

MOSES

A Man of Selfless Dedication

STUDY ELEVEN

The Night Nobody Slept

Exodus 11–12

God spoke, and His people did what He said. The point of the Passover in Exodus is obedience.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

HISTORY is essentially biography, the story of people. Dates, events, and places make up the frame of history's grand mural, but people occupy the focal point.

Think of your own history. The pictures in your family's photo albums record the places you lived and the houses you occupied, but the real history is portrayed in the faces of parents and children, uncles and aunts, cousins, grandchildren and their grandparents—individuals whose stories span generations.

Who are these people? What did they accomplish? What values did they etch into the family hearth around which future generations would gather? This is the stuff of history books.

If history is the story of people, then the storyteller is God. In His book it is written, "all the days that were ordained for me," attributing God as the divine author of every human life (Psalm 139:16 NASB).

Knowing that God is writing your history is a great reassurance. It's also a reminder that He rules all things, and the right response to His rule is submission and trust.

Pharaoh never learned this lesson. He thought history was his to command. But he was only a single line in God's great book. A small-print footnote, really. God's history encompasses a much larger story about a much greater plan involving us today. We're part of God's great story of redemption, and it's one we will discover in the message of Passover in this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study.



The Night Nobody Slept

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PREPARE YOUR HEART

Pray the psalmist's heartfelt prayer as you open the Scriptures and then express your own prayer of commitment.

*LORD, you are mine!
I promise to obey your words!* (Psalm 119:57)



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

We've come to the eve of freedom for God's people, the final hours before they packed up and left Egypt for good—after more than four hundred years in bondage.

Just as the Lord shielded His people from the ninth plague, darkness (Exodus 10:23), He would also spare them from the tenth plague, death. But to receive His mercy, they had to carefully obey His commands.



Observation: Prophecy, Meal, Fulfillment, Exodus

Israel's deliverance was heralded by a *prophecy*, the Passover *meal*, the *fulfillment* of the prophecy, and the *exodus*. Use your skills of observation to track these themes in the following passages.¹

The Prophecy: A Plague of Death—Exodus 11:1–10

Exodus 11 begins with a parenthetical section. It's a flashback to an earlier message God gave Moses to encourage His people before they left Egypt. What was that message in [11:1–3](#)?

The Night Nobody Slept

Exodus 11–12

The next section links to the end of Exodus 10, picking up the account in Pharaoh’s throne room with Pharaoh shouting to Moses, “Get out of here!” (Exodus 10:28). After nine tormenting plagues, Pharaoh had enough of Moses. With a whirl of his robe Moses angrily turned to leave, but not before delivering a final word from God in [Exodus 11:4–8](#). What did Moses say?

With a pound of his staff, Moses stormed out of Pharaoh’s presence. The king knew full well the horrors awaiting him and his nation, but he still refused to repent. The midnight hour of God’s judgment of Egypt was fast approaching, and God’s people needed to prepare.

The Passover Meal: A Memorial—Exodus 12:1–28

It was springtime, the month of Abib, which was later renamed Nisan—the month of Israel’s birth as a nation and the beginning of Israel’s religious calendar. That night, the Israelites would taste freedom for the first time in more than four hundred years. How were the Israelites to prepare for the special meal, according to [Exodus 12:1–5](#)?

On the 14th day of the month, the Hebrew families were to slaughter the lamb or goat “at twilight,” probably between 3 and 5 pm (Exodus 12:6). What must they do next, according to [12:7–11](#)?

Why smear the blood on the doorposts in [12:12–13](#)?

The Night Nobody Slept

Exodus 11–12

God instituted the Passover meal as an annual festival for His people. He also instituted the Festival of Unleavened Bread for the seven days after Passover. What did God teach about this festival in [Exodus 12:14–20](#)?

What final instructions did Moses give in [12:21–28](#)? How did he explain the meaning of the name, “Passover”? How did the people respond?

The Hebrews had never roasted a lamb in a certain way or smeared its blood on their doorways. The only reason for them to do it was God told them to. God’s plan required one thing: obedience. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

The Fulfillment: Death of the Firstborn Sons—Exodus 12:29–30

How did Moses, the author of Exodus, describe what happened that night in [Exodus 12:29–30](#)?

The Exodus: Freedom for the Hebrews—Exodus 12:31–42

Finally, Pharaoh surrendered to the God of Israel. What command did Pharaoh issue in [Exodus 12:31–33](#)? What concession from Moses did the defeated king request, and why? What did Israel’s Egyptian neighbors do?

The Night Nobody Slept

Exodus 11–12

The Hebrews numbered “about 600,000 men, plus all the women and children,” totaling possibly two million in all (Exodus 12:37). This great mass of humanity packed what they could carry, left everything else behind, and departed in a single day. How did they leave, according to [Exodus 12:34–42](#)?

God said to His people, “I’m making history! I’m going to use your lives in the Passover. You’re going to be free, free indeed!” —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: The Meaning of Passover

When the Lord passed through Egypt bringing death, He *passed over* the Hebrews’ homes that had the blood of the lamb smeared on the doorposts (Exodus 12:12–13). Why did the blood save the Hebrews from judgment? What did it signify? How could the Hebrews be certain their homes were secure? Bible commentator Thomas Constable explains:

The ground of [the Israelites’] security was propitiation (God’s satisfaction with the blood-sacrifice of the lamb). The blood satisfied God. Therefore the Israelites could rest.²

The slain lamb served as a substitute. Read [Leviticus 17:11](#); [1 Corinthians 5:7](#); and [1 Peter 1:18–20](#) to learn about substitutionary sacrifices and Christ’s role as our substitute. How does Passover prefigure the death of Christ and the security of our salvation?

On the night Jesus celebrated Passover with His disciples, Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper. What is the connection between the elements of Passover and the Lord’s Supper, according to [1 Corinthians 11:23–26](#)?

The Night Nobody Slept

Exodus 11–12

There was no power in the blood itself, only in what the blood prefigured—the blood of Christ our Savior. “All glory to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us” (Revelation 1:5)!



Correlation: The Joy of Freedom

On the night of Passover, all of Egypt wailed. In contrast, peace settled on the land of Goshen. It was “so peaceful that not even a dog will bark,” Moses said (Exodus 11:7). When the sun rose the next morning, the light of freedom beamed through the windows of the Israelites’ homes. How did the psalmist describe that experience in *Psalms 105:37–38, 42–43*?

You could hear the voices of two million people echoing through the desert as Moses walked in front and the people came behind him. Great clouds of dust built up as they shouted for joy when they walked out of Egypt.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Your Life of Freedom in Christ

Christ is the Passover lamb. He alone gives you peace and accomplishes spiritual deliverance. What freedom has Christ given you?

The Hebrews believed God’s promise. They put their faith in Him when they smeared the blood of the lamb on their doorposts. And then, while death surrounded them on all sides, they rested in peace. How is their faith an example for you?

The Night Nobody Slept

Exodus 11–12

What other lessons do you observe while reading about Passover? Perhaps you see lessons in obedience, lessons regarding the importance of family and community, lessons about ridding yourself of the “yeast” of sin, lessons about leaving the bondage of the past and following God’s call of freedom into the future. So many lessons. What do you find for yourself?

Today, Jews still celebrate Passover and the story of their freedom from bondage. It’s the center point of God’s biography of His people. The next time you celebrate the Lord’s Supper, remember the exodus. Use your time of Communion to celebrate your own Passover redemption through Christ, who offers the greatest freedom of all!



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, when I eat the bread and drink from the cup, I remember Christ’s sacrifice and His death on my behalf. He is my Passover Lamb. My substitute. My Savior. I give Him my life, my service, and my unending praise. In His name, amen.

ENDNOTES

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll’s *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, “[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)”
2. Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Exodus: Directions for the Passover 12:1–14,” 2024 ed., *Sonic Light*, soniclight.com/tcon/notes/html/exodus/exodus.htm.

For the 2024–2025 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll’s messages. Copyright © 1975, 2024 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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Study 11 • Page 7

