

1. God is a great Deliverer

• *Instructions repeated*

• *A family celebration*

• *The death of the firstborn*

• *Pharaoh at last sends away the Israelites*

1. **God is a great Deliverer.** Moses repeats the instructions, already given by God, concerning how the first passover in Egypt will take place^{□1}. Hyssop (a tree with leafy branches) will be used to put the blood around the door frames. No one is to take himself away from the shelter of the blood^{□2}. There will be no safety anywhere except under the blood^{□3}. The ‘destroyer’, an angel representing God, will come^{□4}.

□1 12:21-23
 □2 12:22
 □3 12:23
 □4 12:23

Moses goes on to say how this event will be celebrated in Israel's future life^{□1}. It will be a family affair with the children asking a question about what happened on this famous day in their history. Then the father will give an exposition of what it means for Israel to have been saved by the blood of the lamb.

□1 12:24-27

Next comes the description of the death of the firstborn^{□1}. The people killed the lamb as they had been told^{□2} and then the destroying angel came and the firstborn children and animals of the entire land were struck down^{□3}, to the great distress of the people of Egypt^{□4}. God punishes sin and delivers His people at the same time.

□1 12:28-30
 □2 12:28
 □3 12:29
 □4 12:30

Pharaoh at last sends away the Israelites^{□1}. Moses did not come to Pharaoh on his own initiative^{□2} but Pharaoh sent for him! Pharaoh totally releases the people^{□3}. From the earliest days of his being sent to Egypt, God had told Moses that this is what would happen^{□4}, and now God's word is being fulfilled. Pharaoh actually asks for Moses to pray for him^{□5}. The people of Egypt add their plea that the Israelites should leave^{□6}.

□1 12:31-34
 □2 10:28-29
 □3 12:30-32
 □4 3:20
 □5 12:32
 □6 12:33

2. God's deliverance requires response

• *They are suddenly asked to go*

• *They are supplied with gifts and resources for the future*

• *The first stage of the journey*

2. **God's deliverance requires response.** God had told the Israelites to be ready to leave hurriedly and now they are abruptly and suddenly asked to go. They take dough which they were about to bake for the journey, and large pieces of cloth which were normally used for wrap-around clothing were now used to carry their ovens^{□1}.

□1 12:34

As God had predicted, they went out amply supplied with gifts and resources for the future. They asked for supplies from the Egyptians and they got what they asked for^{□1}.

□1 12:35-36

The first stage of the journey takes them from Rameses to Succoth^{□1}. There are six hundred clans (as a likely translation of 12:37 has it)¹. They went with a mixed multitude.

□1 12:37-39

• *Rameses to Succoth*



• *By faith – non-Israelite believers included*

3. God's deliverance leads to a new life

4. God's redemption is a great sample of His goodness and faithfulness

• *Promise to Abraham fulfilled*

5. The day of deliverance is to be ever remembered

• *Passover was unique to Israel*

• *No foreigner could take part unless he accepted Israel's faith*

• *Every Israelite to be involved*

• *Within the believers, at this point, no discrimination*

It was not nationality that saved Israel from the destroying angel; it was faith. From the beginning there were non-Israelite believers^{□1}. It took faith to leave Egypt and go with Israel^{□2}. It was 'by faith' they crossed the Reed Sea (as it should be called). There were some gentile believers with Israel right from the start. The promise always was for 'all the families of the earth'^{□3}.

3. **God's deliverance leads to a new life.** The people went in great haste^{□1}. They travelled southwards first, reaching places called Succoth and Etham. Later they would turn north towards an area where there were several great lakes, and inlets of water from the sea. One of them was the 'Sea of Reeds'.

4. **God's redemption is a great sample of His goodness and faithfulness.** Exodus 12:40–42 comments on the greatness of the event. Abraham's descendants had been in Egypt for about 430 years (from about 1710 to about 1280 BC; but some scholars put it earlier). God had wonderfully preserved the descendants of Abraham, and of Joseph, and had watched over them for four centuries. God had told Abraham they would be away from Canaan for about four centuries^{□1}. Now came the time for the fulfilment of the promise^{□2}. It was to be remembered in the following centuries^{□3}. Salvation is by the blood of Jesus. It is sprinkled around our life and gives us protection. The cross was predicted in some detail by Jesus just as the death of the lamb was by Moses. No one is to take himself away from the shelter of the blood of Jesus. There will be no safety anywhere except under the blood. The cross of Jesus is to be explained within the family. Once we are redeemed we are released from our old life of bondage. God abundantly meets our needs, perhaps using even old enemies to do so. We leave the old life abruptly and sharply. It is not nationality that saves; people of every kind are invited to come with us. God will wonderfully preserve us and keep all His promises to us.

5. **The day of deliverance is to be ever remembered^{□1}.** The regulations for the festival of Passover are now presented. The feast of the Passover on the fourteenth of the month was immediately followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Exodus 34:18 and 25 treats them as two festivals). Passover was kept on the night of the 14th Nisan; the Feast of Unleavened Bread was kept during 15th to 21st Nisan (see also Leviticus 23:5–6; Numbers 28:16–17; Deuteronomy 16:1–8; 2 Chronicles 35:1, 17; many passages of Scripture link the two). Once a year the Israelites were to recall the greatest miracle of their history – their original redemption by the blood of a lamb.

Passover was unique to Israel; no foreigner could take part unless he accepted Israel's faith^{□1}. It was to take place on the day of the full moon, on the 14th day. That month was to be the first month of the calendar. At first the month was called 'Abib'; later it was called Nisan. On the tenth day a year-old male lamb would be selected. On the 14th Nisan 'between the two evenings' (that is, at dusk) the lamb would be killed. The blood would be applied to the doorframes of the houses, using a branch of a 'hyssop' (a leafy plant). The lamb was to be wholly roasted. No bones were to be broken^{□2}. Every Israelite had to be involved^{□3}. Bitter herbs would be eaten. Any remains were to be burnt. The meal was to be eaten with the participants dressed as though ready for a hasty journey. After the first events Passover was to be kept every year by all Israelites^{□4}. Slaves and resident foreigners were expected to join in^{□5}. Anyone was welcome to look back in faith to the blood of the lamb. Within the believers, at this point, there was to be no discrimination^{□6}.

□1 12:38
□2 Heb 11:29
□3 Gen 12:3

□1 12:39

□1 Gen 15:13
□2 12:41
□3 12:42

□1 12:43-49

□1 12:43-45

□2 12:46
□3 12:47

□4 12:47
□5 12:48

□6 12:49

• A family celebration

The original passover in Egypt would be kept in the peoples' homes. Later the Passover was celebrated at a central sanctuary¹² but it was not meant to lose its family-atmosphere. It was to be celebrated as a family celebration. Although the people would eventually come to Jerusalem – after the days of David – even then it would be kept in people's houses³. The law of Moses also would allow for a minor Passover one month later for those who were ceremonially unclean at the time of the main Passover⁴⁵.

- ¹ 23:14-17
- ² Deut 16:1-8
- ³ Matt 26:17
- ⁴ Num 9:1-14
- ⁵ Chrn 30:2

Note

¹ The translation 'six hundred thousand' (here and in Numbers 11:21) is probably not right. The Hebrew 'eleph' may mean a 'thousand' but there is reason to think it has other meanings, including 'clan' (as in Judges 6:15). The number was small enough for them to camp around the oases of Kadesh-Barnea (see Deuteronomy 1:46). It was less than the Canaanites (Exodus 23:29). Possibly the number at the time of the exodus was about 30,000 people. Still, the deliverance of 30,000 was miraculous enough!

	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible</i> (PTTB) books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
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