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BIBLE STUDY

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"SANCTIFY UNTO ME ALL THE FIRSTBORN"

Exodus 13:1-22

Exodus 13:1 "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,"
Exodus 13:2 "Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, [both] of man and of beast: it [is] mine."
"Sanctify unto me all the firstborn is commanded because the Lord had spared the firstborn of Israel when the Egyptian firstborn children were destroyed. Appropriately the firstborn of men and animals were to be "set apart" for His service. Here, we see an unusual statement about the firstborn being sanctified (set aside) for the Lord. This, probably, meant the first male child although the word translated "man", here, means mankind. We know that the firstborn in Egypt were killed as the tenth plague against Egypt by God. We, also, know that this was not limited to people, but to animals, as well. Here, again, we see the firstborn of animals set aside for God, as well. We will see, when the law was given on the way to the Holy Land, where God sets up the Levitical tribe to take the place of the firstborn of every family.

Exodus 13:3 "And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this [place]: there shall no leavened bread be eaten."
Moses was God's spokesman to these people. The messages that Moses gave them was from God. This, probably, was said at the end of the first day's journey. He was saying, "Now that we are on our way, don't forget that it was God that brought you out." Moses wanted them to be thankful to God alone for their deliverance. Indirectly, Moses was reminding them to lay the gods of Egypt down and be true to the one true God that overcame all of the false religions and brought them out with power. This eating of unleavened bread, to me, means "clean your life up, and stay free from sin". "Leaven" is symbolic of sin. God was trying to impress them not to have sin in their lives.

Exodus 13:4 "This day came ye out in the month Abib."
"Abib" means tender, young, green, or tender green ears of corn. This is just telling us what time of year this was. Abib would be the first month on the Jewish Calendar. It would be in early spring. Our month of April is the same month.

Exodus 13:5 "And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month."

Here, we see a reassurance that God was going to remove the families in this promised land, and that the Israelites would truly inherit this land, and that it would be a productive land of milk and honey.

Exodus 13:6 "Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day [shall be] a feast to the LORD."
"Seven", as we have mentioned so many times before, seems to show spiritual completeness. Here we see, again, that, that was truly what it indicated. This seventh day was like a very special holiday of no work, only worship. The first and the seventh day of this time was to be an especially holy day.

Exodus 13:7 "Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters."
Some believe that every word of the Bible must be taken literally and that we should not attempt to see into the spiritual, but I believe if we look at the spiritual, we will find a hidden treasure. This was spoken, again, to emphasize the importance of these people of God not having leaven inside of them, or not to even find leaven in their homes. Here, again, the seven days just show that, if we are to please God, we will keep sin (leaven) out of our personal life, and we will even keep it out of our homes. Jesus is coming back for a chaste virgin without spot or wrinkle. Jesus is not coming back for those who are practicing sin as a way of life, and that is the spiritual message we are to receive, not only in this verse, but in this whole chapter. It was repeated because it was important.

Exodus 13:8 "And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, [This is done] because of that [which] the LORD did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt."
We see that it was the obligation of the father to tell his son about God. This should be passed from one generation to the next. Not only were they to teach the next generation to observe this feast, but they were to teach them why they were observing this time. Unless parents take the time to teach the next generation, the feast would be overlooked, and it would greatly displease God.

Exodus 13:9 "And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the LORD'S law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt."
The word sign has been the subject of some speculation. Due to this verse and others on Deuteronomy the Jews have concluded that this meant literally wearing pouches called tephillin, a term explained to mean prayers.

> ***Deuteronomy 6:8 "And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.***
>
> ***Deuteronomy 11:18 "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes."***

Phylacteries were strips of parchments with Scriptures written on them. These small pouches made from the skin of ceremonially clean animals, sewn to leather bands by which they were

strapped to the forehead between and immediately above the eyes, and to the left arms, of males who had reached the age of 13. The benediction used when putting these on is, "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with the commandments and enjoined us to put on phylacteries". Some orthodox Jews and Hebrew Christian who interpret the Bible literally practice this today. The goal was to keep God's word in your mind, and before you always. If it is in your mind and heart, it will be in your mouth. The teaching is "keep the teachings of God in your mind and in your heart, or constantly before you. God delivered the Israelites (nothing they did brought them out)." God delivers the Christians through grace, nothing we do saves us.

Exodus 13:10 "Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year."
Exodus 13:11 "And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he sware unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee,"
Exodus 13:12 "That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males [shall be] the LORD'S."
Exodus 13:13 "And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem."
Exodus 13:14 "And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What [is] this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage:"
This was not something to take casually. It must be remembered every year**.** We see the beast of burden (ass) was to be redeemed, so it could carry their goods. The lamb here, too, was the sacrifice. A firstborn son later would be redeemed with five shekels of the sanctuary. If the ass was not redeemed for use as a beast of burden, then it was to be killed. The owner was not to profit from the firstborn ass. Killing him cost the owner. When their sons asked why they keep this? All they were to say was, "Give God the glory for it all".

Exodus 13:15 "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem."
Exodus 13:16 "And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt."
Here, we see the entire reason for sacrificing the firstborn of all the animals to God was in remembrance of God sparing the firstborn of the Israelites on the night all the firstborn of Egypt were slain. The reason the Hebrew firstborn children were to be redeemed (bought back) was because they, too, belonged to God. God did not require the Hebrews to sacrifice the firstborn children, but to redeem them from the law. Jesus is the firstborn of God, Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the law. One more time, they were told to keep reminding themselves that God brought them out. They must keep the remembrance in their minds and hearts.

Exodus 13:17 "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not [through] the way of the land of the Philistines, although that [was] near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt:"

God knew the Philistines would put up a fight, and He knew these people were so whipped down from their bondage in Egypt, that they were not ready to fight a battle, so He sent them the long way. Egypt was bad, but they were not ready for war. They might have given up and gone back to Egypt. Their fight was gone.

Exodus 13:18 "But God led the people about, [through] the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt."
Every Christian on the way to the promised land must cross the wilderness first. This would be a time of real testing. A time to get them separated into the true followers of God from those who were following for what they could get. Even though God brought them the long way, it was still less dangerous than open war with the Philistines. God brought them out this way to teach them His ways. "Harnessed" just means that they moved out orderly in five smaller groups as an army would move. The smaller groups, they would have to overcome in the desert, would be conditioning them.

Exodus 13:19 "And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you."
Exodus 13:20 "And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness."
We remember that Joseph took Jacob's body and buried it in the cave of Machpelah. Both Jacob and Joseph never stopped believing that their ancestors would receive the promised land, as God had promised. Their faith in this, caused Joseph to make them swear to take his bones, so that he, too, might receive the promised land. These were wilderness areas passed through by the Israelites.

Exodus 13:21 "And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:"
Exodus 13:22 "He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, [from] before the people."
We saw earlier in this chapter, that God, Himself, would lead them. God was their Commander and Chief. Probably, because of the heat of the desert, and probably, because of their rush to get out of Egypt, they moved by day and night. This "cloud" and this "fire" were the presence of God. God is a consuming fire.

> ***Hebrews 12:29 "For our God [is] a consuming fire."***

This glowing cloud was the shekinah glory of Yahweh, which later filled the tabernacle (40:35) and then Solomon's temple (1 Kings 8: 10), and finally departed from the temple and the city just before the Babylonian captivity (Ezekiel 8–11). This "glory of the God of Israel" will not return to Israel until the second coming of Christ (Ezekiel 43:1–7), at which time the glowing cloud will once again cover God's earthly people.

> ***Isaiah 4:5 "And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory [shall be] a defence."***

Mount Zion is the church. God is the Protector and Director of the church. It guided the people through the wilderness, assured them of God's presence, and protected them from the Egyptians.

Somehow, in this pillar of a cloud and pillar of fire dwelt the presence of Jehovah. They were to look to Him, and no other for where to go and what to do, and so are we to look to Him. God never leaves us. We may leave Him, but He never leaves us. God will lead us and guide us, as long as we follow Him.

John 14:26 "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 16:13 "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

1 Corinthians 10:1-6
1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;
2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;
3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;
4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.
5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.
6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

QUESTIONS

1. Who was Moses told to sanctify?
2. What does sanctified mean?
3. Why were animals included?
4. How did the Lord bring them out?
5. What did God tell them not to forget?
6. What month did they leave Egypt?
7. Whose land had God promised them?
8. What two foods did God promise them?
9. How many days should they eat unleavened bread?
10. What does this number indicate?
11. What did no leaven in the quarters indicate?
12. Jesus is coming back for whom?
13. Whose obligation was it to tell the family?
14. Where were they to carry the memorial?
15. What does "Phylacteries" mean?
16. How often were they to celebrate this feast?
17. Why was the ass to be redeemed?
18. What was the price the firstborn son was to be redeemed with?
19. When the sons asked why they did this? What should the father answer?
20. Whose land did God lead them away from?

21. Which way did God lead them?
22. In what two things did God show Himself to lead the people?
23. What does "harnessed" mean?
24. Whose bones went with them to the promised land?
25. God is the Director and Protector of the _____.