

Exodus 12

Verses 1-3

Now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ² “This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a lamb for each household.

This month shall be the beginning of months for you

This change in their calendar started in 1446 BC

See chart 1202

Exodus	Event	Year 1 - 1446	Place
12:2	New Calendar	1-1-01	Egypt
12:3	Select a lamb	1-10-01	Egypt
12:37	The Exodus from Egypt	1-15-01	Rameses
14:21-22	Crossing of the Red Sea		Red Sea
15:23	Bitter water		Marah
15:27	12 springs and 70 palm trees		Elim
16:1	Manna and quail	3-15-01	The Desert of Sin
17:1	no water, Amalekites defeated		Rephidim
18	Judges appointed		Near the Mountain of God
19:1	Camped in front of the mountain	4-1-01	The Desert of Sinai
20	The ten commandments		The Desert of Sinai
21-23	Laws and regulations		The Desert of Sinai
24	Covenant confirmed		The Desert of Sinai
25-31	Tabernacle envisioned		The Desert of Sinai
32	Golden Calf	5-11-01	The Desert of Sinai
34	New stone tablets	6-21-01	The Desert of Sinai
36-39	Building the Tabernacle	6 months	The Desert of Sinai
Exodus	Event	Year 2 - 1445	Place
40:1	Set up the Tabernacle	1-1-02	The Desert of Sinai

God choose to change the calendar as a permanent reminder to the people that they were no longer slaves but a free people

The Passover week (Feast of unleavened Bread) would be celebrated in the **1st month**

A reminder of God's powerful hand and their flight out of Egypt

The first month was Abib

See Exodus 13:4

However, following the exile, it was called Nisan

See Pic 1205 Jewish calendar

Number	Hebrew Month Names	Gregorian Calendar Months	Number of Days Per Month	Holidays
1	Nisan	March-April	30	Pesakh
2	Iyar	April-May	29	Lag B'Omer
3	Sivan	May-June	30	Shavuot
4	Tammuz	June-July	29	
5	Av	July-August	30	Tisha B'Av
6	Elul	August-September	29	
7	Tishrei	September-October	30	Rosh Hashanah Sukkot Yom Kippur Shemini Atzeret Simchat Torah
8	Cheshvan	October-November	29	
9	Kislev	November-December	30	Chanukah
10	Tevet	December-January	29	End of Chanukah
11	Shevat	January-February	30	Tu B'shvat
12	Adar	February-March	29	Purim

Seasons are indicated by color.

Before this decree the New Year was in the fall Tishrei 1

Now it was in the spring Nisan 1

See pic 1210

The Jewish Calendar			
The Jews used two types of calendars			
The Civil: Used for kings, births, contracts & The Sacred: Used for festivals			
Month Name	Corresponds to	Civil Year	Sacred Year
Tishri	Sep-Oct	1st	7th
Heshvan	Oct-Nov	2nd	8th
Chislev	Nov-Dec	3rd	9th
Tebeth	Dec-Jan	4th	10th
Shebat	Jan-Feb	5th	11th
Adar	Feb-Mar	6th	12th
Nisan	Mar-Apr	7th	1st
Iyar	Apr-May	8th	2nd
Sivan	May-Jun	9th	3rd
Tammuz	Jun-Jul	10th	4th
Ab	Jul-Aug	11th	5th
Elul	Aug-Sep	12th	6th
The Jewish Day			
(Sunset to Sunset / 8 equal parts of 3 hours each)			
First Watch	Sunset - 9pm	First Hour	Sunrise - 9am
Second Watch	9pm - Midnight	Third Hour	9am - Noon
Third Watch	Midnight - 3am	Sixth Hour	Noon - 3pm
Fourth Watch	3am - Sunrise	Ninth Hour	3Pm - Sunset

The first of Nisan became the religious New Year and the older fall New Year became the new Civil Year

On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves

This was 4 days before it would be sacrificed

It was set apart from the other sheep, to keep it safe from injury or death

Verses 4-6

⁴ Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons *in them*; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight.

Your lamb shall be an unblemished male one year old;

An unblemished lamb was one without any strips or spots.

One year old could be translated - of the first year

Lambs are often slaughtered at 4 months old and weigh around 80 pounds

The meat from such a lamb would be 43 pounds (54% of gross weight)

You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

It seems the Jews preferred to use a lamb

Now if the household is too small for a lamb

Since all of the lamb was to be eaten that night, many households would have chosen younger lambs, even if they were sharing with a neighbor

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

See chart 1215

The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread

This is based on a Passover that begins on a Wednesday

The day of preparation	Feast of Unleavened Bread						
Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Lamb killed before sunset	Special Sabbath		Regular Sabbath	First Fruits			Special Sabbath

See Leviticus 23:5

The Lord's Passover begins at twilight on the 14th day of the first month

The lamb was slaughtered around 6:30pm on the 14th close to sunset (7pm)

Later in history, the Lamb was killed at 3pm at the time of the evening sacrifice

The lamb was then roasted and eaten before midnight (12am) on the 15th

The actual Passover event occurred at midnight on the 15th when the Lord killed all the Egyptian firstborn and passed over the homes of the Hebrew slaves

So the Passover started shortly before the end of the 14th and culminated around midnight on the 15th.

The Jews called the Feast of Unleavened Bread the Passover Week.

Verses 7-11

Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸ They shall eat the flesh that *same* night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹ Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, *both* its head and its legs along with its entrails. ¹⁰ And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire. ¹¹ Now you shall eat it in this manner: *with* your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the Lord's Passover.

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

It is interesting how many events in the Old Testament were a physical representation of a spiritual reality in the New Testament

At the 1st Passover the blood of the lamb saved the 1st born from physical death and in the New Testament the blood of Christ saves us from spiritual death

The physical comes first and then the spiritual

See 1 Cor. 15:42-49

God gave the Jews plenty of reasons to believe in Jesus as the Messiah

They shall eat the flesh that *same* night, roasted with fire

The roasting with fire allowed the cooking of the lamb in one piece (no broken bones)

Not a bone of Christ was broken

See Pic 1220 roasting a lamb



The lamb was killed at twilight, which is near the end of the day

Then the lamb had to cook 4 or 5 hours

It would be late into the night, around 1130pm, before they ate

And they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs

Why the unleavened bread?

Many people claim the Jews did not have time to let the bread rise.

This will be true later when they have to leave Egypt quickly but that was not the case here before the Passover meal

The lamb had to be roasted for about 5 hours and the bread would only take at most 2 hours to rise.

Also, after they got of Egypt, they would have had time to leaven the bread.

Others believe leaven was associated with sin and was therefore forbidden, however, there are good arguments against this idea also.

One thing we do know for sure, God told them to go 7 days without leaven

Why the bitter herbs?

It reminded future generations of the hardships of slavery

Verses 12 -13

For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the Lord. ¹³ The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.

For I will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast

The reason for the 1st born beasts dying becomes apparent in the 2nd half of this verse

Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments

There were all kinds of animal "deities" that were worshipped in Egypt

When these alleged "gods" were unable to protect their offspring from death their status as a god would be diminished

Even the king, who was seen as a god, could not protect his son

When I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you

None of the Jewish households suffered the loss of their first born

In a similar manor, when God sees the shed blood of Christ that covers us, His judgment passes over us

See John 5:24

In verse 7 we talked about how the blood of Christ saves us and here in verse 13 we see how that was accomplished.

Verses 14 -20

¹⁴ 'Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶ On the first day you shall have a holy assembly, and *another* holy assembly on the seventh day; no work at all shall be done on them, except what must be eaten by every person, that alone may be prepared by you. ¹⁷ You shall also observe the *Feast of Unleavened Bread*, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a permanent ordinance. ¹⁸ In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. ¹⁹ Seven days there shall be no leaven found in your houses; for whoever eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether *he is* an alien or a native of the land. ²⁰ You shall not eat anything leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.'

Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the Lord

The Passover began on the 14th when the lamb was killed just before sunset

But the next day, the 15th, began less than one hour later.

So the actual Passover Event (when the Lord passes over the Jewish houses) took place on the 15th which was the first day of the feast of unleavened bread.

See Pic 1225

	Event	Ex.	Date	Time
1	The lamb was killed before sunset	12:6	14th	About 6:30 p.m.
2	Then the blood was applied to the door of the house	12:7	14th	Shortly after 6:30 p.m.
	Sunset			About 7 p.m.
3	The lamb had to be roasted which took about 4 to 5 hours	12:9	15th	7 p.m. to 12 a.m.
5	At midnight, the Lord struck down the Egyptian firstborn	12:29	15th	**At midnight**
6	During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses	12:31	15th	
7	The Egyptians urged the people to leave quickly	12:33	15th	
8	The people plundered the Egyptians	12:36	15th	
9	The Lord brought them out of Egypt that night	12:42	15th	before 6 a.m.

The first two events took place on the 14th
But all the rest took place on the 15th

Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread

The 14th of Nisan is the Day of Preparation and the Passover begins about 1/2 hour before sunset when the lamb is killed.

But most of the Passover Event occurs on the 15th beginning at 7pm

The 15th thru the 21st is the feast of unleavened bread

Jews refer to the 7 days of unleavened bread as Passover week

See Luke 22:1

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

The first day was the 15th and the 7th day was the 21st

These two days were a Special Sabbath

See Chart 1230

Regular Sabbaths vs High/Special Sabbaths

Regular Sabbaths
 See Ex. 35:2-3
 For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a holy day, a Sabbath of complete rest to the Lord; **whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.**
You shall not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day.
Food had to be prepared the day before

Special Sabbaths
 See Ex. 12:16
 And on the first day you shall have a holy assembly, and another holy assembly on the seventh day; **no work at all shall be done on them, except for what must be eaten by every person— that alone may be prepared by you.**
Food could be prepared on a special Sabbath

In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening

See chart 1235

The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread

This is based on a Passover that begins on a Wednesday

The day of preparation	Feast of Unleavened Bread						
Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Lamb killed before sunset	Special Sabbath		Regular Sabbath	First Fruits			Special Sabbath

Verses 21-28

²¹ Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover *lamb*. ²² You shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts; and none of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning. ²³ For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite *you*. ²⁴ And you shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children forever. ²⁵ When you enter the land which the Lord will give you, as He has promised, you shall observe this rite. ²⁶ And when your children say to you, ‘What does this rite mean to you?’ ²⁷ you shall say, ‘It is a Passover sacrifice to the Lord who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but spared our homes.’” And the people bowed low and worshiped. ²⁸ Then the sons of Israel went and did so; just as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

You shall take a bunch of hyssop and apply some of the blood to the lintel and the two doorposts

This was a plant used for applying the blood to their door frame

None of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning.

This was the plan but it seems the Egyptians wanted them to leave a little quicker

See Deut. 16:1 The Lord brought them out at night

The Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite *you*

This is why it was called Passover

The Lord passed over the doors with the blood

We are not told who this destroyer was and there is no reason to speculate about who or what this destroyer might have been.

And when your children say to you, what does this rite mean to you?

Parents look for teachable moments with their kids

Here the parents were even told how they should respond

It is a Passover sacrifice to the Lord who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but spared our homes.

The lamb was a sacrifice that allowed the Israelites to avoid judgment while the Egyptian 1st born died

Verses 29-30

²⁹ Now it came about at midnight that the Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle. ³⁰ Pharaoh arose in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no home where there was not someone dead.

³¹ Then he called for Moses and Aaron at night and said, "Rise up, get out from among my people, both you and the sons of Israel; and go, worship the Lord, as you have said. ³² Take both your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and go, and bless me also."

Now it came about at midnight

During the time of Passover it is dark from 7pm to 6am (approximately)

For the Jewish people midnight was half way between sunset and sunrise

So midnight would have been about 12:30 a.m. on Passover

The Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon

This plague struck every 1st born from the king to lowliest Egyptian prisoner

Pharaoh arose in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no home where there was not someone dead.

Why did everyone in Egypt arise during the night?

Perhaps they were checking on the first born to make sure they were ok.

The cries coming from every household would be a terrifying indication that what Moses had said indeed came true

Then he called for Moses and Aaron at night

The king had vowed to never see them again but time was of the essence.

Rise up, get out from among my people, both you and the sons of Israel

Pharaoh had watched his nation being destroyed by 10 plagues

But finally, according to God's plan, he ordered them to leave

Verses 33 - 36

³³ The Egyptians urged the people, to send them out of the land in haste, for they said, "We will all be dead." ³⁴ So the people took their dough before it was leavened, *with* their kneading bowls bound up in the clothes on their shoulders.

³⁵ Now the sons of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, for they had requested from the Egyptians articles of silver and articles of gold, and clothing; ³⁶ and the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have their request. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.

The Egyptians urged the people, to send them out of the land in haste, for they said, "We will all be dead.

God's judgment on Egypt was not designed to kill all of the Egyptian population.

But having seen all the plagues that destroyed much of Egypt and the death of all the 1st born was enough to bring panic to the people of Egypt

So the people took their dough before it was leavened, *with* their kneading bowls bound up in the clothes on their shoulders.

The slaves had already eaten the unleavened bread that was prepared for the Passover, but they were to eat unleavened bread for 6 more days.

Thus they plundered the Egyptians

Given the desire of the Egyptians to see the slaves depart, they probably gave in a very generous way.

Verse 37

³⁷ Now the sons of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, aside from children.

See Pic 1240



About six hundred thousand men on foot, aside from children

We don't know for sure how many people are involved here but we can use an educated guess to get close

There were 600,000 men on foot. So we can add about the same amount for women

That would equal 1.2 million

The children could easily number 1.2 million (being quite conservative)

Bringing the total to 2.4 million people

Verses 38 - 39

³⁸ A mixed multitude also went up with them, along with flocks and herds, a very large number of livestock. ³⁹ They baked the dough which they had brought out of Egypt into cakes of unleavened bread. For it had not become leavened, since they were driven out of Egypt and could not delay, nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves.

A mixed multitude also went up with them

This group might have included Egyptian slaves who saw an opportunity and took it

The size of this group is not known, but it was big enough to mention

Along with flocks and herds, a very large number of livestock

It is interesting that the people were complaining about the lack of food just one month later

See Exodus 16:1-3

They baked the dough into cakes of unleavened bread. For it had not become leavened, since they were driven out of Egypt and could not delay

This explains why the bread was unleavened when they left Egypt but not at the Passover meal before they left.

Verses 40 - 41

⁴⁰ Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. ⁴¹ And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. ⁴² It is a night to be observed for the Lord for having brought them out from the land of Egypt; this night is for the Lord, to be observed by all the sons of Israel throughout their generations.

Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years

We talked about this issue in Genesis 15, but a review is in order

See Pic 1245

Explaining Genesis 15:13

In Exodus 12:40-41 we learn that the exact period of time was 430 years
God simply rounded it off to "four hundred" when he spoke to Abraham
Stephen did the same thing in Acts 7:6 when he spoke before the council
Rounding off dates that cover long periods of time is not uncommon

There is one other issue that is important to understand
The text in Genesis 15:13 should read in Canaan and Egypt
Some versions leave Canaan out but mention it in a footnote
Knowing this explains the other so called contradiction in the text

Scripture	Event	Person	year
Genesis 22	Abraham offers Isaac	Abraham is 120	1876
Genesis 47:9	70 go to Egypt	Jacob is 130	1706
Exodus 1:6-11	Joseph dies	Joseph is 110	1635
Exodus 1:6-11	slavery begins	30 years later	1606
Exodus 12	The Exodus	Moses is 80	1446

Using the dates above we can determine the following

Years in Canaan	1876-1706	170
Years in Egypt	1706-1446	260
Total	1876-1446	430
Years in slavery	1606-1446	160

The years in Egypt were 260. If you add the 170 years in Canaan to the 260 years in Egypt it comes to 430 years

So why does the text say 430 years in Egypt?

Because Moses is speaking to a group of people that knew their history and he is summarizing without explaining the separate time frames.

Isn't that confusing to people living in 2023? It is unless we pay attention to the many dates and time frames mentioned in the bible.

It is a night to be observed for the Lord for having brought them out from the land of Egypt

The significance of the Passover cannot be overstated

See Deut. 4:32 – 34

Inquire from one end of the heavens to the other.

Has anything been done like this great thing, or has anything been heard like it?

Has a god tried to go to take for himself a nation from within another nation?

The Lord God has done what no other god can do.

Verses 43-51

⁴³ The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the ordinance of the Passover: no foreigner is to eat of it; ⁴⁴ but every man’s slave purchased with money, after you have circumcised him, then he may eat of it. ⁴⁵ A sojourner or a hired servant shall not eat of it. ⁴⁶ It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it. ⁴⁷ All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this. ⁴⁸ But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it. ⁴⁹ The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you.”

⁵⁰ Then all the sons of Israel did so; they did just as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron. ⁵¹ And on that same day the Lord brought the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.

The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger

Whether they are Jew or Gentile the law was the same

No uncircumcised person may eat of it

Being circumcised was a sign of the covenant relationship

⁵⁰ Then all the sons of Israel did so; they did just as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron. ⁵¹ And on that same day the Lord brought the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.

After the Passover meal, about 12:30 a.m., God brought Israel out of Egypt during the night but it was on the same “day” as the Passover meal.

See chart 1250

	Event	Ex.	Date	Time
1	The lamb was killed before sunset	12:6	14th	About 6:30 p.m.
2	Then the blood was applied to the door of the house	12:7	14th	Shortly after 6:30 p.m.
	Sunset			About 7 p.m.
3	The lamb had to be roasted which took about 4 to 5 hours	12:9	15th	7 p.m. to 12 a.m.
5	At midnight, the Lord struck down the Egyptian firstborn	12:29	15th	**At midnight**
6	During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses	12:31	15th	
7	The Egyptians urged the people to leave quickly	12:33	15th	
8	The people plundered the Egyptians	12:36	15th	
9	The Lord brought them out of Egypt that night	12:42	15th	before 6 a.m.

The first two events took place on the 14th
But all the rest took place on the 15th

See Deut. 16:1 The Lord brought them out at night