

▪ JANUARY 31, 2020

▪ *Parashat Bo* **Exodus 10:1–13:16**

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SUMMARY

G!d tells *Moshe* to come to *Par'oh* and to tell him, once again, to let the Israelites go worship in the wilderness. *Par'oh's* heart has been hardened and he refuses. G!d sends the last three plagues: locusts, darkness, and the death of first-born sons. The plagues begin to affect the Israelites differently from the Egyptians. For example, the plague of darkness only affects the Egyptians, not the Israelites.

Before the plague of locusts, *Par'oh* agrees to let the Israelite men go out to worship, but when *Moshe* demands that the women and children must also come with them, *Par'oh* refuses and only gives him permission to take the men.

After the plague of darkness, *Par'oh* agrees to let the men and children go out to worship in the wilderness, but *Moshe* insists that the Israelites will take their animals, too. *Par'oh* refuses and will not let them go.

Only after the last plague does *Par'oh* agree to send the men, the women, the children, and the animals out to worship G!d in the wilderness. The *Par'oh* asks *Moshe* and *Aharon* also to give him a blessing.

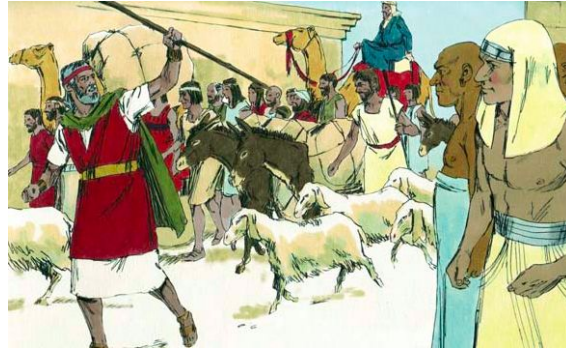
Before the final plague, G!d teaches the Israelites how to celebrate Passover--including the *mitzvot* of eating a Passover meal, eating matzah, remembering our exodus from Egypt, and parents explaining this holiday to their children.



1) Right before the plague of locusts, Par'oh agrees to let just the Israelite men leave for three days to worship in the wilderness. Why would Par'oh have agreed to let the Israelite men go to worship in the wilderness for 3 days, but insist that the women and children remain behind?

I wouldn't trust the men, women, and children to all go out together either. I would suspect that after three days away they would see that things are better when they are not enslaved and they would want to leave for good.

2) After the plague of darkness Par'oh agrees to let all the men, women, and children go out to worship in the wilderness for three days, but Moshe insists that the Israelites need to take their animals, too and Par'oh refuses. Why do you think Moshe insisted on the animals and why would Par'oh not let him take them?



Par'oh probably thinks that if they take the animals, then they'll have plenty of food for a long trip in the wilderness, but if they *don't* take the animals, the Israelites will have to go back to Egypt.

Moshe trusts that G'd will provide them with food. After all G'd is the one that is taking the Israelites out and if G'd isn't responsible about giving them food--that's not going to go well. Moshe is probably thinking that he wants to take the animals so that the Israelites can sacrifice some of them to G'd when they go out to worship in the wilderness.

3) After all of the plagues, when Par'oh finally does agree to send all of the Israelites and their animals, he asks for Moshe & Aharon's blessing. Why do you think Par'oh would want their blessing after all that?

As part of the final plague--the death of first born Egyptian children, Par'oh's first born son just died. This plague affected him more personally, so maybe he finally believes that G'd is powerful. Maybe he even hopes that a blessing could bring his son back to life and reverse that last plague for all of the Egyptians.