Exodus 12

Bible Study
Ch. 11:10
“So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land”
Introduction to Chapter 12

God gave detailed (Passover) instructions to Israel in preparation with respect to the final plague coming upon the Egyptians.

God’s instructions were to be repeated every year—as a reminder of God’s intervention for His people [v.14].

They also foreshadow the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the lamb of God.

1 Corinthians 5:7
For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

Several activities in the instructions for this Passover were never repeated:

- Blood on the doorposts [v.7]
- The Lord passed over the homes of the Israelites [v. 13]
- The lamb was eaten in haste [v. 11]
Outline of chapter 12

v. 1-14—instructions for Passover (to Moses and Aaron)

v. 15-20—instructions for Unleavened Bread

v. 21-28—Passover instructions given to elders/Israel

v. 29-36—Description of the 10th plague; Pharaoh’s demand that Israel leave; spoiling of the Egyptians

v. 37-42 Israel leaves Egypt

v. 43-51—Moses and Aaron given regulations about celebrating the Passover, concerning foreigners (at Succoth)
1Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

2“This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.

3Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

v. 3“congregation” (Qahal Heb)—first use in the Bible (Expositors) “...becomes a technical term for the ‘people’ of God gathered to worship God or to be instructed in spiritual things.

[Qahal] is often associated in meaning with the NT Greek ekklesia (assembly, church)”
4And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb.

5Your lamb shall be **without blemish**, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats.

The pronoun ‘it’ in verses 4-11 refers back to the noun “lamb”

“lamb” Points to Christ—who was without spot and blemish especially in the spiritual sense

1 Peter 1:18-19

18knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers,

19but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.
Now you shall keep it until the **fourteenth day** of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at **twilight**. (KJV “in the evening”)

“**Twilight**” (is a disputed term)
(Expositors) *ben ha arbayim* (Heb.) *literally: between the two evenings*;
(NIV) ‘at twilight’ has given rise to a much discussed question that is explained in two ways: 1) **between sunset and dark**
or 2) between the decline of the sun (three to five o clock) and sunset.

Deuteronomy 16:6 fixes the time at ‘when the sun goes down’, the same time for the lighting of the lamps in the tabernacle (30:8) and the offering of the daily sacrifice”

(Vines)“The phrase ‘between the evenings’ means the period **between sunset and darkness**, ‘twilight’ (Ex. 12:6 [KJV] ‘in the evening’”)

(UCG study paper, ‘the Passover of Exodus 12’)

“**Twilight**” (Heb.) *ben ha arbayim* = between the two evenings
“**When the light grows dim, after sunset, but before complete darkness**”
Exodus 16:12-13—helps us understand when “at twilight” (between the two evenings) occurs

Exodus 16:12

“Then I heard the children of Israel grumble against me. So I said, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. And you shall know that I am the Lord your God.’”

“At twilight” = beyn ha arbayim— between the two evenings

Exodus 16:13

“So it was that quails came up at evening and covered the camp, and in the morning the dew lay all around the camp.

“at evening” = ba erev— sunset

(Vines) “This word represents the time of the day immediately preceding and following the setting of the sun”

Israel was told they would have meat “at twilight” (between the two evenings) [v.12]...
In verse 13 the meat /quails came “at evening” (sunset)
And they shall take *some* of the blood and put *it* on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.

With the blood of the lamb applied to the door posts, the Israelites were protected in their homes from the 10th plague, the death of the firstborn.

The blood symbolizes the blood of Christ and was applied to the door frame (sides and head) but not on the threshold...

- On a spiritual plane of not trampling on the blood of Christ

Hebrews 10:28-29

28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?
Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with **unleavened bread** and with bitter **herbs** they shall eat it.

Exodus 34:25

“You shall **not** offer the blood of **My sacrifice with leaven**, nor shall the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover be left until morning.

“**roasted in fire**”—symbolizes Christ giving Himself for mankind

“**with unleavened bread**”—because Christ was perfect and sinless

➢ Eaten ‘with unleavened bread’ symbolizes without sin

v. 8 “**bitter herbs**”—were wild lettuce or endive indigenous to Egypt

(Expositors)“were to recall the bitter years of servitude”

(UCG study paper)”Clearly the Passover was never to be taken with leavening, nor was it be left until morning. Unleavened bread was eaten with the Passover because of the nature of the sacrifice.

In Leviticus we find that no leaven was to be present in any of the sin offerings which were brought to the tabernacle. (Lev. 2:11; 6:17; 10:12).

Therefore, the eating of unleavened bread with the Passover lamb is associated with the sacrifice, and not necessarily the day in which it was eaten. We also find that Passover, while not a Holy Day, is called a Feast”
9Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails.

(Expositors) “The meat was to be roasted whole with the head and legs intact and the washed internals left inside; it was not be eaten raw or boiled with water”

“roasted in fire”—pertained to the whole lamb—picturing the complete and total sacrifice of Christ

10You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire.

(Expositors) “All leftovers were to be burnt; nothing was to be allowed to become profane by purification or superstitious abuse”

None of the lamb would become corrupt or decay—as Christ’s body was not corrupted

Acts 13: 37 “but He whom God raised up saw no corruption”
And thus you shall eat it: *with* a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord’s *Passover*.

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**“Passover”**—first time mentioned in scripture...is defined here as a reference to the lamb itself.

**“haste” chippazown (Heb.)**—can be translated ‘anxiously’ *(Word Biblical Commentary)*.

*(Keil and Delitzch)*

“The directions in verse 11 had reference to the paschal meal in Egypt only, and had no other signification than to prepare the Israelites for their approaching departure.”

*(Expositors)*

“The meal was to be eaten with an air of haste and expectancy. Therefore the people’s long robes were to be tucked in their belts, their sandals to be worn, and their staffs were to be ready and on hand.”
12‘For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord.

13Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.
So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

(Keil and Delitzch)

“That day (the evening of the 14th) Israel was to keep ‘for a commemoration to Jehovah’, consecrated for all time, as an ‘eternal ordinance’ i.e. for all ages”

“For the Passover, the remembrance of which was to be revived by the constant repetition of the Feast....”

“(Zondervan Bible Backgrounds Commentary)

“The earliest reference outside the Bible to an observance of Passover comes from an Aramaic letter addressed to the Jewish community on the Nile’s island of Elephantine in Egypt.

It dates to around 420 BC and refers to a seven-day observance of what appears to be Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.”
15Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.

16On the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you.

Numbers 33:3

They departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover the children of Israel went out with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians.
So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an **everlasting ordinance**.

Unleavened Bread, like the Passover was to be an ‘everlasting ordinance’

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.

(UCG study paper) "**at evening**" (Heb) ba ‘erev—"in general it means **sunset**"

[not the same word used in verse 6]

(UCG study paper, the Passover of Exodus 12)
"Exodus 12:18 is telling us that when the sun sets at the end of the fourteenth, the first day of Unleavened Bread begins. The last of the seven days will end when the sun sets on the twenty-first day of the month.”
19For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land.

20You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.’”

“cut off from the congregation”
(BKC) “that is, excluded from the camp, separated from the covenant rights and privileges, possibly resulting in death”

(Expositors) “probably refers to expulsion from the community of Israel with the possibility that it might prove fatal to the person”

””whether he is a stranger”
(Expositors) “The ‘alien’ (NIV) must have included the ‘mixed multitude’ [v.38]

- Possibly included Hyksos who were not able to escape from Pharaoh Amosis and some Egyptians who were convicted of God’s power [9:20]
Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover lamb.

And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.

v. 22 Two new items given to the elders:

1) Blood to be applied to each doorframe by a bunch of hyssop, dipped in blood
2) “none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning”
23 For the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.

“The destroyer”—reflects back to ‘the Lord will... strike the Egyptians’

(BKC) “The destroyer who killed the firstborn may have been the Angel of the Lord (the preincarnate Jesus Christ)”

[Ex. 12:12] “For I will pass through the land of Egypt in that night, and will strike all the firstborn...”

24 And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever.

25 It will come to pass when you come to the land which the Lord will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service.

Told to keep the Passover in the promised land
And it shall be, when your children say to you, ‘What do you mean by this service?’

that you shall say, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice of the Lord, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.’” So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

“‘The name ‘Passover’ is derived from the time when the LORD ‘passed over the houses’ of the Israelites”

Then the children of Israel went away and did so; just as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

“The people, grateful for their soon-to-come deliverance from centuries of slavery, worshipped the Lord. Then they carried out His commands”
And it came to pass 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 livestock.

So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

v. 29-30 The 10th plague is specific at to its: time—**midnight**, extent—**every firstborn**, and the effect—**loud wailing**

v. 30 “a great cry in Egypt”  
(Adam Clarke)  
“No people in the universe were more remarkable for their mourning than the Egyptians, especially in matters of religion; they whipped, beat, tore themselves, and howled in all the excess of grief”

(‘Bible Archaeology’—Hoerth/McCray) “Amenhotep II was followed by his son Thutmose IV, who was not the eldest son”

(Archaeology and the Old Testament, Unger)  
“It is plain from the monuments that Thutmose IV (1425-1412 BC) who excavated the sphinx, was not the eldest son of Amenhotep II”
Then he **called for** Moses and Aaron by night, and said, “Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the Lord as you have said.”

**“called for”**
(Companion) “sent message to”

(GSB) “Based on the words of Moses in 10: 29, it is likely that this message was delivered by an intermediary. Pharaoh was grief stricken at the death of his son”

Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and **be gone**; and bless me also.”

God had predicted that Pharaoh would drive them out after the 10th plague:

**Exodus 11:1**

1And the Lord said to Moses, “I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether.

**“and bless me also”**

Pharaoh was now humbled and preferred God’s blessing to any more plagues.
33 And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, “We shall all be dead.”

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

v. 34 “dough before it was leavened” [did not have time to bake bread]
(NSB) “They left Egypt with unleavened dough. From that day on, unleavened bread would remind them of the haste of flight from slavery”

35 Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing.

36 And the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.

v. 35 “had asked”—actually began spoiling the Egyptians before the day of departure [11: 2]

v. 36 “plundered the Egyptians”
(NSB) This was God’s plan from the beginning [3:21-22; 11: 2-3]. The slaves were now being paid for their years of service”
“The Israelites spent the daylight portion of the fourteenth gathering in their ‘armies’ and spoiling the Egyptians (an exercise that had begun earlier, but was probably not completed until just prior to departure.

“There were 600,000 men, unknown numbers of women and children, a mixed multitude and much cattle that had to be organized at Rameses, the point of departure from Egypt. This was no small feat. It would be like evacuating the city of Chicago.

“Even though each family was prepared for a journey, the need to bring everyone together from possibly a 750 square mile area would require several hours. This would seem impossible to accomplish in the hours prior to daybreak when nothing could be done until after midnight.

“From Rameses they departed as the sun was setting and the night of the fifteenth (the day after Passover, Numbers 33:3) was beginning, having been too busy to prepare the dough and having time for it to rise.

They baked unleavened cakes (12:39) for the journey and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

They viewed the Egyptians burying the dead from the previous night as they marched out of the land. With a full moon guiding them they marched to their first campsite, Succoth.”
Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children. [aprox. 2 million] [FDUB]

“A days march (Adam Clarke) ...15 miles (JFB)

“Succoth”
(Adam Clarke) “As the term Succoth signifies ‘booths’ or ‘tents,’ it is probable that this place is so named from its being the place of the first encampment of the Israelites”

A mixed multitude went up with them also, and flocks and herds—a great deal of livestock.

“mixed multitude”
Probably many Hyksos, Egyptians, and possibly other captured slaves

And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.

(BKC) “En route the people baked...unleavened bread”
Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years.

And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years—on that very same day—it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.

v. 41 “on that very same day”
(JFB) “The date is repeated by the historian in order to show that the intimation made to Abraham [Gen. 15: 13-16] was realized, and that the time of deliverance corresponded with the most minute exactness to the prophetic announcement”

(Word) “the reference here is clearly the end of the Egyptian sojourn and the day of the Exodus”
It is a night of **solemn observance** to the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of the Lord, a **solemn observance** for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.

“night of solemn observance” (OKJ) ‘much observed’

(BKC) “Moses concluded this section about the beginning of the Exodus with a historical notation, a reminder of God’s faithfulness, and a call to **remembrance**”

(JFB) “The repetition of the remark in another form in the latter clause of the verse...shows the importance of the memorial festival”
And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it.

But every man’s servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then he may eat it.

A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it.

The account of the departure of the Israelites is interrupted by this section which records regulations for the Passover. Clearly, these regulations applied to both the first Passover and later commemorations [v.42].

The several regulations for the Passover were apparently necessitated by the non-Israelites who joined the Exodus and had identified with the religion of the Hebrews.

If a man did not identify with the covenant promises by the rite of circumcision he could not celebrate the Passover.

A servant who had faith in God and was circumcised could partake of the holy feast. But persons who did not share in Israel’s faith were excluded [v.45].
46 In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break one of its bones.

47 All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.
48 And when a stranger dwells with you and wants to keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it.

49 One law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who dwells among you.”

Israel was required to keep the Passover....if a stranger wanted to, he had to be circumcised

50 Thus all the children of Israel did; as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

51 And it came to pass, on that very same day, that the Lord brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt according to their armies.
The Passover of Exodus 12 foreshadowed the supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the lamb of God

The children of Israel were to be ready for travel, belt on waist, staff in hand—we are to be spiritually ready for the return of Christ

Unleavened Bread to be eaten seven days—to remember God bringing Israel out of Egypt
Leaven represents sin—a reminder for us to purge our lives of spiritual leavening