

Parsha Plug Parshat Bo

| Shemot 12:1-14 | שמות יב:א-יד |
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| <p>1 The Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, 2 This month shall be to you the head of the months; to you it shall be the first of the months of the year. 3 Speak to the entire community of Israel, saying, "On the tenth of this month, let each one take a lamb for each parental home, a lamb for each household. 4 But if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor who is nearest to his house shall take [one] according to the number of people, each one according to one's ability to eat, shall you be counted for the lamb. 5 You shall have a perfect male lamb in its [first] year; you may take it either from the sheep or from the goats. 6 And you shall keep it for inspection until the fourteenth day of this month, and the entire congregation of the community of Israel shall slaughter it in the afternoon. 7 And they shall take [some] of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel, on the houses in which they will eat it. 8 And on this night, they shall eat the flesh, roasted over the fire, and unleavened cakes; with bitter herbs they shall eat it. 9 You shall not eat it rare or boiled in water, except roasted over the fire its head with its legs and with its innards. 10 And you shall not leave over any of it until morning, and whatever is left over of it until morning, you shall burn in fire. 11 And this is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste it is a Passover sacrifice to the Lord. 12 I will pass through the land of Egypt on this night, and I will smite every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and upon all the gods of Egypt will I wreak judgments I, the Lord. 13 And the blood will be for you for a sign upon the houses where you will be, and I will see the blood and skip over you, and there will be no plague to destroy [you] when I smite the [people of the] land of Egypt. 14 And this day shall be for you as a memorial, and you shall celebrate it as a festival for the Lord; throughout your generations, you shall celebrate it as an everlasting statute.¹</p> | <p>א ויאמר ה' אל-מֹשֶׁה וְאַל-אַהֲרֹן בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֵאמֹר. ב הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם רֹאשׁ חֳדָשִׁים: רֹאשׁוֹן הוּא לָכֶם לְחֹדְשֵׁי הַשָּׁנָה. ג דַּבְּרוּ, אֶל-כָּל-עַדֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר, בַּעֲשֹׂר, לְחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה: וְיִקְחוּ לָהֶם, אִישׁ שֶׂה לְבֵית-אָבֹת--שֶׂה לְבֵיתוֹ. ד וְאִם-יִמְעַט הַבֵּית, מִהָיֹת מִשֶּׂה--וְלָקַח הוּא וְשִׁכְנוֹ הַקָּרֵב אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ, בְּמִכְסַת נַפְשׁוֹ: אִישׁ לְפִי אָכְלוֹ, תִּכְסְּפוּ עַל-הַשֶּׂה. ה שֶׂה תְּמִים זָכָר בֶּן-שָׁנָה, יִהְיֶה לָכֶם; מִן-הַכְּבָשִׂים וּמִן-הָעִזִּים, תִּקְחוּ. ווְהָיָה לָכֶם לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת, עַד אַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם לְחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה; וְשַׁחֲטוּ אֹתוֹ, כָּל קֹהֵל עַדֹת-יִשְׂרָאֵל--בֵּין הָעֶרְבָיִם: ז וְלָקְחוּ, מִן-הַדָּם, וְנָתְנוּ עַל-שְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזוֹת, וְעַל-הַמַּשְׁקוּף--עַל, הַבָּתִּים, אֲשֶׁר-יֹאכְלוּ אֹתוֹ, בָּהֶם. ח וְאָכְלוּ אֶת-הַבָּשָׂר, בְּלִילָה הַזֶּה: צֹלִי-אֵשׁ וּמִצּוֹת, עַל-מַרְרִים יֹאכְלֵהוּ. ט אֶל-תֹּאכְלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ נָא, וּבָשֵׁל מִבָּשֵׁל בְּמַיִם: כִּי אִם-צֹלִי-אֵשׁ, רֹאשׁוֹ עַל-כַּרְעֵיו וְעַל-קַרְבּוֹ. י וְלֹא-תֹתִירוּ מִמֶּנּוּ, עַד-בֹּקֶר; וְהִנְתֵּר מִמֶּנּוּ עַד-בֹּקֶר, בְּאֵשׁ תִּשְׂרֹפוּ. יא וְכִכָּה, תֹּאכְלוּ אֹתוֹ--מִתְּנִיכֶם חֲגָרִים, נְעִלֵיכֶם בְּרַגְלֵיכֶם וּמְקַלְכֶם בְּיַדְכֶם; וְאָכַלְתֶּם אֹתוֹ בַּחֲפָזוֹן, פֶּסַח הוּא לֵה'. יב וְעִבְרַתִּי בְּאֶרֶץ-מִצְרַיִם, בְּלִילָה הַזֶּה, וְהִפִּיתִי כָל-בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, מֵאָדָם וְעַד-בְּהֵמָה; וּבְכָל-אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם אֲעֲשֶׂה שְׁפָטִים, אֲנִי ה'! יג וְהָיָה הַדָּם לָכֶם לְאֹת, עַל הַבָּתִּים אֲשֶׁר אֲתֶם שָׂם, וְרָאִיתִי אֶת-הַדָּם, וּפָסַחְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם; וְלֹא-יְהִי בְכֶם נֶגֶף לְמִשְׁחִית, בְּהִפְתִּי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם. יד וְהָיָה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לָכֶם לְזִכְרוֹן, וְחַגְתֶּם אֹתוֹ חַג לֵה': לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם, חֻקַּת עוֹלָם תִּחְגַּגְהוּ.</p> |

| Netivot Shalom Parshat Bo 85-88 | נתיבות שלום פרשת בא פהיפה |
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| <p>God said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt saying, 'This month shall be to you the head of the months; to you</p> | <p>ויאמר ה' אל משה ואל אהרן בארץ מצרים לאמר החדש הזה לכם ראש חדשים ראשון</p> |

¹ Translation from Chabad.org

it shall be the first of the months of the year'. Rashi writes at the very beginning of Bereshit that this is the most logical place for the whole Torah to begin, from 'This month shall be to you'. For this is the mitzvah of kiddush hachodesh, sanctifying the new moon, which is a fitting way to start the Torah.....The reason why this is the first mitzvah commanded to Israel is because it illustrates that in the darkness when there does not appear to be a glimmer of light, even then does Israel believe with a complete faith in the love of God for His people Israel. Israel believes that all of God's dealings are for the good from His great love for them...This act of counting by the moon --which illuminates in both the day and night-- makes this mitzvah appropriately the first mitzvah...

A different possible reason why Israel counts by the moon is because the moon does not always illuminate like the sun. At certain times it is dark and divided. This is called the end of the month when the light is hidden and it is completely dark. Specifically at this time does the beginning of the month start, in the moment when the moon is totally dark. This is the way of Israel. This is the special strength of Israel, the chosen people that God chose in all of their dire straits, even when they were in absolute darkness. When they were in Egypt in the house of slavery, God chose them and called them 'My son, my firstborn Israel', and for this reason God said 'I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to Me'...

Another possible lesson from this mitzvah of 'This month shall be for you' is that Jews are commanded to always recreate, just like creating a new world...This is why Israel counts by the moon, for it is the master of renewal and recreation. For the sun is a very big and strong light, but it does not have any renewal in it. For thousands of years it has always illuminated the same quality. But the moon is always renewing and innovating...

הוא לכם לחדשי השנה. הנה כתב רש"י בריש בראשית שלא היה צריך להתחיל את התורה אלא מהחודש הזה לכם, הרי שמצוה זו של קדוש החודש בה היה ראוי להתחיל את התורה...וזהו מצוה ראשונה שנצטוו בה ישראל, שמבחינה מסויימת הרי זו המצוה הגדולה ביותר, שאפילו במחשכים כאשר לא נראה שום ניצוץ של אור גם אז מאמינים ישראל באמונה שלמה באהבת השי"ת לעמו ישראל, שכל הנהגתו עמהם היא רק לטובה מגודל אהבתו ית' אליהם...והמדרגה הגדולה הזאת שישאל מונין ללבנה שמאירה בין ביום ובין בלילה ראויה להיות מצוה ראשונה...

ומשמעות יתירה בענין ישראל מונין ללבנה, שהלבנה אינה מאירה תמיד כחמה, עתים חשוכה היא בחלקה, ולקראת סוף החדש נעלם אורה ונחשכת לגמרי, ודוקא אז הוא ראש חדש בעת שהלבנה בתכלית החשכות. עד"ו הוא ענינם של ישראל, הכח המיוחד של ישראל עם הנבחר הוא שהקב"ה בחר בהם בכל המצבים שהם נמצאים ואף במצבים הגרועים ביותר כשהם בחשכות מוחלטת. ובהיותם במצרים בבית עבדים אז בחר בהם הקב"ה וקרא להם בני בכורי ישראל, שע"ז נאמר ואשא אתכם על כנפי נשרים ואביא אתכם אלי...

עוד מרומז במצות החדש הזה לכם, שיהודי מצווה להתחדש תמיד ככריה חדשה...וזהו ענין ישראל מונין ללבנה, שהיא מורה על חידוש והתחדשות, כי החמה אורה גדול וחזק מאד אבל אין בה שום חידושים, שבכל שית אלפי שנים היא מאירה תמיד באותה מדה, אבל הלבנה יש בה תמיד חידושים...

Rambam Mishneh Torah Kiddush HaChodesh 17:8

[The difficulties that come up when it is hard to see the moon were avoided due to the following] tradition which existed among our Sages, [having been] transmitted from one to another in a chain extending back to Moses our teacher: When the moon was not seen at the beginning of the months, month after month, the court establishes [the following sequence]: one full month with thirty days, one lacking month with twenty-nine days. In this manner, they would calculate and establish one full month and one lacking month

רמב"ם קידוש החודש יח:

אלא הקבלה שביד החכמים איש מפי איש מפי משה רבינו כך היא, שבזמן שלא יראה הירח בתחלת החדשים חדש אחר חדש, בית דין קובעין חדש מעובר משלשים יום וחדש חסר מתשעה ועשרים יום, וכן מחשבין וקובעין חדש מעובר וחדש

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| <p>- establishing these months, but not sanctifying them. For the sanctification of the months is dependent solely on the sighting [of the moon]. At times they would have a full month follow another full month, or a lacking month follow another lacking month, depending on the results of their calculations.²</p> | <p>חסר בקביעה לא בקידוש, שאין מקדשין אלא על הראייה, ופעמים עושין מלא אחר מלא או חסר אחר חסר כמו שיראה להם מן החשבון.</p> |
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Aish Kodesh Parshat Bo January 24th, 1942

God said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt. ‘This month shall be the head month to you. It shall be the first month of the year. Speak to the entire community of Israel, saying . . .’ (Exodus 12:1). Rashi on this verse, quoting the Mechilta, explains: “The unnecessary reference to the land of Egypt in the first verse is there to emphasize that this revelation occurred outside the city. Moses and Aaron left the presence of Pharaoh and the city to distance themselves from loathed idols and other offensive objects...

Perhaps [another] explanation is as follows: There is a well-known teaching in the Zohar (vol. I, 103a) about the verse (Prov. 31:14) “Her husband is well known in the gates. . . .” The Zohar explains this verse with a play on the Hebrew word b’she’arim, “in the gates”: “she’ar, normally translated as ‘gate,’ can also mean ‘estimation,’ ‘calculation,’ and ‘valuation.’ The ‘husband’ in the verse is the Holy Blessed One, Husband of the human soul, Who is known by each person inasmuch as that person in his heart esteems and values Him...The extent to which a person journeys spiritually, preparing himself and making ready to receive God’s revelation, is a measure of his faith, love, and fear of God. Any grasp of the Torah he may have acquired, whether of the revealed or the hidden Torah, is his personal revelation of God, because God is found within the Torah. A person learning a page in the Talmud (Baba Metzia 2a) concerning two people who have simultaneously found a lost object and are both tightly holding the same tallit, saying, “It’s all mine.” “No! It’s all mine.” has grasped something of God’s light, found only on that page in the Talmud. Although he may think he is studying simple case law concerning mundane people and everyday things—two people, the tallit, and the dispute over ownership, etc.—he is actually experiencing a revelation of God. So every Jew learning the Torah must strive to reach for the hidden, the secret, within it. Whether he is learning the text on a simple scholarly level or studying the arcane meaning, he must always try to reach for the mystery, which is the light of God in that Torah...

“God said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt.” Even though Moses and Aaron were outside the city, God still spoke to them in Egypt. The emphasis on Egypt is because Egypt was where the Jews, Moses’ students, were. The Torah he was being given and the Commandment to purchase and prepare a kid on the tenth of the first month in preparation for the Egyptian Passover Festival was solely for the benefit of the Jewish people at that time and in that place. This was a once-only Festival. Subsequent Passover celebrations were quite different. Moses was favored with this revelation only because of his students, the Jews who were still in Egypt—because, as we said, it is the students who bring about the revelation in their teacher, each according to his own level.³

² Translation from Rabbi Eliyahu Touger

³ Translation based on Hershey J. Worch. “Sacred Fire.” Rowman & Littlefield, 2002