

# APOSTOLIC SCRIPTURE REFLECTION:

for **Bo**

by Mark Huey    posted 23 January, 2010    www.outreachisrael.net

John 1:29; Luke 2:22-24  
John 19:31-37  
Acts 13:16-17  
Revelation 8:6-9:12; 16:1-21

## "The Passover Lamb"

The Ancient Israelites' deliverance from Egyptian slavery is one of the most dramatic and pivotal events continually remembered in human history. It is not only significant because of the physical impact of initiating the return of Israel to the Promised Land, but also the spiritual significance of depicting deliverance from the bondage of sin by God's power. The *parashah* we are considering this week, *Bo* or "Go," describes in great detail not only the final judgments of God on Pharaoh and Egypt, but also the formula for escaping the ravages of plagues and the lethal angel of death. The symbolism of what occurs in the conflict, as blameless lambs have to be killed in order to preserve Israel, serves as a marker for later salvation history when Yeshua the Messiah arrives to be the consummate Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29). But in order for any Believer today to fully understand and appreciate the severity of the sacrificial blood of the Lamb, it is important to understand the foreshadowing events that preceded it in the Exodus.

The way I look at what we are reading about in *Bo*, is that the Holy One, in His illustrative way, proceeds to lay the groundwork for humanity that will ultimately lead to people understanding that they need a Divine Savior to pay for the penalty of their sins. I am reminded of how without the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit to guide us, we mortals are usually blind to spiritual realities. Even with the Spirit sometimes, many still only see through a glass darkly (1Corinthians 13:12). But, we should all praise God for how there is an unveiling that comes through the enlightenment of the Spirit, and we are able to see His message to us more clearly:

"But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Messiah. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, *there* is liberty. **But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit**" (2 Corinthians 3:14-18).

In retrospect, the principle of the firstborn being consecrated or set aside as an offering to the Lord takes on fuller dimensions when it is understood within the larger scope of revelation seen in the Holy Scriptures. In the deliverance passages of *Bo*, an entire generation of Egyptian firstborn people and animals are "sacrificed," as it were, in the final judgment upon Israel's oppressors. Then as the account proceeds, the Lord requires the Israelites to not only sanctify or set-apart every firstborn, but also remember their day of deliverance annually throughout their future generations:

"Sanctify to Me every firstborn, the first offspring of every womb among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me." Moses said to the people, 'Remember this day in which you went out from Egypt, from the house of slavery; for by a powerful hand the LORD brought you out from this place. And nothing leavened shall be eaten. On this day in the month of Abib, you are about to go forth'" (Exodus 13:2-4).

Almost a millennia-and-a-half later, when Yeshua is born and consecrated at the Temple in Jerusalem, the Gospel of Luke cites this passage. It is used to affirm how Yeshua, as the firstborn, fulfilled this command to be separated out as the Lamb of God, able to be sacrificed for our atonement. (Note how "firstborn" is frequently used in the Scriptures to not always denote one who is the first born in sequential lineage, but instead to denote one of superior rank.):

“And when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, ‘EVERY *firstborn* MALE THAT OPENS THE WOMB SHALL BE CALLED HOLY TO THE LORD’) [Exodus 13:2, 12, 15]” (Luke 2:22-23).

Some other details seen in *Bo* regard the requirement for the Passover lamb to be blameless, in order for its blood to be applied to the doorframes of the Israelite homes. This way, when the death angel passed over the homes of all in Egypt, the Israelite families would be spared (Exodus 12:6-7; 12). Because of the great significance of the original Passover, the need for future generations of Israel to remember the event is quite obvious. But interestingly, the Torah also anticipates how more people will be included within the assembly of Israel, and how they too should remember the Passover. Specifically, the instruction that we see is that the same Torah applies to both the native Israelite and stranger within the community of Israel:

“It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it. All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this. But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it. **The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you.**’ Then all the sons of Israel did so; they did just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron. And on that same day the LORD brought the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts” (Exodus 12:46-51).

The basic premise that we see in Exodus 12:49 is that those within the ranks of God’s people are to be held accountable to the same set of basic instruction. This is especially true today in the post-resurrection era where all those in Messiah Yeshua are equal, regardless of race, social status, or gender (Galatians 3:27-28)—a direct consequence of His sacrifice—to which the original instruction in Exodus is anticipatory.

John’s Gospel makes a direct quotation to Exodus 12:46, in connecting the sacrifice of the original Passover lambs to the crucifixion of Yeshua the Messiah. He couples it also with an allusion to Zechariah 12:10, and how we must look to the pierced Savior to find deliverance from sin:

“Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. So the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first man and of the other who was crucified with Him; but coming to Yeshua, **when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.** And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe. For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, ‘**NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN**’ [Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12; Psalm 34:20]. And again another Scripture says, ‘**THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED**’ [Zechariah 12:10]” (John 19:31-37).

In the original scene, it is notable that a Roman soldier is the one who pierced Yeshua—an indication of how all of sinful humanity is responsible for the Messiah’s execution (cf. Revelation 1:7). At the same time, when the larger context of Zechariah 12 is considered, the Prophet Zechariah is probably not only speaking of Yeshua’s crucifixion, but also time in the future to the time of Jacob’s Trouble when Jerusalem will become a cup of reeling and a heavy stone for the world. At the consummation of the age, when Yeshua returns and the battle of Armageddon occurs, those in Jerusalem will look upon the Messiah and weep bitterly:

“I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, **and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn**” (Zechariah 12:10).

The reference to the Messiah as “firstborn” cannot be overlooked. Obviously, with the illumination of the Holy Spirit, Believers know who is being spoken of, especially in terms of the

Messiah's fulfillment of the Exodus instructions of firstborn in Luke 2:22-23. Yeshua the Messiah has paid for the sin of humanity, being pierced through for the transgressions of the world. We can immediately think about some of the Messianic expectations as foreseen in Isaiah's prophecy of the Suffering Servant:

"But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke *was due?*" (Isaiah 53:5-8).

Hopefully, the images of what was done centuries ago in the deliverance of Israel from the clutches of Egypt can be appreciated even more—because of how the Lamb of God has been slain for our sins. Yeshua had to empty Himself of His exalted glory in Heaven, and become a servant in human form, sacrificed for us but now supremely exalted as Lord (Philippians 2:5-11; cf. Isaiah 45:23). Understanding how serious Yeshua's sacrifice is for us, we each have to consider our own actions and attitudes as His followers. If the Spirit of God is inside of us, residing in our hearts, it should be manifest in some appropriate actions that cause us to remember and honor His activities of salvation.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Should I be celebrating and remembering the Passover, especially in light of Yeshua's salvation?
- Would I find it instructional and helpful to speak about the Passover with my family members and other fellow Believers?
- Do I have the Messiah's attitude regarding service to others?
- Do I elevate myself above others, thinking myself to be superior because of my social status or ethnicity? Or do I desire all to be of the people of God?
- When I think about the One who was pierced for my transgressions, do I confess that He truly is the Lord supreme? Am I prepared to submit myself to the will of the Messiah?

There is much more we could consider from Bo, connecting it to themes of the Messiah's ministry, but what I have summarized above I think is most important. *Brothers and sisters—go and to them!*

Until the restoration of all things...

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