



"The person who reads too much and uses his brain too little will fall into lazy habits of thinking."

—Albert Einstein

18-Apr-08

The Great Escape

Imagine you are the logistics officer in charge of moving and supplying 2.5 million troops housed over a 450 square mile area. Your job is to gather them at a preset, central staging area, line them up by division and march them off. Of course, you also have the numerous assorted baggage that goes with this many people—equipment, food, and other supplies.

Additionally, you must do this without mechanical or electronic help. No cars, trucks, trains, planes, telephones, radios, fax machines, etc. And you have ample time to do this, let's say . . . five hours!

What's that? You say it cannot be done? I would agree with you. But that is just what some would have us believe took place in Egypt 3,500 years ago!

The Jews partake of their Seder, the [Passover](#) meal, on Nisan 15, the night we observe as the [Night to Be Much Observed](#). Though the controversy has died down somewhat, some in the church still believe that [God](#) instituted Passover to take place on Nisan 15 and that [Christ](#) moved it back a day.

In past discussions with friends of this "new understanding," as it has been called, some said, "What difference does it make when the Israelites kept the Passover as long as we keep it on the right day?" Well, it made a big difference to the Israelites! If they had kept it on the wrong day, they would have died! And for us, if we accept error without proving it, one way or the other, then we set ourselves up to accept other errors.

We will take a common sense look at this simple question: Can 2.5 million people move out of an area, on foot, in five hours?

Goshen, where the Israelites lived in Egypt, is approximately 30 miles wide by 15 miles long. Within it is the city of Rameses, built by Israelite labor as one of Egypt's treasure cities. The children of Israel left Rameses and headed for Succoth about 25 miles to the southeast. Without any of our modern conveniences, 2.5 million people—including children, the elderly, the disabled, not to mention baggage, the riches of Egypt, and their herds of livestock—had to assemble in Rameses and march out in order ([Exodus 12: 51](#)).

But under the "new understanding," the events of the Passover and beginning of the Exodus are compressed into half the time as that of the church of God's traditional teaching. At a [Worldwide Church of God](#) Bible study back in 1990, when this "new understanding" was discussed, I asked the associate pastor how this massive undertaking was accomplished in half the time it was previously thought to take. His answer: "Their loins were girded"! End of discussion.

For the sake of argument, we will make a few concessions to help this "theory" work:

- A day must begin at full dark instead of sundown.
- The Israelites have to spoil the Egyptians completely before the last plague.
- They have to assemble in Rameses for the Passover rather than their homes.
- They have to slay, clean, prepare, roast, eat, and burn the Passover lamb in record time.

- They have to leave Egypt in the middle of the night.

Even with these concessions—though each can be disproved in its own right—could the children of Israel have physically left Rameses in five hours?

The earliest the Israelites could have received permission to leave their homes after the Death Angel passed through at midnight would be 1 am. This gives Pharaoh time to send a messenger to [Moses](#), and Moses time to inform the elders, who then in turn tell the people. In the spring the day and night are about equal, so sunrise would be about 6 am. Since the Bible clearly says that they left at night, their window to leave Rameses was the five hours between 1 and 6 am.

As a former general in the Egyptian army, Moses knew all about logistics, the moving, feeding, and supplying of an army. But even Moses was not this good!

Some believe that the Israelites left Egypt directly from their homes, but [Exodus 12:37](#) plainly shows them leaving from Rameses. So, on the road outside Rameses, we have 2.5 million people lined up to leave for Succoth. To keep their movement manageable, we will assume a column a mile wide, which means it stretches for at least ten miles to the rear. It is highly probable that it was actually much narrower and thus correspondingly longer.

How fast could the children of Israel move? A trained army can march at between 2 and 2.5 miles an hour. But Israel was not a trained army, and further, they had children, the elderly, animals, and baggage—and it was dark! They would be fortunate to average one mile an hour.

To put this in better perspective, during the Boer War of 1900 in South Africa, 21,000 English soldiers set out to relieve the siege of the town of Ladysmith. Their supply train, consisting of thousands of wagons pulled by 15,000 oxen, stretched for 15 miles and required two days to pass a spot, even when moving sharply. This is well less than one mile an hour.

Given that the Egyptians were urging them to go, and that their adrenaline was pumping, we will suppose that the Israelites averaged one mile per hour.

From the time the first person stepped out toward Succoth until the time the last person in the column crossed the starting point, more than ten hours would have passed. Under this scenario, the last Israelites would have left Rameses well after sunrise—actually around lunch time.

According to the biblical details, this "new understanding" just will not work, even though "their loins were girded"! The truth is simple and clear, but this deception is not. It depends on so many twists and perversions of Scripture to fit everything in, and even then it still collapses.

History tends to repeat itself. [Satan](#) has attacked and subverted God's people before over the subject of the Passover and other [holy days](#). Do not let him fool you!

- Mike Ford

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[What Is the Passover Anyway?](#)

by Staff

To someone not familiar with the Bible's instructions regarding the keeping of Passover, this festival can seem strange and confusing. This article explains the basic points of the Passover, showing from Scripture what God commands and why.

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