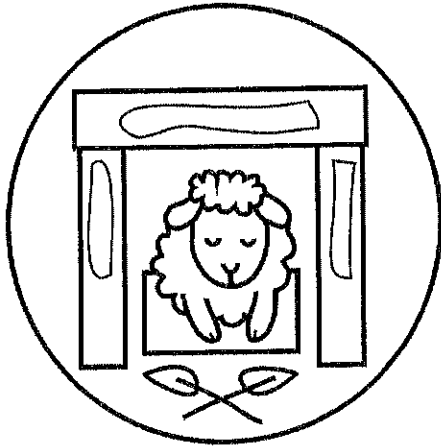


December 8: Moses and the Passover



The Israelites were slaves to Pharaoh. Because they were growing in number, Pharaoh was afraid that they would no longer obey him so he ordered all the male babies killed. To save baby Moses his mother hid him in a basket on the river. The daughter of Pharaoh found him and raised him like her own child. When Moses grew up, God told him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt to the Promised Land; however, Pharaoh didn't want to let them go. God ended up sending 10 plagues to convince Pharaoh. The 10th plague was the worst, the death of all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. During this last plague God told the Israelites to

mark the doors of their houses with the blood of a lamb to be a sign for the plague to pass over their houses. When Pharaoh's son was killed, he finally let the Israelites go. During the Passover celebration each year Jews remember how God rescued them from slavery in Egypt, how quickly they left, and how there wasn't even enough time to let the bread dough rise before baking it. That is why only unleavened bread is eaten for the Feast of the Unleavened Bread.



"Moses rescued from the Nile"
Nicolas Poussin, 1638



Exodus 2:5-10. ⁵ Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe at the river. Her maidens walked along by the riverside. She saw the basket among the reeds, and sent her servant to get it. ⁶ She opened it, and saw the child, and behold, the baby cried. She had compassion on him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children.

⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Should I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew

women, that she may nurse the child for you?" ⁸ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." The young woman went and called the child's mother.

⁹ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away, and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." The woman took the child, and nursed it. ¹⁰ The child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, and said, "Because I drew him out of the water."

Exodus 12:3, 5-8, 11-15. 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... ⁵ Your lamb shall be without defect, a male a year old... ⁶ 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. 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. ⁸ They shall eat the meat in that night, roasted with fire, and unleavened bread. They shall eat it with bitter herbs....

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 Yahweh's Passover. 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. I will execute judgments against all the gods of Egypt. I am Yahweh.

¹³ The blood shall be to you for a token on the houses where you are. When I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. ¹⁴ This day shall be a memorial for you. You shall keep it as a feast to Yahweh. You shall keep it as a feast throughout your generations by an ordinance forever. 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."