

Exodus 13:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the LORD'S.

Analysis

The command to 'set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix' uses the same verb (avar, עָבַר) as 'pass over'—dedicating firstborn to God. The phrase 'every firstling that cometh of a beast' extends to livestock. The declaration 'the males shall be the LORD's' specifies gender—males represented strength and primary value in agrarian culture. Giving firstborn/firstlings acknowledges God's ownership of all.

Historical Context

This law created ongoing tribute to God for exodus deliverance. Firstborn animals were sacrificed; firstborn sons were redeemed with payment (Numbers 18:15-16).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does dedicating 'all that openeth the womb' teach that God deserves the first and best, not leftovers?

2. What does God's claim on the firstborn teach about His rightful ownership of everything you have?

Interlinear Text

וְהַעֲבַרְתָּ	כָּל	פֶּֿטֶר	רֶחֶם	לַיהוָה:		
That thou shalt set apart	H3605	all that openeth	the matrix	shall be the LORD'S		
H5674		H6363	H7358	H3068		
וְכָל	פֶּֿטֶר	שֶֿׁגֶר	בְּהֵמָה	אֲשֶׁר	יְהִי־הִ	לָךְ
H3605	all that openeth	that cometh	of a beast	H834	H1961	H0
	H6363	H7698	H929			
הַזָּכָר יִם	לַיהוָה:					
which thou hast the males	shall be the LORD'S					
H2145	H3068					

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 18:15 (References Lord): Every thing that openeth the matrix in all flesh, which they bring unto the LORD, whether it be of men or beasts, shall be thine: nevertheless the firstborn of man shalt thou surely redeem, and the firstling of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem.

Exodus 34:19 (Parallel theme): All that openeth the matrix is mine; and every firstling among thy cattle, whether ox or sheep, that is male.

Leviticus 27:26 (References Lord): Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be the LORD'S firstling, no man shall sanctify it; whether it be ox, or sheep: it is the LORD'S.

Exodus 13:2 (Parallel theme): Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.

Ezekiel 44:30 (Parallel theme): And the first of all the firstfruits of all things, and every oblation of all, of every sort of your oblations, shall be the priest's: ye shall

also give unto the priest the first of your dough, that he may cause the blessing to rest in thine house.

Exodus 22:29 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.

Deuteronomy 15:19 (References Lord): All the firstling males that come of thy herd and of thy flock thou shalt sanctify unto the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep.

Numbers 8:17 (Parallel theme): For all the firstborn of the children of Israel are mine, both man and beast: on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for myself.

Numbers 3:12 (Parallel theme): And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine;