up with energy and make life seem more joyful and fun. Procrastination weighs on us and steals our joy. Rising early and working hard all day gives a man satisfaction and contentment.

Question: When could it be better not to have this trait? If going quickly makes us careless, it's likely better to slow down somewhat. Also if we feel tempted to do something we know we shouldn't, a little procrastination is the best thing we could do.

Question: Is there ever such a thing as a bad question? If a question is coming from a sincere and positively motivated desire to know or understand something, then no matter how simple or misguided the question seems, it is a good one. However, there is another type of question which is 'bad.' This type of question doesn't genuinely seek an answer, but rather seeks only to ridicule or put down the speaker or what is being said. This type of question actually isn't a question at all, but a verbal attack. The Torah way is not simply to accept things blindly, but to question everything - as long as our questions are sincerely based on a desire to discover truth. The next time someone says something to you that you don't understand, ask him what he means.

Resources:

The Stone Edition of The Chumash

The Complete Messianic Aleph Tav Scriptures C-MATS www.AlephTavScriptures.com

“Weekly Torah Portion” from www.aish.com

Book of Jasher or Book of the Just Man (Hebrew: סֵפֶר הַיָּשָׁר; transliteration: sēfer hayyāšār)

Joshua 10:13 **And the Sun stood still and the Moon stayed, until the nation had avenged themselves of their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jashar? And the Sun stayed in the midst of heaven and delayed not going down about a whole day.**

2 Sam 1:18 **And he bade them teach the Children of Judah *the song of the bow*: surely, it is written in the book of Jashar:**

(The Septuagint translation renders *sefer hayashar* in both cases as 'Book of the Just'. The reference to the bow is here missing, so that the text reads: And he gave orders to teach it the sons of louda: behold it is written in the Book of the Just.)