

# THE JOURNEY OF OUR LIFE! Part 1

## (Scripture - Exodus 13:17-22)

Introduction:

God wanted Israelites to remember three important facts about Passover.

1. The lamb that was sacrificed for the Lord's Passover. Because the blood of the Lamb that saved the Israelites.
2. They ought to remember Him through the unleavened bread, which signifies the holy living without sin, plus the urgency and our preparedness to depart from our current living status.
3. The first born of the Israelites to be remembered and redeemed.

This chapter deals with all these three important aspects of Passover, and also it teaches us a valuable lesson about faith, and the presence of the Lord in our lives. **But one caution:** Exodus chapter 13 is not a seamless passage. It brings out different topics out of sequence. Please don't think I am wandering all over the place. I will try to point out when that happens and try to smoothen those transitions.

**Exodus 13:1, 2**

**1**Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **2**"Sanctify to Me every firstborn, the first offspring of every womb among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me.

The first born male belongs to the Lord. They must be fully surrendered to the Lord, serving Him with gladness, with their talent, time, and treasure. They ought to be separated unto God. They ought to make a sacrificial living for the Lord. The animals also, the first born to be literally sacrificed for the Lord. This sacrifice is the remembrance of the firstborn that were slaughtered during the Lord's Passover in Egypt.

Verse 3 through 10 deals with Passover ritual again, and it is just a repetition of what was said before. So I'll skip that part and point out an interesting command in verse 9, and 10. I want you to understand not only the Word of God, but also the current Jewish practice and application of that Word right now in our time.

**Exodus 13:9, 10. 9**"And it shall serve as a sign to you on your hand, and as a reminder on your forehead, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth; for with a powerful hand the LORD brought you out of Egypt. **10**"Therefore, you shall keep this ordinance at its appointed time from year to year.

Jewish system of **tephillin**, or "phylacteries," grew mainly out of this passage, and was intended as a fulfillment of the commands contained in it. **The tephillin** were strips of parchment with passages of Scripture from Exodus 13, Deut. 6, and Deut. 11, written upon them and deposited in small boxes, which were fastened by a strap either to the left arm, or across the forehead.

Is that what the Lord really wanted them to do? Sometimes we do things literally when we are supposed to take the spiritual meaning behind it. **Let us see more of this thought in vs 16 also.**

Now Let us come back with the first born thought starting from vs 11.

**Exodus 13:11-13 11**

**11.** "Now when the LORD brings you to the land of the Canaanite, as He swore to you and to your fathers, and gives it to you,

**12**you shall devote to the LORD the first offspring of every womb, and the first offspring of every beast that you own; the males belong to the LORD.

**13**"But every first offspring of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, but if you do not redeem *it*, then you shall break its neck; and every firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem.

They were not told to sacrifice any unclean animals such as donkey, but instead the donkeys to be redeemed through a lamb sacrifice. But if they cannot afford a lamb, then they need to break their neck. It sounds so brutal, horrible, but God wanted them to understand the pain of sacrificing their animals to remember that horrible slaughter of first born in Egypt. Not only that, there is a valuable point to be remembered also: unredeemed soul must die! Later on this redemption was done through money for 5 shekels.

The bottom line is this: God wants to redeem our souls with the precious blood of Jesus. Isaiah 43:1 says that I have redeemed you, you are mine!

He wanted them to explain this act to their children and also memorialize it as follows:

**Exodus 13:14-16.**

**14**"And it shall be when your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What is this?' then you shall say to him, 'With a powerful hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery.

**15**'it came about, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the LORD killed every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore, I sacrifice to the LORD the males, the first offspring of every womb, but every firstborn of my sons I redeem.'

**16**"So it shall serve as a sign on your hand and as phylacteries on your forehead, for with a powerful hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt."

We must pass our faith to our children. I am a passionate believer of this. This is the main reason God made me plant this church. It is important that we plant faith in Christ among our children, and help them to grow together as one body rest of their lives! Unfortunately, our children got scattered because of parents' preference for denominationalism, because of doctrinal particularism that is unscriptural, and because of their language preferences, and cultural nuances! Because of parents' selfish interests, the children were kept away from each other. Talk to your friends to come and worship together, grow in faith of God together. It is not about what the parents want. It is all about our children being together in faith!

God not only want us to tell our children about Him, but also, He wants us to remember this first born slaughter in Egypt. He wants us to wear it in our arm and on their forehead.

Picture of phylactery



Exodus 13:17, 18.

**17** Now when Pharaoh had let the people go, God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, even though it was near; for God said, "The people might change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt."

**18** Hence God led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea; and the sons of Israel went up in martial array from the land of Egypt.



This verse tells us why God did not take them through Philistine area which is a short cut. God said, people may change their mind and go back to Egypt, if they saw war now. Also, God wanted them to travel via Sinai Mountain to have personal time with God. What a great treat to have retreat with God Himself! God knows the best option for your life. If you are asking for something, God may not grant that yet because you may not be ready. Do not be impatient. Follow God's path! His ways may be very mysterious, beyond any logic or reasoning, yet you must obey His plan at any cost!

The Israelites had a long way to go. First of all, they had to get rid of the slave mentality complex and must feel set free. Second, they needed to know who Their God was through worship and by hearkening to His voice. They had to be strengthened and made strong for wars. Also, they had to be disciplined through the Law of God!

Exodus 13:19, 20.

**19**Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, "God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones from here with you."

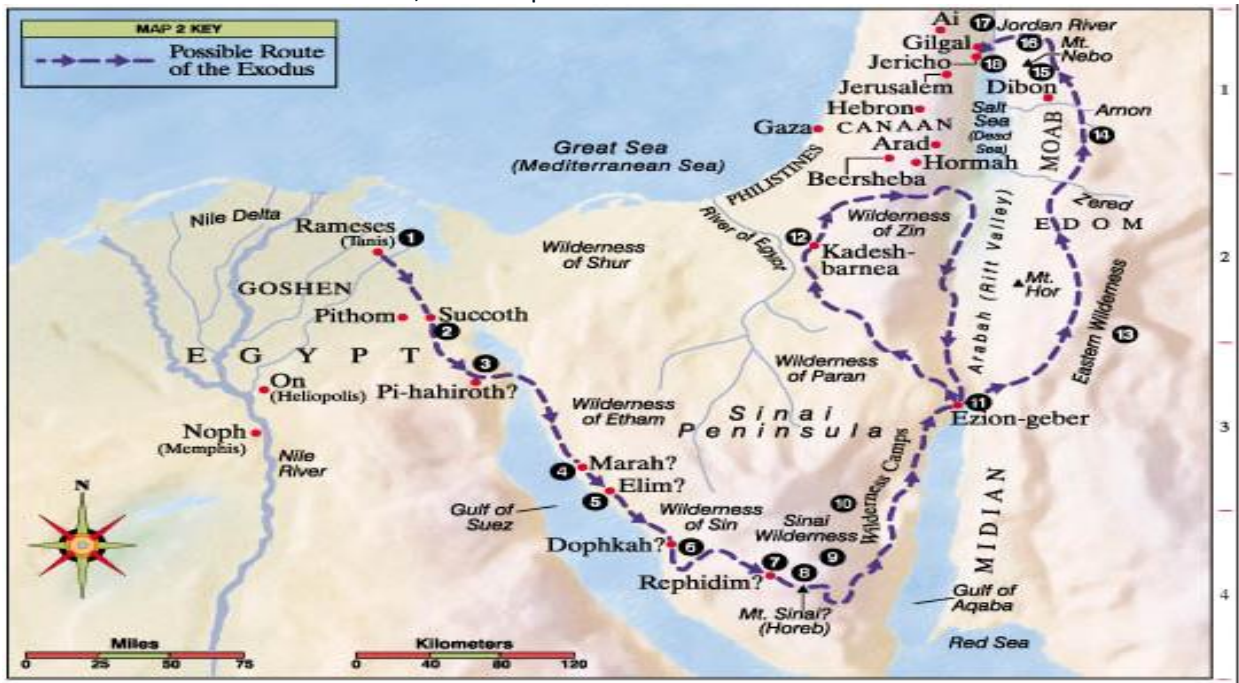
**20**Then they set out from Succoth and camped in Etham on the edge of the wilderness.

There is a great story of faith in this passage. Joseph firmly believed that the Lord will take His people back again to the Promised Land one day and He will give that land to them. By faith, Joseph told them to take his bones with them and bury them in the Promised Land. By faith, he saw that God will surely take care of them to fulfill Abraham's promise!

Hebrews 11:22. **22**By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones.

Let us cling to God's promise by faith just like Joseph. Receive Christ and cling to all the promises that comes through Him!

The Israelites moved from Succoth, and camped in Etham.



Instead of going north east, they were coming down south! God sometimes takes us exactly opposite to what we want. Do not resist. Go with Him. He knows the best. We need to be trained first before He can assign us higher responsibility. God knows the best.

Exodus 13: 21, 22.

**21**The LORD was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.

**22**He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.

The Lord led them by night and day!

It is the Lord who is our shepherd who will lead us in the right path, and the sheep are supposed to follow without any questions!

The Lord protected them! Our Lord never slumbers. He watches us 24/7. We have nothing to worry!

The Lord was with them night and day! His presence always went before them!

The Lord was their Light unto their path that they may not stumble in darkness! The Lord is our wisdom and understanding, and His Word is the guiding light for us!

The Lord provided all their needs once their supplies were exhausted! We will see this later. He is indeed Jehovah Jireh! God who provides in all circumstances. He marched them toward the wilderness to prove that He does provide anywhere, any time!

The Lord was their banner, and their warrior! Soon they would be trained to fight also. David says in Psalm. It was God who trained his hands to fight. God can train us if we look to Him. He is our warrior. He fights for us!

**Conclusion:** in summary, what can we take from this passage and apply it in our own personal life?

Let us remember to give the best and the most precious possession of our life to the Lord, which is equivalent to our first born child, first fruits of our wealth.

Let us remember the blood of our Lamb of God, our Passover lamb through Lord's Supper at least ONCE A WEEK!

Let us remember to purge the leaven of sin from our life, and LEAD AN UNLEAVENED LIFE.

Let us trust like Joseph, and know for sure that our Lord will care for us and fulfill His promise in our life.

Let us not be rebellious but instead trust and obey His voice.

Our Lord leads our way. Our Lord guards our back. Our Lord surrounds us with goodness and mercy. Let us just hold His hands and walk with Him.