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Q1: God seems to imply that the plagues on Egypt are partially justified by the retelling of the story across generations. Do you think suffering in one generation or era can be redeemed by recalling it correctly in succeeding generations? What do we need to say about the Exodus in order to make the whole painful experience in Egypt worthwhile?

Q2: Is God trying to educate Pharaoh? About what, and why? Why can't the Jews leave without his permission?

Q3: Why do Moses and Aaron agree to relent every time Pharaoh asks them to stop a plague, instead of applying more pressure?

Q4: What are the pivotal points in the narrative of the ten plagues? What devices does God employ as author of this narrative?

Q5: What do you think of the way God chooses to reveal his power? Consider for example: Why did God strike the firstborn at midnight? Why not in the middle of the day?

Q6: The tenth plague struck all of Egypt, from the house of Pharaoh to servants. Why was it not enough to strike the ruling class? Does the description of passing-over the houses of the Jews imply that the Jewish slaves and Egyptians lived in the same neighborhood?

Q7: Why did the Israelites make matzoh as they were leaving Egypt? Why did they eat matzoh? Why do we?

Q8: Why and how do animals play a role in the Exodus?

Q9: Compare the prohibition on leaven (12.15) and the exclusion of outsiders and the uncircumcised from the passover (12.49). What is achieved through the severances entailed by these two prohibitions?

Q10: What's the significance of matzoh instead of leavened bread, and fire-roasted meat instead of stewed meat?

Q11: The realization of Israel as a nation emerges as an explicit theme in this section. What is the significance of this change and how is it marked?

Q12: Why did the Jews put blood on their doorposts? Compare God's explanation to Moses with Moses' explanation to the Israelites.

Q13: What is the significance of the phrase "it is a Passover"? Why does it work as an explanation--is its meaning self-evident? (see 12:11; 27)

Q14: Why did Israel request to borrow expensive things from their Egyptian neighbors? How did they find favor in the eyes of the Egyptian people? How can this detail be assimilated into a realistic psychological framework?