
EXODUS 12:1 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

The month Abib is to be considered as the commencement of the year, Exo 12:1, Exo 12:2. The Passover instituted; the lamb or kid to be used on the occasion to be taken from the flock the tenth day of the month, and each family to provide one, Exo 12:3, Exo 12:4. The lamb or kid to be a male of the first year without blemish, Exo 12:5. To be killed on the fourteenth day, Exo 12:6, and the blood to be sprinkled on the side posts and lintels of the doors, Exo 12:7. The flesh to be prepared by roasting, and not to be eaten either sodden or raw, Exo 12:8, Exo 12:9; and no part of it to be left till the morning, Exo 12:10. The people to eat it with their loins girded, etc., as persons prepared for a journey, Exo 12:11. Why called the Passover, Exo 12:12. The blood sprinkled on the door posts, etc., to be a token to them of preservation from the destroying angel, Exo 12:13. The fourteenth day of the month Abib to be a feast for ever, Exo 12:14. Unleavened bread to be eaten seven days, Exo 12:15. This also to be observed in all their generations for ever, Exo 12:17-20. Moses instructs the elders of Israel how they are to offer the lamb and sprinkle his blood, and for what purpose, Exo 12:21-23. He binds them to instruct their children in the nature of this rite, Exo 12:24-27. The children of Israel act as commanded, Exo 12:28. All the first-born of Egypt slain, Exo 12:29, Exo 12:30. Pharaoh and the Egyptians urge Moses, Aaron, and the Israelites to depart, Exo 12:31-33. They prepare for their departure, and get gold, silver, and raiment from the Egyptians, Exo 12:34-36. They journey from Rameses to Succoth, in number six hundred thousand men, besides women and children, and a mixed multitude, Exo 12:37, Exo 12:38. They bake unleavened cakes of the dough they brought with them out of Egypt, Exo 12:39. The time in which they sojourned in Egypt, Exo 12:40-42. Different ordinances concerning the Passover, Exo 12:43-49; which are all punctually observed by the people, who are brought out of Egypt the same day, Exo 12:50, Exo 12:51.

EXODUS 12:2 "This month shall be to you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year to you.

Verse 2

This month shall be unto you the beginning of months - It is supposed that God now changed the commencement of the Jewish year. The month to which this verse refers, the month Abib, answers to a part of our March and April; whereas it is supposed that previously to this the year began with Tisri, which answers to a part of our September; for in this month the Jews suppose God created the world, when the earth appeared at once with all its fruits in perfection. From this circumstance the Jews have formed a twofold commencement of the year, which has given rise to a twofold denomination of the year itself, to which they afterwards attended in all their reckonings: that which began with Tisri or September was called their civil year; that which began with Abib or March was called the sacred or ecclesiastical year.

As the exodus of the Israelites formed a particular era, which is referred to in Jewish reckonings down to the building of the temple, I have marked it as such in the chronology in the margin; and shall carry it down to the time in which it ceased to be acknowledged.

Some very eminently learned men dispute this; and especially Houbigant, who contends with great plausibility of argument that no new commencement of the year is noted in this place; for that the year had always begun in this month, and that the words shall be, which are inserted by different versions, have nothing answering to them in the Hebrew, which he renders literally thus. *Hic mensis vobis est caput mensium; hic vobis primus est anni mensis.* "This month is to you the head or chief of the months; it is to you the first month of the year." And he observes farther that God only marks it thus, as is evident from the context, to show the people that this month, which was the beginning of their year, should be so designated as to point out to their posterity on what month and on what day of the month they were to celebrate the passover and the fast of unleavened bread. His words are these: "*Ergo superest, et Hebr. ipso ex contextu efficitur, non hic novi ordinis annum constitui, sed eum anni mensem, qui esset primus, ideo commemorari, ut posteris constaret, quo mense, et quo die mensis paseha et azyma celebranda essent.*"

EXODUS 12:3 Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth day of this month, they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household;

Verse 3

In the tenth day of this month - In after times they began their preparation on the thirteenth day or day before the Passover, which was not celebrated till the fourteenth day, see Exo 12:6 : but on the present occasion, as this was their first passover, they probably required more time to get ready in; as a state of very great confusion must have prevailed at this time. Mr. Ainsworth remarks that on this day the Israelites did afterwards go through Jordan into the land of Canaan; Jos 4:19. And Christ, our Paschal Lamb, on this day entered Jerusalem, riding on an ass; the people bearing palm branches, and crying, Hosanna, Joh 12:1, Joh 12:12, Joh 12:13, etc.: and in him this type was truly fulfilled.

A lamb - The original word *נש* seh signifies the young of sheep and of goats, and may be indifferently translated either lamb or kid. See Exo 12:5.

A lamb for a house - The whole host of Israel was divided into twelve tribes, these tribes into families, the families into houses, and the houses into particular persons; Numbers 1, Jos 7:14 - Ainsworth.

EXODUS 12:4 and if the household is too little for a lamb, then he and his neighbour next to his house shall take one according to the number of the souls; according to what everyone can eat you shall make your count for the lamb.

Verse 4

If the household be too little - That is, if there be not persons enough in one family to eat a whole lamb, then two families must join together. The rabbins allow that there should be at least ten persons to one paschal lamb, and not more than twenty.

Take it, according to the number of the souls - The persons who were to eat of it were to be first ascertained, and then the lamb was to be slain and dressed for that number.

EXODUS 12:5 Your lamb shall be without defect, a male a year old. You shall take it from the sheep, or from the goats:

Verse 5

Without blemish - Having no natural imperfection, no disease, no deficiency or redundancy of parts. On this point the rabbins have trifled most egregiously, reckoning fifty blemishes that render a lamb or kid, or any animal, improper to be sacrificed: five in the ear, three in the eyelid, eight in the eye, three in the nose, six in the mouth, etc., etc.

A male of the first year - That is, any age in the first year between eight days and twelve months.

From the sheep, or from the goats - The שֶׁה seh means either; and either was equally proper if without blemish. The Hebrews however in general preferred the lamb to the kid.

EXODUS 12:6 and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at evening.

Verse 6

Ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day - The lamb or kid was to be taken from the flock on the tenth day, and kept up and fed by itself till the fourteenth day, when it was to be sacrificed. This was never commanded nor practiced afterwards. The rabbins mark four things that were required in the first passover that were never required afterwards:

1. The eating of the lamb in their houses dispersed through Goshen.
2. The taking the lamb on the tenth day.
3. The striking of its blood on the door posts and lintels of their houses. And,
4. Their eating it in haste. These things were not required of the succeeding generations.

The whole assembly - shall kill it - Any person might kill it, the sacrificial act in this case not being confined to the priests.

In the evening - בין הערבים beyn haabayim, "between the two evenings." The Jews divided the day into morning and evening: till the sun passed the meridian all was morning or fore-noon; after that, all was afternoon or evening. Their first evening began just after twelve o'clock, and continued till sunset; their second evening began at sunset and continued till night, i.e., during the whole time of twilight; between twelve o'clock, therefore, and the termination of twilight, the passover was to be offered. "The day among the Jews had twelve hours, Joh 11:9. Their first hour was about six o'clock in the morning with us. Their sixth hour was our noon. Their ninth hour answered to our three o'clock in the afternoon. By this we may understand that the time in which Christ was crucified began at the third hour, that is, at nine o'clock in the morning, the ordinary time for the daily morning sacrifice, and ended at the ninth hour, that is, three o'clock in the afternoon, the time of the evening sacrifice, Mar 15:25, Mar 15:33, Mar 15:34, Mar 15:37. Wherefore their ninth hour was

their hour of prayer, when they used to go into the temple at the daily evening sacrifice, Act 3:1; and this was the ordinary time for the passover. It is worthy of remark that God sets no particular hour for the killing of the passover: any time between the two evenings, i.e., between twelve o'clock in the day and the termination of twilight, was lawful. The daily sacrifice (see Exo 29:38, Exo 29:39) was killed at half past the eighth hour, that is, half an hour Before three in the afternoon; and it was offered up at half past the ninth hour, that is, half an hour After three. In the evening of the passover it was killed at half past the seventh hour, and offered at half past the eighth, that is, half an hour Before three: and if the evening of the passover fell on the evening of the Sabbath, it was killed at half past the Sixth hour, and offered at half past the Seventh, that is, half an hour Before two in the afternoon. The reason of this was, they were first obliged to kill the daily sacrifice, and then to kill and roast the paschal lamb, and also to rest the evening before the passover. Agreeably to this Maimonides says 'the killing of the passover is after mid-day, and if they kill it before it is not lawful; and they do not kill it till after the daily evening sacrifice, and burning of incense: and after they have trimmed the lamps they begin to kill the paschal lambs until the end of the day.' By this time of the day God foreshowed the sufferings of Christ in the evening of times or in the last days, Heb 1:2; 1Pet 1:19, 1Pet 1:20 : and about the same time of the day, when the paschal lamb ordinarily died, He died also, viz., at the ninth hour; Mat 27:46-50." See Ainsworth.

EXODUS 12:7 They shall take some of the blood, and put it on the two door posts and on the lintel, on the houses in which they shall eat it.

Verse 7

Take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts - This was to be done by dipping a bunch of hyssop into the blood, and thus sprinkling it upon the posts, etc.; see Exo 12:22. That this sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb was an emblem of the sacrifice and atonement made by the death of Jesus Christ, is most clearly intimated in the sacred writings, 1Pet 1:2; Heb 9:13, Heb 9:14; Heb 8:10. It is remarkable that no blood was to be sprinkled on the threshold, to teach, as Mr. Ainsworth properly observes, a reverent regard for the blood of Christ, that men should not tread under foot the Son of God, nor count the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing; Heb 10:29.

EXODUS 12:8 They shall eat the flesh in that night, roasted with fire, and unleavened bread. They shall eat it with bitter herbs.

Verse 8

They shall eat the flesh - roast with fire - As it was the ordinary custom of the Jews to boil their flesh, some think that the command given here was in opposition to the custom of the Egyptians, who ate raw flesh in honor of Osiris. The Ethiopians are to this day remarkable for eating raw flesh, as is the case with most savage nations.

Unleavened bread - מצות matstsoth, from מצה matsah, to squeeze or compress, because the bread prepared without leaven or yeast was generally compressed, sad or heavy, as we term it. The word here properly signifies unleavened cakes; the word for leaven in Hebrew is חמץ chamets, which

simply signifies to ferment. It is supposed that leaven was forbidden on this and other occasions, that the bread being less agreeable to the taste, it might be emblematical of their bondage and bitter servitude, as this seems to have been one design of the bitter herbs which were commanded to be used on this occasion; but this certainly was not the sole design of the prohibition: leaven itself is a species of corruption, being produced by fermentation, which in such cases tends to putrefaction. In this very light St. Paul considers the subject in this place; hence, alluding to the passover as a type of Christ, he says: Purge out therefore the old leaven - for Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth; 1Cor 5:6-8.

Bitter herbs - What kind of herbs or salad is intended by the word מררים merorim, which literally signifies bitters, is not well known. The Jews think chicory, wild lettuce, horehound, and the like are intended. Whatever may be implied under the term, whether bitter herbs or bitter ingredients in general, it was designed to put them in mind of their bitter and severe bondage in the land of Egypt, from which God was now about to deliver them.

EXODUS 12:9 Don't eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted with fire; with its head, its legs and its inner parts.

Verse 9

With the purtenance thereof - All the intestines, for these were abused by the heathens to purposes of divination; and when roasted in the manner here directed they could not be thus used. The command also implies that the lamb was to be roasted whole; neither the head or legs were to be separated, nor the intestines removed. I suppose that these last simply included the heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, etc., and not the intestinal canal.

EXODUS 12:10 You shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; but that which remains of it until the morning you shall burn with fire.

Verse 10

Ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning - Merely to prevent putrefaction; for it was not meet that a thing offered to God should be subjected to corruption, which in such hot countries it must speedily undergo. Thus the body of our blessed Lord saw no corruption, Psa 16:10; Act 2:27, because, like the paschal lamb, it was a sacrifice offered to God.

It appears that from the Jewish passover the heathens borrowed their sacrifice termed Propter Viam. It was their custom previously to their undertaking a journey, to offer a sacrifice to their gods, and to eat the whole if possible, but if any part was left they burned it with fire; and this was called propter viam, because it was made to procure a prosperous journey. It was in reference to this that Cato is said to have rallied a person called Q. Albidius, who, having eaten up all his goods, set fire to his house, his only remaining property. "He has offered his sacrifice propter viam," says Cato, "because he has burned what he could not eat." This account is given by Macrobius, Saturn., lib. ii.,

2, edit. Bipont., vol. 1, p. 333; and is a remarkable instance how closely some of the religious observances of the people of God have been copied by the heathen nations.

EXODUS 12:11 This is how you shall eat it: with your belt on your waist, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD's Passover.

Verse 11

And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded - As in the eastern countries they wear long loose garments, whenever they travel they tuck up the fore parts of their garments in the girdle which they wear round their loins.

Your shoes on your feet - This seems particularly mentioned because not customary. "The easterns throw off their shoes when they eat, because it would be troublesome," says Sir J. Chardin, "to keep their shoes upon their feet, they sitting cross-legged on the floor, and having no hinder quarters to their shoes, which are made like slippers; and as they do not use tables and chairs as we do in Europe, but have their floors covered with carpets, they throw off their shoes when they enter their apartments, lest they should soil those beautiful pieces of furniture." On the contrary the Israelites were to have their shoes on, because now about to commence their journey. It was customary among the Romans to lay aside their shoes when they went to a banquet. The servants took them off them when they entered the house, and returned them when they departed to their own habitations.

Your staff in your hand - The same writer observes that the eastern people universally make use of a staff when they travel on foot.

Ye shall eat it in haste - Because they were suddenly to take their departure: the destroying angel was at hand, their enemies were coming against them, and they had not a moment to lose.

It is the Lord's passover - That is, Jehovah is now about to pass over the land, and the houses only where the blood is sprinkled shall be safe from the stroke of death. The Hebrew word פסח pesach, which we very properly translate Passover, and which should always be pronounced as two words, has its name from the angel of God passing by or over the houses of the Israelites, on the posts and lintels of which the blood of the lamb was sprinkled, while he stopped at the houses of the Egyptians to slay their first-born.

EXODUS 12:12 For I will go through the land of Egypt in that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and animal. Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements: I am the LORD.

Verse 12

Against all the gods of Egypt, etc. - As different animals were sacred among the Egyptians, the slaying of the first-born of all the beasts might be called executing judgment upon the gods of Egypt. As this however does not appear very clear and satisfactory, some have imagined that the word אלהי elohey should be translated princes, which is the rendering in our margin; for as these princes, who

were rulers of the kingdom under Pharaoh, were equally hostile to the Hebrews with Pharaoh himself, therefore these judgments fell equally heavy on them also. But we may ask, Did not these judgments fall equally on all the families of Egypt, though multitudes of them had no particular part either in the evil counsel against the Israelites or in their oppression? Why then distinguish those in calamities in which all equally shared? None of these interpretations therefore appear satisfactory. Houbigant, by a very simple and natural emendation, has, he thinks, restored the whole passage to sense and reason. He supposes that **אלהי** *elohey*, Gods, is a mistake for **אהלי** *ahley*, Tents or habitations, the **ה** *he* and the **ל** *lamed* being merely interchanged. This certainly gives a very consistent sense, and points out the universality of the desolation to which the whole context continually refers. He therefore contends that the text should be read thus: And on all the Tents (or Habitations) of Egypt I will execute judgment; by which words the Lord signified that not one dwelling in the whole land of Egypt should be exempted from the judgment here threatened. It is but justice to say that however probable this criticism may appear, it is not supported by any of the ancient versions, nor by any of the MSS. collated by Kennicott and De Rossi. The parallel place also, Num 33:4, is rather against Houbigant's interpretation: For the Egyptians buried all their first-born, which the Lord had smitten among them: upon their gods also [**ובאלהיהם** *ubeloheyhem*] the Lord executed judgments. But Houbigant amends the word in this place in the same way as he does that in Exodus. There appears also to be an allusion to this former judgment in Isa 19:1 : Behold, the Lord - shall come into Egypt, and the idols [**אלילי** *eliley*] of Egypt shall be moved at his presence. And in Jer 43:13 : The houses of the gods [**בתי אלהי** *bottey elohey*] of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire. The rabbins say that "when Israel came out of Egypt, the holy blessed God threw down all the images of their abominations, and they were broken to pieces." When a nation was conquered, it was always supposed that their gods had either abandoned them or were overcome. Thus Egypt was ruined, and their gods confounded and destroyed by Jehovah. See Clarke's note on Exo 11:7.

EXODUS 12:13 The blood shall be to you for a token on the houses where you are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no plague be on you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

Verse 13

The blood shall be to you for a token - It shall be the sign to the destroying angel, that the house on which he sees this blood sprinkled is under the protection of God, and that no person in it is to be injured. See Clarke on Exo 12:11 (note).

EXODUS 12:14 This day shall be to you for a memorial, and you shall keep it a feast to the LORD: throughout your generations you shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever.

Verse 14

A memorial - To keep up a remembrance of the severity and goodness, or justice and mercy, of God. Ye shall keep it a feast - it shall be annually observed, and shall be celebrated with solemn religious joy, throughout your generations - as long as ye continue to be a distinct people; an ordinance - a

Divine appointment, an institution of God himself, neither to be altered nor set aside by any human authority.

For ever - חקת עולם chukkath olam, an everlasting or endless statute, because representative of the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world; whose mediation, in consequence of his sacrifice, shall endure while time itself lasts; and to whose merits and efficacy the salvation of the soul shall be ascribable throughout eternity. This, therefore, is a statute and ordinance that can have no end, either in this world or in the world to come. It is remarkable that though the Jews have ceased from the whole of their sacrificial system, so that sacrifices are no longer offered by them in any part of the world, yet they all, in all their generations and in all countries, keep up the remembrance of the passover, and observe the feast of unleavened bread. But no lamb is sacrificed. Their sacrifices have all totally ceased, ever since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Even the flesh that is used on this occasion is partly roasted and partly boiled, that it may not even resemble the primitive sacrifice; for they deem it unlawful to sacrifice out of Jerusalem. The truth is, the true Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world has been offered, and they have no power to restore the ancient type. See Clarke on Exo 12:27 (note).

EXODUS 12:15 “Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; even the first day you shall put away yeast out of your houses, for whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.

Verse 15

Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread - This has been considered as a distinct ordinance, and not essentially connected with the passover. The passover was to be observed on the fourteenth day of the first month; the feast of unleavened bread began on the fifteenth and lasted seven days, the first and last of which were holy convocations.

That soul shall be cut off - There are thirty-six places in which this excision or cutting off is threatened against the Jews for neglect of some particular duty; and what is implied in the thing itself is not well known. Some think it means a violent death, some a premature death, and some an eternal death. It is very likely that it means no more than a separation from the rights and privileges of an Israelite; so that after this excision the person was considered as a mere stranger, who had neither lot nor part in Israel, nor any right to the blessings of the covenant. This is probably what St. Paul means, Rom 9:3. But we naturally suppose this punishment was not inflicted but on those who had showed a marked and obstinate contempt for the Divine authority. This punishment appears to have been nearly the same with excommunication among the Christians; and from this general notion of the cutting off, the Christian excommunication seems to have been borrowed.

EXODUS 12:16 In the first day there shall be to you a holy convocation, and in the seventh day a holy convocation; no kind of work shall be done in them, except that which every man must eat, that only may be done by you.

Verse 16

In the first day and in the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation - This is the first place where we meet with the account of an assembly collected for the mere purpose of religious worship. Such assemblies are called holy convocations, which is a very appropriate appellation for a religious assembly; they were called together by the express command of God, and were to be employed in a work of holiness. מִקְרָא mikra, convocation, is a word of similar import with the Greek εκκλησια, which we commonly translate Church, and which properly signifies an assembly convened by public call.

EXODUS 12:17 You shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this same day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations by an ordinance forever.

Verse 17

Self-same day - בֶּעֶצְמָתוֹ beetssem, in the body of this day, or in the strength of this day; probably they began their march about day-break, called here the body or strength of the day, and in Deu 16:1, by night - sometime before the sun rose.

EXODUS 12:18 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.

EXODUS 12:19 There shall be no yeast found in your houses for seven days, for whoever eats that which is leavened, that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a foreigner, or one who is born in the land.

Verse 19

No leaven found in your houses - To meet the letter of this precept in the fullest manner possible, the Jews, on the eve of this festival, institute the most rigorous search through every part of their houses, not only removing all leavened bread, but sweeping every part clean, that no crumb of bread shall be left that had any leaven in it. And so strict were they in the observance of the letter of this law, that if even a mouse was seen to run across the floor with a crumb of bread in its mouth, they considered the whole house as polluted, and began their purification afresh. We have already seen that leaven was an emblem of sin, because it proceeded from corruption; and the putting away of this implied the turning to God with simplicity and uprightness of heart. See on Exo 12:8 (note), and Exo 12:27 (note).

EXODUS 12:20 You shall eat nothing leavened. In all your habitations you shall eat unleavened bread.”

EXODUS 12:21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said to them, “Draw out, and take lambs according to your families, and kill the Passover.

Verse 21

Kill the passover - That is, the lamb, which was called the paschal or passover lamb. The animal that was to be sacrificed on this occasion got the name of the institution itself: thus the word covenant is often put for the sacrifice offered in making the covenant; so the rock was Christ, 1Cor 10:4; bread and wine the body and blood of Christ, Mar 14:22, Mar 14:24. St. Paul copies the expression, 1Cor 5:7 : Christ our passover (that is, our paschal lamb) is sacrificed for us.

EXODUS 12:22 You shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two door posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.

Verse 22

A bunch of hyssop - The original word בִּיטָח ezob has been variously translated musk, rosemary, polypody of the wall, mint, origanum, marjoram, and Hyssop: the latter seems to be the most proper. Parkhurst says it is named from its detersive and cleansing qualities, whence it was used in sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb, in cleansing the leprosy, Lev 14:4, Lev 14:6, Lev 14:51, Lev 14:52; in composing the water of purification, Num 19:6, and sprinkling it, Num 19:18. It was a type of the purifying virtue of the bitter sufferings of Christ. And it is plain, from Psa 51:7, that the psalmist understood its meaning. Among botanists hyssop is described as "a genus of the gymnospermia (naked-seeded) order, belonging to the didynamia class of plants. It has under-shrubby, low, bushy stalks, growing a foot and a half high, small, spear-shaped, close-sitting, opposite leaves, with several smaller ones rising from the same joint; and all the stalks and branches terminated by erect whorled spikes of flowers of different colors, in the varieties of the plant. The leaves have an aromatic smell, and a warm pungent taste. The leaves of this plant are particularly recommended in humoral asthmas, and other disorders of the breast and lungs, and greatly promote expectoration." Its medicinal qualities were probably the reason why this plant was so particularly recommended in the Scriptures.

EXODUS 12:23 For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when he sees the blood on the lintel, and on the two door posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to strike you.

EXODUS 12:24 You shall observe this thing for an ordinance to you and to your sons forever.

EXODUS 12:25 It shall happen when you have come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he has promised, that you shall keep this service.

EXODUS 12:26 It will happen, when your children ask you, 'What do you mean by this service?'

Verse 26

What mean ye by this service? - The establishment of this service annually was a very wise provision to keep up in remembrance this wonderful deliverance. From the remotest antiquity the institution of feasts, games, etc., has been used to keep up the memory of past grand events. Hence God

instituted the Sabbath, to keep up the remembrance of the creation; and the passover to keep up the remembrance of the deliverance from Egypt. All the other feasts were instituted on similar reasons. The Jews never took their sons to the tabernacle or temple till they were twelve years of age, nor suffered them to eat of the flesh of any victim till they had themselves offered a sacrifice at the temple, which they were not permitted to do before the twelfth year of their age. It was at this age that Joseph and Mary took our blessed Lord to the temple, probably for the first time, to offer his sacrifice. See Calmet.

EXODUS 12:27 that you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the LORD's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians, and spared our houses.'" The people bowed their heads and worshipped.

Verse 27

It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover - We have already intimated that the paschal lamb was an illustrious type of Christ; and we shall find that every thing in this account is typical or representative. The bondage and affliction of the people of Israel may be considered as emblems of the hard slavery and wretchedness consequent on a state of sinfulness. Satan reigns over both body and soul, bringing the whole into subjection to the law of sin and death; while various evil tempers, passions, lusts, and irregular appetites, act as subordinate tormentors, making the lives of the vassals of sin bitter, because of the rigour by which they are obliged to serve. Reader, is this thy case? The mercy of God projects the redemption of man from this cruel bondage and oppression; and a sacrifice is appointed for the occasion by God himself, to be offered with particular and significant rites and ceremonies, all of which represent the passion and death of our blessed Lord, and the great end for which he became a sacrifice, viz., the redemption of a lost world from the power, the guilt, and the pollution of sin, etc. And it is worthy of remark,

1. That the anniversary or annual commemoration of the passover was strictly and religiously kept by the Jews on the day, and hour of the day, on which the original transaction took place, throughout all their succeeding generations.
2. That on one of these anniversaries, and, as many suppose, on the very day and hour on which the paschal lamb was originally offered, our blessed Lord expired on the cross for the salvation of the world.
3. That after the destruction of Jerusalem the paschal lamb ceased to be offered by the Jews throughout the world, though they continue to hold the anniversary of the passover, but without any sacrifice, notwithstanding their deep-rooted, inveterate antipathy against the author and grace of the Gospel.
4. That the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was instituted to keep this true paschal sacrifice in commemoration, and that this has been religiously observed by the whole Christian world (one very small class of Christians excepted) from the foundation of Christianity to the present day!
5. That the Jews were commanded to eat the paschal lamb; and our Lord, commemorating the passover, commanded his disciples, saying, Take, eat, This is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me. In the communion service of the Church of England, the spirit and design both of the type and antitype are most expressly condensed into one point of view, in the address to

the communicant: "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for Thee; and Feed upon Him, in thy heart, by Faith with Thanksgiving. Thus God continues the memorial of that grand transaction which he has said should be an ordinance for ever; evidently meaning thereby, that the paschal lamb should be the signicator till the passion and death of Christ; and that afterwards bread and wine taken sacramentally, in commemoration of his crucifixion, should be the continual representatives of that sacrifice till the end of the world. Thus the passover in itself, and in its reference, is an ordinance for ever; and thus the words of the Lord are literally fulfilled.

Reader, learn from this,

1. That if thou art not rescued from the thralldom of sin, thou must perish for ever.
2. That nothing less than the power and mercy of God can set thee free.
3. That God will save thee in no other way than by bringing thee out of thy sinful state, and from thy wicked practices and companions.
4. That in order to thy redemption it was absolutely necessary that the Son of God should take thy nature upon him, and die in thy stead.
5. That unless the blood of this sacrifice be sprinkled, in its atoning efficacy and merits, on thy heart and conscience, the guilt and power of thy sin cannot be taken away.
6. That as the blood of the paschal lamb must be sprinkled on every house, in order to the preservation of its inhabitants, so there must be a personal application of the blood of the cross to thy conscience, to take away thy sins.
7. As it was not enough that the passover was instituted, but the blood must be sprinkled on the lintels and door posts of every house to make the rite effectual to the salvation of each individual, so it is not enough that Christ should have taken human nature upon him, and died for the sin of the world; for no man who has the opportunity of hearing the Gospel is saved by that death, who does not, by faith, get a personal application of it to his own heart.
8. That those who wish for an application of the atoning blood, must receive this spiritual passover with a perfect readiness to depart from the land of their captivity, and travel to the rest that remains for the people of God; it being impossible, not only to a gross sinner, continuing such, to be finally saved, (however he may presume upon the mercy of God), but also to a worldly-minded man to get to the kingdom of God; for Christ died to save us from the present evil world, according to the will of God.
9. That in order to commemorate aright, in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the great atonement made for the sin of the world, all leaven of malice, bitterness, and insincerity, must be put away; as God will have no man to partake of this mystery who does not fully enter into its spirit and meaning. See 1Cor 5:7, 1Cor 5:8.

EXODUS 12:28 The children of Israel went and did so; as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

EXODUS 12:29 At midnight, 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.

Verse 29

Smote all the first born - If we take the term first-born in its literal sense only, we shall be led to conclude that in a vast number of the houses of the Egyptians there could have been no death, as it is not at all likely that every first-born child of every Egyptian family was still alive, and that all the first-born of their cattle still remained. And yet it is said, Exo 12:30, that there was not a house where there was not one dead. The word therefore must not be taken in its literal sense only. From its use in a great variety of places in the Scriptures it is evident that it means the chief, most excellent, best beloved, most distinguished, etc. In this sense our blessed Lord is called the First-Born of every creature, Col 1:15, and the First-Born among many brethren, Rom 8:29; that is, he is more excellent than all creatures, and greater than all the children of men. In the same sense we may understand Rev 1:5, where Christ is called the First-Begotten from the dead, i.e., the chief of all that have ever visited the empire of death, and on whom death has had any power; and the only one who by his own might quickened himself. In the same sense wisdom is represented as being brought forth before all the creatures, and being possessed by the Lord in the beginning of his ways, Pro 8:22-30; that is, the wisdom of God is peculiarly conspicuous in the production, arrangement, and government of every part of the creation. So Ephraim is called the Lord's First-Born, Jer 31:9. And the people of Israel are often called by the same name, see Exo 4:22 : Israel is my son, my First-Born; that is, the people in whom I particularly delight, and whom I will especially support and defend. And because the first-born are in general peculiarly dear to their parents, and because among the Jews they had especial and peculiar privileges, whatever was most dear, most valuable, and most prized, was thus denominated. So Mic 6:7 : Shall I give my First-Born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? Shall I give up the most beloved child I have, he that is most dear and most necessary to me, in order to make an atonement for my sins! In like manner the Prophet Zechariah, speaking of the conversion of the Jews to the Gospel of Christ, represents them as looking on him whom they have pierced, and being as one that is in bitterness for his First-Born; that is, they shall feel distress and anguish as those who had lost their most beloved child. So the Church triumphant in the kingdom of God are called, Heb 12:23, the general assembly and Church of the First-Born, i.e., the most noble and excellent of all human if not created beings. So Homer, Il. iv., ver. 102: Ἀρνῶν πρωτογονῶν ρεξιὴν κλειτὴν ἑκατομβῆν· "A hecatomb of lambs all firstlings of the flock." That is, the most excellent of their kind.

In a contrary sense, when the word first-born is joined to another that signifies any kind of misery or disgrace, it then signifies the depth of misery, the utmost disgrace. So the First-Born of the poor, Isa 14:30, signifies the most abject, destitute, and impoverished. The First-Born of death, Job 18:13, means the most horrible kind of death. So in the threatening against Pharaoh, Exo 11:5, where he informs him that he will slay all the first-born, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon the throne; to the first born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill, he takes in the very highest and lowest conditions of life. As there was no state in Egypt superior to the throne, so there was none inferior to that of the female slave that ground at the mill. The Prophet Habakkuk seems to fix this as the sense in which the word is used here; for speaking of the plagues of Egypt in general, and the salvation which God afforded his people, he says, Hab 3:13 : Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people - thou woundedst the Head (רֹאשׁ rosh, the chief, the most excellent) of the house of the wicked - of Pharaoh and the Egyptians. And the author of the book of The Wisdom of Solomon understood it in the same way: The master and the servant were punished after one manner; and like as the king, so suffered the common people - for in one moment the Noblest Offspring of them was destroyed, The Wisdom of Solomon 18:11, 12. And in no other sense can we understand the

word in Psa 89:27, where, among the promises of God to David, we find the following: Also I will make him my First-Born, higher than the kings of the earth; in which passage the latter clause explains the former; David, as king, should be the First-Born, of God, i.e., he should be higher than the kings of the earth - the Most Eminent potentate in the universe. In this sense, therefore, we should understand the passage in question; the most eminent person in every family in Egypt, as well as those who were literally the first-born, being slain in this plague. Calmet and some other critics particularly contend for this sense.

EXODUS 12:30 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 there was not one dead.

Verse 30

There was a great cry - No people in the universe were more remarkable for their mournings than the Egyptians, especially in matters of religion; they whipped, beat, tore themselves, and howled in all the excess of grief. When a relative died, the people left the house, ran into the streets, and howled in the most lamentable and frantic manner. See Diod. Sicul., lib. i., and Herod., lib. ii., c. 85, 86. And this latter author happening to be in Egypt on one of their solemnities, saw myriads of people whipping and beating themselves in this manner, lib. ii., c. 60; and see Mr. Bryant on the Plagues of Egypt, where many examples are given, p. 162, etc. How dreadful then must the scene of horror and distress appear when there was not one house or family in Egypt where there was not one dead; and according to their custom, all the family running out into the streets bewailing this calamity!

EXODUS 12:31 He called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise up, get out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as you have said!"

Verse 31

Called for Moses and Aaron - That is, he sent the message here mentioned to them; for it does not appear that he had any farther interview with Moses and Aaron, after what is mentioned Exo 10:28, Exo 10:29, and Exo 11:8. See Clarke's notes Exo 10:28, Exo 10:29 (note), and Exo 11:8 (note).

EXODUS 12:32 Take both your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also!"

EXODUS 12:33 The Egyptians were urgent with the people, to send them out of the land in haste, for they said, "We are all dead men."

Verse 33

The Egyptians were urgent upon the people - They felt much, they feared more; and therefore wished to get immediately rid of a people on whose account they found they were smitten with so many and such dreadful plagues.

EXODUS 12:34 The people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes on their shoulders.

Verse 34

The people took their dough before it was leavened, etc. - There was no time now to make any regular preparation for their departure, such was the universal hurry and confusion. The Israelites could carry but little of their household utensils with them; but some, such as they kneaded their bread and kept their meal in, they were obliged to carry with them. The kneading troughs of the Arabs are comparatively small wooden bowls, which, after kneading their bread in, serve them as dishes out of which they eat their victuals. And as to these being bound up in their clothes, no more may be intended than their wrapping them up in their long, loose garments, or in what is still used among the Arabs, and called hykes, which is a long kind of blanket, something resembling a highland plaid, in which they often carry their provision, wrap themselves by day, and sleep at night. Dr. Shaw has been particular in his description of this almost entire wardrobe of an Arab. He says they are of different sizes and of different qualities, but generally about six yards in length, and five or six feet broad. He supposes that what we call Ruth's veil, Rut 3:15, was a hyke, and that the same is to be understood of the clothes of the Israelites mentioned in this verse. See his Travels, p. 224, 4th edition.

EXODUS 12:35 The children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they asked of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and clothing.

Verse 35

They borrowed of the Egyptians - See Clarke's note on Exo 3:22, where the very exceptionable term borrow is largely explained.

EXODUS 12:36 The LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. They plundered the Egyptians.

EXODUS 12:37 The children of Israel travelled from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot who were men, besides children.

Verse 37

From Rameses to Succoth - Rameses appears to have been another name for Goshen, though it is probable that there might have been a chief city or village in that land, where the children of Israel rendezvoused previously to their departure, called Rameses. As the term Succoth signifies booths or

tents, it is probable that this place was so named from its being the place of the first encampment of the Israelites.

Six hundred thousand - That is, There was this number of effective men, twenty years old and upwards, who were able to go out to war. But this was not the whole number, and therefore the sacred writer says they were about 600,000; for when the numbers were taken about thirteen months after this they were found to be six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty, without reckoning those under twenty years of age, or any of the tribe of Levi; see Num 1:45, Num 1:46. But besides those on foot, or footmen, there were no doubt many old and comparatively infirm persons, who rode on camels, horses, or asses, besides the immense number of women and children, which must have been at least three to one of the others; and the mixed multitude, Exo 12:38, probably of refugees in Egypt, who came to sojourn there, because of the dearth which had obliged them to emigrate from their own countries; and who now, seeing that the hand of Jehovah was against the Egyptians and with the Israelites, availed themselves of the general consternation, and took their leave of Egypt, choosing Israel's God for their portion, and his people for their companions. Such a company moving at once, and emigrating from their own country, the world never before nor since witnessed; no doubt upwards of two millions of souls, besides their flocks and herds, even very much cattle; and what but the mere providence of God could support such a multitude, and in the wilderness, too, where to this day the necessaries of life are not to be found?

Suppose we take them at a rough calculation thus, two millions will be found too small a number.

Effective men, 20 years old and upward 600,000 Two-thirds of whom we may suppose were married, in which case their wives would amount to 400,000 These, on an average, might have 5 children under 20 years of age, an estimate which falls considerably short of the number of children each family must have averaged in order to produce from 75 persons, in A. M. 2298, upwards of 600,000 effective men in A. M. 2494, a period of only 196 years 2,000,000 The Levites, who probably were not included among the effective men 45,000 Their wives 33,000 Their children 165,000 The mixed multitude probably not less than 20,000

Total 3,263,000

Besides a multitude of old and infirm persons who would be obliged to ride on camels and asses, etc., and who must, from the proportion that such bear to the young and healthy, amount to many thousands more! Exclude even the Levites and their families, and upwards of three millions will be left. "In Num 3:39 the male Levites, aged one month and upwards, are reckoned 22,000, perhaps the females did not much exceed this number, say 23,000, and 500 children, under one month, will make 45,500." - Anon.

Had not Moses the fullest proof of his Divine mission, he never could have put himself at the head of such an immense concourse of people, who, without the most especial and effective providence, must all have perished for lack of food. This single circumstance, unconnected with all others, is an ample demonstration of the Divine mission of Moses, and of the authenticity and Divine inspiration of the Pentateuch. To suppose that an impostor, or one pretending only to a Divine call, could have ventured to place himself at the head of such an immense body of people, to lead them through a trackless wilderness, utterly unprovided for such a journey, to a land as yet in the possession of several powerful nations whom they must expel before they could possess the country, would have implied such an extreme of madness and folly as has never been witnessed in an individual, and such a blind credulity in the multitude as is unparalleled in the annals of mankind! The succeeding stupendous events proved that Moses had the authority of God to do what he did; and the people

had at least such a general conviction that he had this authority, that they implicitly followed his directions, and received their law from his mouth.

EXODUS 12:38 A mixed multitude went up also with them, with flocks, herds, and even very much livestock.

EXODUS 12:39 They baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought out of Egypt; for it wasn't leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt, and couldn't wait, neither had they prepared for themselves any food.

EXODUS 12:40 Now the time that the children of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred thirty years.

Verse 40

Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, etc. - The statement in this verse is allowed on all hands to be extremely difficult, and therefore the passage stands in especial need of illustration. "That the descendants of Israel did not dwell 430 years in Egypt," says Dr. Kennicott, "may be easily proved, and has often been demonstrated. Some therefore imagine that by Egypt here both it and Canaan are to be understood. But this greater latitude of place will not solve the difficulty, since the Israelites, including Israel their father, did not sojourn 430 years in both countries previous to their departure from Egypt. Others, sensible of the still remaining deficiency, would not only have Egypt in the text to signify it and Canaan, but by a figure more comprehensive would have the children of Israel to mean Israel's children, and Israel their father, and Isaac the father of Israel, and part of the life of Abraham, the father of Isaac. "Thus indeed," says Dr. Kennicott, "we arrive at the exact sum, and by this method of reckoning we might arrive at any thing but truth, which we may presume was never thus conveyed by an inspired writer." But can the difficulty be removed without having recourse to such absurd shifts? Certainly it can. The Samaritan Pentateuch, in all its manuscripts and printed copies, reads the place thus: -

Umshab beney Yishrael veabotham asher yashebu baarets Cnaan, ubaarets mitsraim sheloshim shanah vearba meoth shanah. "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, and of their fathers, which they sojourned in the land of Canaan and in the land of Egypt, was 430 years." This same sum is given by St. Paul, Gal 3:17, who reckons from the promise made to Abraham, when God commanded him to go to Canaan, to the giving of the law, which soon followed the departure from Egypt; and this chronology of the apostle is concordant with the Samaritan Pentateuch, which, by preserving the two passages, they and their fathers, and in the land of Canaan, which are lost out of the present copies of the Hebrew text, has rescued this passage from all obscurity and contradiction. It may be necessary to observe that the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint has the same reading as that in the Samaritan. The Samaritan Pentateuch is allowed by many learned men to exhibit the most correct copy of the five books of Moses; and the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint must also be allowed to be one of the most authentic as well as most ancient copies of this version which we possess. As to St. Paul, no man will dispute the authenticity of his statement; and thus in the mouth of these three most respectable witnesses the whole account is indubitably established. That these three witnesses have the truth, the chronology itself proves: for from Abraham's entry into Canaan to the birth of Isaac was 25 years, Gen 12:4; 17:1-21; Isaac was 60 years old at the birth of Jacob, Gen 25:26; and Jacob was 130 at his going down into Egypt, Gen 47:9; which three sums make 215

years. And then Jacob and his children having continued in Egypt 215 years more, the whole sum of 430 years is regularly completed. See Kennicott's Dissertation on the Hebrew Text.

EXODUS 12:41 At the end of four hundred thirty years, to the day, all of the LORD's armies went out from the land of Egypt.

EXODUS 12:42 It is a night to be much observed to the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt. This is that night of the LORD, to be much observed of all the children of Israel throughout their generations.

Verse 42

A night to be much observed - A night to be held in everlasting remembrance, because of the peculiar display of the power and goodness of God, the observance of which annually was to be considered a religious precept while the Jewish nation should continue.

EXODUS 12:43 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover. No foreigner shall eat of it,

Verse 43

This is the ordinance of the passover - From the last verse of this chapter it appears pretty evident that this, to the 50th verse inclusive, constituted a part of the directions given to Moses relative to the proper observance of the first passover, and should be read conjointly with the preceding account beginning at Exo 12:21. It may be supposed that these latter parts contain such particular directions as God gave to Moses after he had given those general ones mentioned in the preceding verses, but they seem all to belong to this first passover.

There shall no stranger eat thereof - בן נכר ben nechar, the son of a stranger or foreigner, i.e., one who was not of the genuine Hebrew stock, or one who had not received circumcision; for any circumcised person might eat the passover, as the total exclusion extends only to the uncircumcised, see Exo 12:48. As there are two sorts of strangers mentioned in the sacred writings; one who was admitted to all the Jewish ordinances, and another who, though he dwelt among the Jews, was not permitted to eat the passover or partake of any of their solemn feasts; it may be necessary to show what was the essential point of distinction through which the one was admitted and the other excluded.

In treatises on the religious customs of the Jews we frequently meet with the term proselyte, from the Greek προσηλυτος, a stranger or foreigner; one who is come from his own people and country to sojourn with another. All who were not descendants of some one of the twelve sons of Jacob, or of Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph, were reputed strangers or proselytes among the Jews. But of those strangers or proselytes there were two kinds, called among them proselytes of the gate, and proselytes of injustice or of the covenant. The former were such as wished to dwell among the Jews, but would not submit to be circumcised; they, however, acknowledged the true God, avoided all idolatry, and observed the seven precepts of Noah, but were not obliged to observe any of the Mosaic institutions. The latter submitted to be circumcised, obliged themselves to

observe all the rites and ceremonies of the law, and were in nothing different from the Jews but merely in their having once been heathens. The former, or proselytes of the gate, might not eat the passover or partake of any of the sacred festivals; but the latter, the proselytes of the covenant, had the same rights, spiritual and secular, as the Jews themselves. See Exo 12:48.

EXODUS 12:44 but every man's servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then shall he eat of it.

EXODUS 12:45 A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat of it.

Verse 45

A foreigner - תושב toshab, from ישב yashab, to sit down or dwell; one who is a mere sojourner, for the purpose of traffic, merchandise, etc., but who is neither a proselyte of the gate nor of the covenant.

And a hired servant - Who, though he be bought with money, or has indented himself for a certain term to serve a Jew, yet has not become either a proselyte of the gate or of the covenant. None of these shall eat of it, because not circumcised - not brought under the bond of the covenant; and not being under obligation to observe the Mosaic law, had no right to its privileges and blessings. Even under the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is the author of eternal salvation only to them who Obey him, Heb 5:9; and those who become Christians are chosen to salvation through Sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, 2Thes 2:13; for the grace of God, that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared, teaching us that, Denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts we should live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly, in this present world; Tit 2:11, Tit 2:12. Such persons only walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called.

EXODUS 12:46 In one house shall it be eaten; you shall not carry out anything of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall you break a bone of it.

Verse 46

In one house shall it be eaten - In one family, if that be large enough; if not, a neighboring family might be invited, Exo 12:4.

Thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh - Every family must abide within doors because of the destroying angel, none being permitted to go out of his house till the next day, Exo 12:22.

Neither shall ye break a bone thereof - As it was to be eaten in haste, (Exo 12:11), there was no time either to separate the bones, or to break them in order to extract the marrow; and lest they should be tempted to consume time in this way, therefore this ordinance was given. It is very likely that, when the whole lamb was brought to table, they cut off the flesh without even separating any of the large joints, leaving the skeleton, with whatever flesh they could not eat, to be consumed with fire, Exo 12:10. This precept was also given to point out a most remarkable circumstance which 1500 years after was to take place in the crucifixion of the Savior of mankind, who was the true Paschal Lamb, that Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world; who, though he was crucified as a

common malefactor, and it was a universal custom to break the legs of such on the cross, yet so did the providence of God order it that a bone of Him was not broken. See the fulfillment of this wondrously expressive type, Joh 19:33, Joh 19:36.

EXODUS 12:47 All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.

EXODUS 12:48 When a stranger shall live as a foreigner with you, and will 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 one who is born in the land: but no uncircumcised person shall eat of it.

Verse 48

And when a stranger - will keep the passover, etc. - Let all who sojourn among you, and who desire to partake of this sacred ordinance, not only be circumcised themselves, but all the males of their families likewise, that they may all have an equal right to the blessings of the covenant.

EXODUS 12:49 One law shall be to him who is born at home, and to the stranger who lives as a foreigner among you."

Verse 49

One law shall be to him that is home-born, etc. - As this is the first place that the term תורה torah or Law occurs, a term of the greatest importance in Divine revelation, and on the proper understanding of which much depends, I judge it best to give its genuine explanation once for all.

The word תורה torah comes from the root ירה yarah, which signifies to aim at, teach, point out, direct, lead, guide, make straight, or even; and from these significations of the word (and in all these senses it is used in the Bible) we may see at once the nature, properties, and design of the law of God. It is a system of Instruction in righteousness; it teaches the difference between moral good and evil; ascertains what is right and fit to be done, and what should be left undone, because improper to be performed. It continually aims at the glory of God, and the happiness of his creatures; teaches the true knowledge of the true God, and the destructive nature of sin; points out the absolute necessity of an atonement as the only means by which God can be reconciled to transgressors; and in its very significant rites and ceremonies points out the Son of God, till he should come to put away iniquity by the sacrifice of himself. It is a revelation of God's wisdom and goodness, wonderfully well calculated to direct the hearts of men into the truth, to guide their feet into the path of life, and to make straight, even, and plain that way which leads to God, and in which the soul must walk in order to arrive at eternal life. It is the fountain whence every correct notion relative to God - his perfections, providence, grace, justice, holiness, omniscience, and omnipotence, has been derived. And it has been the origin whence all the true principles of law and justice have been deduced. The pious study of it was the grand means of producing the greatest kings, the most enlightened statesmen, the most accomplished poets, and the most holy and useful men, that ever adorned the world. It is exceeded only by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is at once the accomplishment of its rites and predictions, and the fulfillment of its grand plan and outline. As a system of teaching or instruction, it is the most sovereign and most effectual; as by it is the knowledge of sin, and it alone

is the schoolmaster, παι δαγωγος, that leads men to Christ, that they may be justified through faith. Gal 3:24. Who can absolutely ascertain the exact quantum of obliquity in a crooked line, without the application of a straight one? And could sin, in all its twistings, windings, and varied involutions, have ever been truly ascertained, had not God given to man this perfect rule to judge by? The nations who acknowledge this revelation of God have, as far as they attained to its dictates, the wisest, purest, most equal, and most beneficial laws. The nations that do not receive it have laws at once extravagantly severe and extravagantly indulgent. The proper distinctions between moral good and evil, in such states, are not known: hence the penal sanctions are not founded on the principles of justice, weighing the exact proportion of moral turpitude; but on the most arbitrary caprices, which in many cases show the utmost indulgence to first-rate crimes, while they punish minor offenses with rigour and cruelty. What is the consequence? Just what might be reasonably expected: the will and caprice of a man being put in the place of the wisdom of God, the government is oppressive, and the people, frequently goaded to distraction, rise up in a mass and overturn it; so that the monarch, however powerful for a time, seldom lives out half his days. This was the case in Greece, in Rome, in the major part of the Asiatic governments, and is the case in all nations of the world to the present day, where the governor is despotic, and the laws not formed according to the revelation of God.

The word *lex*, law, among the Romans, has been derived from *lego*, I read; because when a law or statute was made, it was hung up in the most public places, that it might be seen, read, and known by all men, that those who were to obey the laws might not break them through ignorance, and thus incur the penalty. This was called *promulgatio legis*, *q. provulgatio*, the promulgation of the law, i.e., the laying it before the common people. Or from *ligo*, I bind, because the law binds men to the strict observance of its precepts. The Greeks call a law νομος *nomos*, from νεμω, to divide, distribute, minister to, or serve, because the law divides to all their just rights, appoints or distributes to each his proper duty, and thus serves or ministers to the welfare of the individual and the support of society. Hence where there are either no laws, or unequal and unjust ones, all is distraction, violence, rapine, oppression, anarchy, and ruin.

EXODUS 12:50 All the children of Israel did so. As the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

EXODUS 12:51 That same day, the LORD brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies.

Verse 51

By their armies - צבאותם *tsibotham*, from צבא *tsaba*, to assemble, meet together, in an orderly or regulated manner, and hence to war, to act together as troops in battle; whence צבאות *tsebaoth*, troops, armies, hosts. It is from this that the Divine Being calls himself יהוה צבאות *Yehovah tsebaoth*, the Lord Of Hosts or armies, because the Israelites were brought out of Egypt under his direction, marshalled and ordered by himself, guided by his wisdom, supported by his providence, and protected by his might. This is the true and simple reason why God is so frequently styled in Scripture the Lord of hosts; for the Lord did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their Armies.

On this chapter the notes have been so full and so explicit, that little can be added to set the subject before the reader in a clearer light. On the ordinance of the Passover, the reader is requested to consult the notes on Exo 12:7, Exo 12:14, and Exo 12:27. See Clarke's note on Exo 12:7. See Clarke's note on Exo 12:14. See Clarke's note on Exo 12:27. For the display of God's power and providence in supporting so great a multitude where, humanly speaking, there was no provision, and the proof that the exodus of the Israelites gives of the truth of the Mosaic history, he is referred to Exo 12:37. And for the meaning of the term Law, to Exo 12:49.

On the ten plagues it may be but just necessary, after what has been said in the notes, to make a few general reflections. When the nature of the Egyptian idolatry is considered, and the plagues which were sent upon them, we may see at once the peculiarity of the judgment, and the great propriety of its being inflicted in the way related by Moses. The plagues were either inflicted on the objects of their idolatry, or by their means.

1. That the river Nile was an object of their worship and one of their greatest gods, we have already seen. As the First plague, its waters were therefore turned into blood; and the fish, many of which were objects also of their adoration, died. Blood was particularly offensive to them, and the touch of any dead animal rendered them unclean. When then their great god, the river, was turned into blood, and its waters became putrid, so that all the fish, minor objects of their devotion, died, we see a judgment at once calculated to punish, correct, and reform them. Could they ever more trust in gods who could neither save themselves nor their deluded worshippers?

2. Mr. Bryant has endeavored to prove that frogs, the Second plague, were sacred animals in Egypt, and dedicated to Osiris: they certainly appear on many ancient Egyptian monuments, and in such circumstances and connections as to show that they were held in religious veneration. These therefore became an awful scourge; first, by their numbers, and their intrusion into every place; and, secondly, by their death, and the infection of the atmosphere which took place in consequence.

3. We have seen also that the Egyptians, especially the priests, affected great cleanliness, and would not wear woollen garments lest any kind of vermin should harbour about them. The Third plague, by means of lice or such like vermin, was wisely calculated both to humble and confound them. In this they immediately saw a power superior to any that could be exerted by their gods or their magicians; and the latter were obliged to confess, This is the finger of God!

4. That flies were held sacred among the Egyptians and among various other nations, admits of the strongest proof. It is very probable that Baal-zebub himself was worshipped under the form of a fly or great cantharid. These, therefore, or some kind of winged noxious insects, became the prime agents in the Fourth plague; and if the cynomyia or dog-fly be intended, we have already seen in the notes with what propriety and effect this judgment was inflicted.

5. The murrain or mortality among the cattle was the Fifth plague, and the most decisive mark of the power and indignation of Jehovah. That dogs, cats, monkeys, rams, heifers, and bulls, were all objects of their most religious veneration, all the world knows. These were smitten in a most singular manner by the hand of God; and the Egyptians saw themselves deprived at once of all their imaginary helpers. Even Apis, their ox-god, in whom they particularly trusted, now suffers, groans, and dies under the hand of Jehovah. Thus does he execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt. See Exo 12:12.

6. The Sixth plague, viz., of boils and blains, was as appropriate as any of the preceding; and the sprinkling of the ashes, the means by which it was produced, peculiarly significant. Pharmacy, Mr. Bryant has observed, was in high repute among the Egyptians; and Isis, their most celebrated

goddess, was considered as the preventer or healer of all diseases. "For this goddess," says Diodorus, Hist., lib. i., "used to reveal herself to people in their sleep when they labored under any disorder, and afford them relief. Many who placed their confidence in her influence, παραδοξως υγιανεσθαι, were miraculously restored. Many likewise who had been despaired of and given over by the physicians on account of the obstinacy of the distemper, were saved by this goddess. Numbers who had been deprived of their eyes, and of other parts of their bodies, were all restored on their application to Isis." By this disorder, therefore, which no application to their gods could cure, and which was upon the magicians also, who were supposed to possess most power and influence, God confounded their pride, showed the folly of their worship, and the vanity of their dependence. The means by which these boils and blains were inflicted, viz., the sprinkling of ashes from the furnace, was peculiarly appropriate. Plutarch assures us, De Iside et Osiride, that in several cities of Egypt they were accustomed to sacrifice human beings to Typhon, which they burned alive upon a high altar; and at the close of the sacrifice the priests gathered the ashes of these victims, and scattered them in the air: "I presume, says Mr. Bryant, "with this view, that where an atom of their dust was wafted, a blessing might be entailed. The like was done by Moses with the ashes of the furnace, that wherever any, the smallest portion, alighted, it might prove a plague and a curse to this cruel, ungrateful, and infatuated people. Thus there was a designed contrast in these workings of Providence, an apparent opposition to the superstition of the times."

7. The grievous hail, the Seventh plague, attended with rain, thunder, and lightning, in a country where these scarcely ever occur, and according to an express prediction of Moses, must in the most signal manner point out the power and justice of God. Fire and water were some of the principal objects of Egyptian idolatry; and fire, as Porphyry says, they considered *μεγαν ειναι θεον*, to be a great god. To find, therefore, that these very elements, the objects of their adoration, were, at the command of a servant of Jehovah, brought as a curse and scourge on the whole land, and upon men also and cattle, must have shaken their belief in these imaginary deities, while it proved to the Israelites that there was none like the God of Jeshurun.

8. In the Eighth plague we see by what insignificant creatures God can bring about a general destruction. A caterpillar is beyond all animals the most contemptible, and, taken singly, the least to be dreaded in the whole empire of nature; but in the hand of Divine justice it becomes one of the most formidable foes of the human race. From the examples in the notes we see how little human power, industry, or art, can avail against this most awful scourge. Not even the most contemptible animal should be considered with disrespect, as in the hand of God it may become the most terrible instrument for the punishment of a criminal individual or a guilty land.

9. The Ninth plague, the total and horrible darkness that lasted for three days, afforded both Israelites and Egyptians the most illustrious proof of the power and universal dominion of God; and was particularly to the latter a most awful yet instructive lesson against a species of idolatry which had been long prevalent in that and other countries, viz., the worship of the celestial luminaries. The sun and moon were both adored as supreme deities, as the sole dispensers of light and life; and the sun was invoked as the giver of immortality and eternal blessedness. Porphyry, De Abstin., l. 4, preserves the very form used by the Egyptian priests in addressing the sun on behalf of a deceased person, that he might be admitted into the society of the gods: *Ω δεσποτα Ηλιε, και Θεοι παντες, οί την ζωην τοις ανθρωποις δοντες, προσδεξασθε με, και παραδοτε τοις αιδιοις Θεοις συνοικον*, "O sovereign lord the sun, and all ye other deities who bestow life on mankind! Receive me, and grant that I may be admitted as a companion with the immortal gods!" These objects of their superstitious worship Jehovah showed by this plague to be his creatures, dispensing or withholding their light merely at his will and pleasure; and that the people might be convinced that all this came by his

appointment alone, he predicted this awful darkness; and that their astronomers might have the fullest proof that this was no natural occurrence, and could not be the effect of any kind of eclipse, which even when total could endure only about four minutes, (and this case could happen only once in a thousand years), he caused this palpable darkness to continue for three days!

10. The Tenth and last plague, the slaying of the first-born or chief person in each family, may be considered in the light of a Divine retribution: for after that their nation had been preserved by one of the Israelitish family, "they had," says Mr. Bryant, "contrary to all right, and in defiance of original stipulation, enslaved the people to whom they had been so much indebted; and not contented with this, they had proceeded to murder their offspring, and to render the people's bondage intolerable by a wanton exertion of power. It had been told them that the family of the Israelites were esteemed as God's first-born, Exo 4:22; therefore God said: Let my son go, that he may serve me; and if thou refuse - behold, I will slay thy son, even thy First-Born, Exo 4:23. But they heeded not this admonition, and hence those judgments came upon them that terminated in the death of the eldest in each family; a just retaliation for their disobedience and cruelty." See several curious and important remarks on this subject in a work entitled, *Observations upon the Plagues inflicted on the Egyptians*, by Jacob Bryant, 8vo., 1810.

On the whole we may say, Behold the goodness and severity of God! Severity mixed with goodness even to the same people. He punished and corrected them at the same time; for there was not one of these judgments that had not, from its peculiar nature and circumstances, some emendatory influence. Nor could a more effectual mode be adopted to demonstrate to that people the absurdity of their idolatry, and the inefficacy of their dependence, than that made use of on this occasion by the wise, just, and merciful God. At the same time the Israelites themselves must have received a lesson of the most impressive instruction on the vanity and wickedness of idolatry, to which they were at all times most deplorably prone, and of which they would no doubt have given many more examples, had they not had the Egyptian plagues continually before their eyes. It was probably these signal displays of God's power and justice, and these alone, that induced them to leave Egypt at his command by Moses and Aaron; otherwise, with the dreadful wilderness before them, totally unprovided for such a journey, in which humanly speaking it was impossible for them and their households to subsist, they would have rather preferred the ills they then suffered, than have run the risk of greater by an attempt to escape from their present bondage. This is proved by their murmurings, Exo 16:2, Exo 16:3, from which it is evident that they preferred Egypt with all its curses to their situation in the wilderness, and never could have been induced to leave it had they not had the fullest evidence that it was the will of God; which will they were obliged, on pain of utter destruction, to obey.