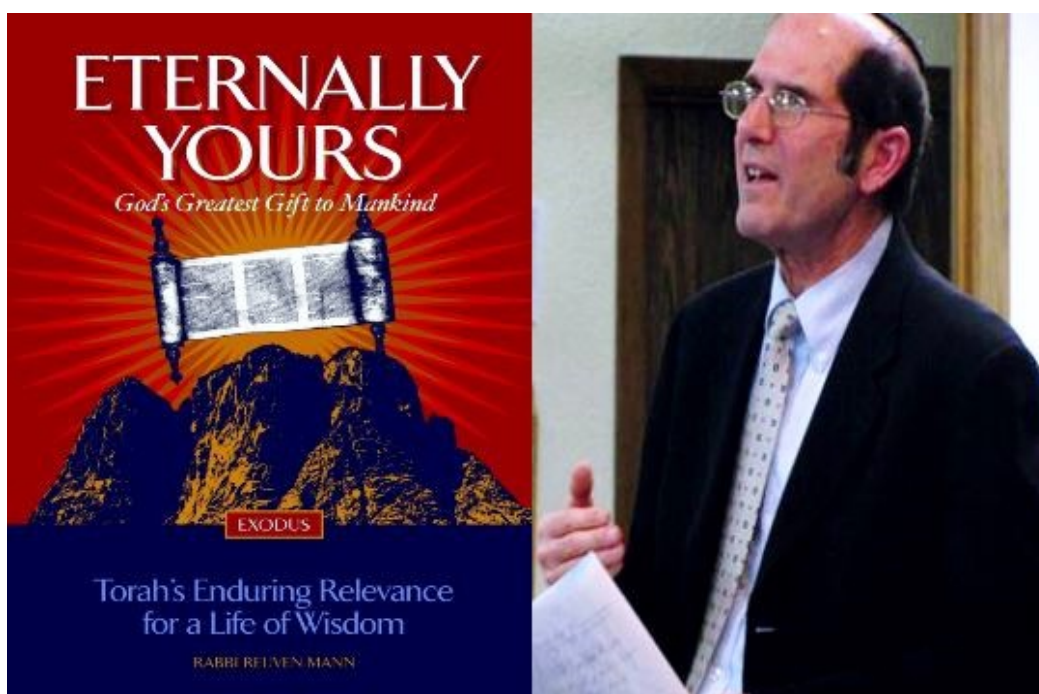


A Passover Seder Supplement to ETERNALLY YOURS

God's Greatest Gift to Mankind



From the author, Rabbi Reuven Mann:

“My new book, [Eternally Yours: God’s Greatest Gift To Mankind](#) on Exodus takes up many issues related to the enslavement of the Jews and their redemption from Egypt. The basic mitzvah of the night of Passover is to recount the story of the Exodus and the many issues that are related to it.

The book has a great deal of useful information and interpretations which can stimulate discussion and enhance the quality of the interactions of the Seder participants. I have raised ten challenging questions and indicated the pages in the book which deal with these matters. It is my hope that readers of the book will benefit from an enlivened Seder experience as a result.”

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Questions for the Seder

1. The Enslavement began when a new king arose over Egypt, “who did not know Joseph”. A great Talmudic sage says it was really the *old* Pharaoh who *acted* as though he didn’t know Joseph. At first glance this interpretation seems far-fetched as that Pharaoh elevated Joseph to the highest position of power and eagerly invited his entire family to settle in his country. Why would he suddenly turn against Joseph’s descendants? What is the reasoning behind this Rabbi’s explanation and what lessons does it contain for us? See Page 19
2. The Jews are famously described as a “Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation”. However God separated the descendants of Aharon from the tribe of Levi to be *Kohanim* (Priests). Only they can perform the Temple Service and if a non-Kohen seeks to do that he is liable to the death penalty. If that is the case, in what sense can the entire Jewish People be described as a nation of priests? What teaching does this designation contain for our mission as Jews? See page 23
3. The Haggadah is based on the Talmudic teaching that, in recounting the story of the Exodus, one must “begin with degradation and conclude with praise”. This means that we must emphasize the extreme severity of the oppression we were subjected to in Egypt. It is only through cognizance of the terrible cruelty of the Enslavement that we can appreciate and give praise for the great miracle of the Exodus. We must therefore inquire, why did God subject us slavery in the first place? Why was this experience so essential to our formation as a nation? There is no *simple* answer as this is a multi-faceted issue. And this can generate intense discussion. For my take on the matter see page 25.
4. The Sages maintain that the Jews adopted the idolatrous practices of the Egyptians during their sojourn in that country. According to the great Biblical commentator, Rashi, Moses asked God, what merit did the Jews possess to warrant His intervention to save them? If, indeed, the Jews weren’t worthy of God’s intervention why *did* He perform great miracles to save them? See page 29

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5. As a result of Moses' initial meeting with Pharaoh at which he conveyed God's demand that the Jews be given a "vacation" from their labors to go and worship Him", the King worsened the situation of the Jews. He withheld straw from them but demanded that they produce the same quota of bricks. This caused the Jews to turn against Moses who complained to God. God responded, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh. For through a mighty hand he shall send them away and through a mighty hand he will expel them from his land!" It seems that it was necessary for things to get worse before they could get better. However, if the time for the redemption had arrived why did the situation have to deteriorate *before* God took action? See page 35

6. At Moses' first meeting with the Egyptian King he sought to use persuasion to convince him to allow the Jews to observe a Festival unto the Lord. When this effort proved unsuccessful God sent him back to Pharaoh with a miracle which would establish the veracity of his word. However Pharaoh's magicians were seemingly able to copy the *wonder* of converting the staff into a snake. A miracle by definition is a supernatural phenomenon which cannot be duplicated. Why didn't God provide Moses with a miracle that Pharaoh's magicians could not replicate in *any* manner. See page 41

7. Prior to the departure from Egypt Moses instructed the Jews to request gifts of clothing and jewelry from their Egyptian acquaintances. The Jews were certainly entitled to compensation for the many years of backbreaking slave labor they had provided. However the method of obtaining this wealth seems strange. Why didn't Moses demand that Pharaoh make the payment from Egypt's national treasury? Why was it necessary for each Jewish Man and woman to confront their Egyptian friend and make this unusual request? See page 47

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8. After the plague of *Darkness* Moses confronted Pharaoh and a disagreement arose when he insisted that the Jews would have to bring *all their livestock* with them to the “Festival unto the Lord”. That was because they could not know how many sacrifices would be necessary until God communicated that to them. Suddenly and seemingly out of nowhere Pharaoh got angry at Moses, ordered him to leave and threatened to kill him if he should come back. This was a very strange development for until that time Pharaoh had been very respectful of Moses and even confessed, at one point, that *he* was wicked and God was righteous. What triggered this seemingly inexplicable fury of Pharaoh, his expulsion of Moses and threat of death should he seek to return? See page 53

9. The purpose of the plagues was to convince Pharaoh of The Existence and Might of God so that he would let the Jews go and worship Him. They also had the objective of educating *all* of Egypt to know the *true* God and renounce idolatry. However, God told Moses that He would harden Pharaoh’s heart and thus prevent him from acceding to His demands. Wouldn’t the hardening Of Pharaoh’s heart defeat the entire purpose of the Plagues? See page 56

10. After the Jews were released from slavery the Egyptians had a change of heart and sent a mighty expeditionary force to recapture the former slaves. God interfered with the mighty miracle of splitting the Sea. This enabled the Jews to pass through on dry land while the Egyptian army was destroyed when the waters came crashing down on them. The Jews were profoundly affected by this great demonstration of Divine Might and “believed in God and His servant Moses”. They the traveled for three days and did not find drinkable water and they “complained against Moses saying, what shall we drink?” How could the Jews behave so disrespectfully so soon after they experienced such a miraculous salvation and sang the most glorious song of praise to the Almighty? What important lesson can we learn from this? See page 61