

## Torah Portion: Bo (Exodus 10:1-13:16)

[The focus of this Torah portion series is family structure and function as revealed in Scripture. I.e., headship, patriarchy, marriage, etc, graduating to understanding community and Israel as a whole. If you have not read other portions up to this point, you may want to as parts build on previous lessons in Torah, available at: <https://natsab.com/torah-portion-series/> ]

Bo!! - meaning ‘Go!’ is a portion loaded with topics related to headship, patriarchy, family structure and the role of the father. We are going to dive into topics and issues such as firstborn, circumcision, and sojourners, as well as to whom most commandments are written. So, buckle up and let’s dig in.

Up to this point in the Torah we have seen some importance placed on firstborns, but we have not had a strong indication of how very seriously God takes this role and position. Certainly, we have seen the wrestling between Jacob and Esau as well as the Reuben-Judah-Joseph unfolding of Israel’s family, and have sensed something important about this position, but it is not until this portion that the firstborn position really comes to be highlighted.

**Exodus 11** Now the LORD said to Moses, “One more plague I will bring on Pharaoh and on Egypt; after that he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out from here completely. **2** Speak now in the hearing of the people that each man ask from his neighbor and each woman from her neighbor for articles of silver and articles of gold.” **3** The LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Furthermore, the man Moses *himself* was greatly esteemed in the land of Egypt, *both* in the sight of Pharaoh’s servants and in the sight of the people.

**4** Moses said, “Thus says the LORD, ‘About midnight I am going out into the midst of Egypt, **5** and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of the Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones; all the firstborn of the cattle as well. **6** Moreover, there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been *before* and such as shall never be again. **7** But against

any of the sons of Israel a dog will not even bark, whether against man or beast, that you may understand how the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.' **8** All these your servants will come down to me and bow themselves before me, saying, 'Go out, you and all the people who follow you,' and after that I will go out." And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.

The role of the firstborn, besides being the strength of a man's seed, is also a priestly role. The fullness of this role is carried out by the Firstborn of all creation, Yeshua, but on a smaller scale, it is a significant intercessory position in each family as we will see later in this portion.

A quick search for primogeniture, meaning firstborn, led me to a terrific explanation at this website: <http://helpmewithbiblestudy.org/10ChristianLiving/FamilyFirstbornLawOfPrimogeniture.aspx#sthash.PqFGxPEM.dpbs> Consider their well articulated overview:

What is the significance of understanding the biblical term "firstborn" to our culture today? Is it a chauvinistic cultural practice with no relevance to today? The Bible has made distinctions between firstborn and younger brothers, Jews and Gentiles, and men and women. How does understanding the concept of "firstborn" help us understand our roles in serving God?

Because God placed a significance on the "firstborn," Ancient Near East culture has believed that the first born human or animal had the purest and strongest blood, and thus were considered the best representatives of their race. The lifespan of Adam and the subsequently shorter lifespan of his descendants provide an example for the basis of this belief.

Within Ancient Near East culture, the term "firstborn" anoints the oldest son with the assignment of special privileges and responsibilities. He was second to his father and had authority over his younger siblings. Upon the death of his father, he was entitled to the Birthright, which was a double portion of the estate among his brothers and leadership of the family. As new head and spiritual leader of the home, the firstborn cared for his mother until her death, and provided for his unmarried sisters until their marriage. The Birthright, however, can be lost or sold as exemplified by the passing of the Abrahamic Covenant to Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph (Gen 21:5-10, 25:29-34, 48:3-5).

Inheritance rights became a difficult issue in the case of multiple wives, and God prescribed a law to protect the rights of the firstborn (Deut 21:15-17). This law, revealing God's view of firstborns (aside from the Abrahamic Covenant), may explain God's love for Hagar (Gen 21:10-21).

While the younger brothers of a family may not be the "firstborn," they became the head and spiritual leader of their respective families when they married and left the home. And they would have the privilege to pass on their Birthright to a son. Thus all males, "firstborn" or not, would ultimately be the priest and leader of his family. This responsibility is why God decreed that all males are circumcised as part of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 17:9-14). It is also the reason why all males must appear before the Lord 3 times a year as part of the Mosaic Covenant to commemorate the Passover meal and the first 7 days of the Exodus (Feast of the Unleavened Bread), Israel's wandering in the wilderness (Feast of the Tabernacles [Ingathering]), and the first harvest in the Promised Land (Feast of First Fruits) (Ex 23:14-17).

With the Mosaic Covenant, God selected the firstborn Hebrew as a testimony and remembrance of His Divinity and Power.

As a remembrance of His deliverance from Egypt, by the destruction of Egypt's firstborn and the preservation of Israel's firstborn, God placed a special claim on the firstborn of each Hebrew family's male, animals and plants; the giving of the firstborn was symbolic of giving back what was His (Ex 13:11-15, Deut 14:22-23, Num 8:14-19). Because all firstborn were in God's possession, it was necessary for a family to buy back or redeem the firstborn infant from God for 5 shekels, which was given to the priests when the infant was 1 month old (Num 18:15-17).

Yet while God claimed the firstborn Hebrew male of each family as His own, they were not dedicated to Him. Instead He took the men of the tribe of Levi as their representative and dedicated them to the service of the Tabernacle and to assist the priests Aaron and his sons (Num 3:5-9, 40-51; 8:14-19).

Often the term "firstborn" is used figuratively and expresses God's dear affection for an

individual, king, or group of people who enjoy a special relationship with Him and receive the benefits of an heir.

In this sense, while David was the youngest of eight sons (1 Sam 16:7-12), God considered King David as a firstborn, because he was the king of His chosen firstborn nation (Ps 89:27). And, in affirmation, the unconditional Davidic Covenant was made.

Similarly, the nation of Israel was chosen as God's firstborn among nations (Ex 4:22). The nation of Israel was to be a nation of priests and represent God's means of bringing earth His blessings and message of salvation (Ex 19:6).

This was born out in the New Testament when the Mosaic Covenant was still in force. Jesus selected twelve Jewish men as disciples and prepared them for spiritual leadership; the number referred to the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt 19:27-28). While Jesus ministered to many Gentiles, He considered the Hebrews as a priority and preference (Matt 2:1-6, 10:5-6, 15:21-28, Mark 7:24-30, and Rom 1:16).

Jesus came to fulfill the messianic prophecy that only Jews would recognize (Matt 5:17-20, Matt 26:52-56, Luke 4:14-21, Luke 24:44-48, John 5:39-47). Only Jews and His disciples would understand and recognize the Savior Jesus Christ (Matt 16:13-17, John 11:23-27). Only Jews would understand the significance of the Passover lamb and the timing of the crucifixion during the Passover meal.

The Jews were chosen, not to be honored, but to be God's servants. God chose Abraham and his descendants to bless him with an unconditional covenant (Gen 12:1-3, Deut 14:2, Amos 3:2). God had a priority on the man Abraham and his descendants.

The Jews received the Law first, had the prophets, had the knowledge of the one true God, and were the guardians of the Old Testament (Rom 3:1-2; 9:4). God had a priority on Hebrew men who were entrusted to know and teach the Law.

God intended Jesus to come as a Jew and lead the nation of Jews as the means and mission to save the world; salvation would come from the Jews (Rom 9:4-5, Matt 10:1-7, John 4:19-22, Rom 11:13-21). Despite the Jews' rejection of Jesus Christ, God's priority on the nation of Israel was for the benefit of the world.

And this priority did not end when Jesus came. Jews will receive either final judgment or blessing before the Gentiles (Rom 2:4-11, Luke 12:41-48). But while God has a priority, the believing Jew is no more righteous than the believing Gentile, and none are saved except through faith in Jesus (Rom 3:9-10, 10:17-20).

Jesus Christ was literally the firstborn of God and the Virgin Mary (Matt 1:18-25, Luke 1:26-35; 2:7, John 3:16). However His birth did not mark His origin in time but only His appearance as a man.

As part of the triune God, Jesus Christ is eternal and pre-existed before and participated in Creation (John 1:3). He has neither a beginning nor an end; He exists outside any human concept of time.

Yet His birth as a human being, an incarnate form of God, qualified Him for receiving the Birthright as the Firstborn.

While ontologically equal with God the Father, Jesus Christ functioned as the Firstborn among all Christians. And while God predestined Christians to be with Him and conformed to the image of His Son, He intended all Christians to have an intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ as younger siblings would have with an older brother. (Rom 8:29).

Jesus Christ is the firstborn from among the dead, the first human being to be resurrected from the dead and reside in heaven. Preeminent, sovereign over everything including death, Jesus Christ the Firstborn is exalted, and glorified in Heaven by angels and resurrected saints (Col 1:13-18, Heb 1:6, Rev 1:5).

As a consequence of Jesus Christ's redeeming work, Gentiles are considered adopted sons and sharing in the spiritual inheritance as heirs to God's promise (Gal 4:3-7, Heb 12:23-24, Rom 8:16-17, Gal 3:24-29). In this context, adoption entitles one the privilege of receiving an inheritance.

Roman customs, which influenced the first century church, mandated that the one adopting had to be male and the one being adopted had to be independent and capable of agreeing to the adoption. According to Roman law, the adopted person was considered as being born again into the new family. Paul is the only New Testament writer to use the term "adoption" in this context (Rom 8:15, 23; and 9:4).

Is there any evidence that Jesus explicitly understood His role as the Firstborn? During the crucifixion, Jesus passes on His responsibility for the care of His mother to His disciple John, not to his brother!

Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her into his own household. (John 19:27)

It is important to recognize God's emphasis on the role of the firstborn and males. The mistaken notion that this is culturally determined ignores the Bible and introduces a huge misunderstanding of God's intended role for men and women. Worse it de-emphasizes and perhaps intentionally confuses the priestly responsibility that men have for their families and church.

[Long quote and I might quibble with the author on several finer points of understanding the relationship between Jew and non-Jew as well as our ongoing responsibility to the Torah, the above quote gives a broad overview of the firstborn throughout Scripture and highlights the significance, even in our day.]

We see therefore that by killing the Egyptian firstborns, God is judging the entire religious and social system. At the same time, we will see Him specifically sanctify and set apart for Himself the firstborn among Israel, both man and animal, in this portion.

**Exodus 13** Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **2** "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.”

**3** 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.

A second and significant topic that we want to take up is to whom the commandments are given. And, whose responsibility is it to see that they are properly instructed and carried out? This seems an odd place to do so, however, having just considered the role of the firstborn and the fact that a very unusual rendering of a command occurs in this portion, we will take up this challenging topic.

To do so, I will quote extensively from two articles previously published in the [Restoring kol Israel](#) series on natsab.com. The complete articles are [here](#) and [here](#). And, here is the relevant verse that opens our discussion.

**Exodus 12:3** Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a lamb for each household.

What does bèn mean in Hebrew? [Strong's H1121](#)

Bèn Israel is commonly used in the opening of a passage when Moses is delivering the Torah. Bèn is in the masculine form. Some versions commonly translate it as “children” others translate it as “sons”. Lev. 12:2 is a specific example. KJV translates bèn as “children” NASB translates bèn as “sons”. It seems to me that the men are being addressed specifically throughout the Torah when commands are delivered by Yah via Moses..

I understand that based on the context we apply this to all the people and I think it’s appropriate to do just that. I also understand that it holds to the Hebrew language structure to use the masculine form even when the group being addressed is a mixed audience. However, there is a specific example where Yah uses a different word to address the entire assembly when he is addressing the women, children, slaves, and foreigners as well as the men when giving a command. **This is actually quite exciting so please stick with me!** I believe that Yah is intentional when he uses this particular masculine word. I do believe there were women and

children also present when Moses spoke the Torah to the men and I believe the commands apply to them as well. I however do not believe the women and children were specifically being spoken to. Consider that it was Adam who was held accountable for Eve's actions. By learning and walking properly the roles Yah has assigned us, men should be avoiding the sin of Adam (not being the head) and women avoiding the sin of Eve (not being in submission to her head).

There are very few instances where Yah speaks directly to women in Torah. Even in Leviticus 12 and 15 the men are addressed concerning the specifics about women's menstruation, childbirth and such. It is therefore the responsibility of the men to insure those commands are carried out under their headship.

To be clear, Yah is delivering these commands through Moses to the men of the households and it's the man's responsibility to teach them and discern correct application for his women. And, it is the man's responsibility to correct her/them accordingly. Yah is a "gentleman" and this is another example such as Numbers 30, [previously addressed](#), where Yah maintains the hierarchy and literally does not circumvent His authority given to the woman's head / man.

What, then, is 'êdâh ?

**Exodus 12:3** Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household.

That word "congregation" is: 'êdâh [Strong's H5712](#) and it is appropriately translated as congregation or assembly.

I did a little digging and I cannot find another Torah command addressed specifically to the whole congregation of Israel... the only other time the word 'êdâh is used in the opening address of a command is in Lev. 19:2 and it says "the congregation ('êdâh) of the sons (bên) of Israel" so it's still a specific address to the men.

Based on what I just pointed out the only context where Yah bypasses His authority structure and delivers a command directly to all of the assembly including men, women, children, slaves, and foreigners etc... is in the context of the first Passover and the ongoing observance of the passover which is a picture of the ultimate salvation in Yeshua himself. All other matters are directly delivered to the men. Salvation *appears to be the only issue* that a man does not have



direct authority over his women. All other “manner of life” commands are given following the hierarchy through the headship of the man.

We know that elsewhere Paul makes it very clear that women are to be subject to their husbands in everything.

**Ephesians 5:24** But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

This is a very good reason why every woman should be under headship. It is a place of protection for her. We as men need to be prepared to step up and provide that love, headship, guidance and correction for whatever woman or women that Yah puts in our lives and to the degree that he leads us to do so. Ladies, I ask you, are you walking this out in submission to your head / man? Those of you who are single, are you seeking to come under the headship of a man? What does Paul say should be happening for widows under the age of 60? 1 Tim. 5 tells us she should be seeking a head. Ladies who are divorced need to be thinking long and hard about what Numbers 30:9 has to say putting them in the same status as widows. Scripture clearly indicates that it is best if all single ladies seek to be under the headship of a man. Will we walk out what scripture teaches? Or, will we continue to be ruled by our cultural biases and fear of man?

Remember this first Passover was open to all who would choose to follow Yah... and some foreigners did choose to follow. Exodus 12:38, 48 (Paul references them as Greeks) mentions “a mixed multitude” and “strangers”. Slaves are referenced as well in Exodus 12:44. For clarity sake what I am pointing out is that Paul grasped the fact that Salvation is open to all and no one has authority over another with regard to acceptance of salvation. Just as Exodus 12 makes clear that the Passover is open to all, Paul points out that Jew, Greek, male, female, slave and free have equal status in messiah as it pertains to salvation.

**Galatians 3:28** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. **29** And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to promise.

So why did Paul mention Abraham and the promise here in this context? How does this fit in with Passover? And what is the relationship with belonging to Messiah?

**Exodus 12:47** All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this. **48** 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. **49** The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you.

There's that word congregation ('êdâh) again. This time in direct connection to the stranger (Greek) who chooses to reverence (sojourns) Yah and partake of the Passover (Salvation). Did you notice the command is for circumcision? What is the eternal sign of the covenant made with Abraham?

**Genesis 17:9** God said further to Abraham, "Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. **10** This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. **11** And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. "

The Apostle Paul upheld and taught the Torah. He did not attempt to add to it or take from it. In Gal. 3:26-29 he is expounding on Exodus 12 and giving us the truth from the Torah with regard to salvation and the Passover. He is further tying it all back to the covenant with Abraham. Paul is remaining consistent with his teaching (Titus 2:9) that a bondsman is to be subject to their master. He is remaining consistent with himself (1Cor. 12:13) and the Torah, teaching that upon entering into salvation all become part of the assembly (body). He is not contradicting himself (Eph. 5) or the Torah and teaching some sort of false egalitarianism as it regards the authority structure laid out consistently throughout the scriptures and expounded by himself in 1 Corinthians 11, which is Yah => Messiah => man => woman.

[First article ends here.]

In a subsequent article we clarified and doubled-down on the assertion that most all commands, apart from this very interesting verse in Exodus 12 concerning Pesach, are given to men for the purpose of

implementing them in their families and leading, as Adam didn't, the domain God has entrusted to them. Here the article is in its entirety demonstrating why this verse is so significant regarding its connection to Galatians 3:28 and salvation through Yeshua available to each of us, while maintaining the God ordained order of things.

A week ago, in our post titled [\*Restoring Kol Israel: No more male or female?\*](#), we made a huge statement that many may have glossed over. Because it is so monumental, we need to go back and parse it with implications spelled out. Here is the quote:

*To be clear, Yah is delivering these commands through Moses to the men of the households and it's the man's responsibility to teach them and discern correct application for his women. [See post](#)*

As demonstrated earlier in the cited post, the Torah commands, over and over, as given by YHVH to Moshe, are specifically addressed to the men. While this understanding is not in conflict with most of Orthodox Judaism, it is a decided cut against the western egalitarianism and feminism that has overrun the church.



To review a couple things very quickly, our heart's desire is to see kol Israel, all 12 (13) tribes restored. That cannot happen unless the most basic building block is restored. That building block is the man and, if he has one, his family. Call it what you will, manhood, masculinity,

patriarchy, etc., the simple fact is that the structure of a nation *cannot* be assembled from broken or improperly functioning family building blocks. The basis of the entire structure that Yah designed and implemented is focused on the man leading his family. [It began in Gan Eden](#) with Adam and Chava.

Adam was given headship and the direct commandment of Yah. It was Adam's responsibility to lead and correct Chava, which he did not do. *His* failure is what led to the fall of mankind, at that time entirely contained in his loins. He chose to *follow* Chava, instead of *correcting and leading* her.

In a sense, from that point forward we are each 'Adams' with the responsibility to follow Yah, obey HIS commands and lead our families. The entire structure, instituted *before* the Fall is patriarchal and the adversary is constantly railing against it. His very first attack was against the woman and he continues to this day with that line of assault (among others).

Restoring patriarchy and walking in the ways of Yah is not easy because it demands buying into the Torah at a deeper level than simply attending Shabbat or keeping the feasts. It demands that men step up and *be* the men Yah calls us to be and it requires women to catch the vision of restoration and their role as helpers who *enable* their head to be obedient to Yah. In essence, both men and women must reject the roles imposed by the world and embrace the roles defined in Scripture.

So, as demonstrated in our previous post, the commandments are written specifically to the men *who then have the responsibility* to teach them and see them carried out by those under their headship/authority. See how beautiful and challenging this is? The man has to do the work of Adam and the woman has to do the work of Chava.

Let's break down the implications for the different people in this structure. Our categories are: married men, single men, married women and single women as well as children.

**Married man:** A married man is to be vested in building a 'house.' He is, therefore, the head that is responsible before Yah for the vision, leadership, instruction, obedience and wellbeing of his house. He should know and be walking well the commandments and should be a proven provider and leader. More [details here](#).

**Single man:** A single man who aspires to be the head of a house is to be learning. He should be

growing in Torah, learning and growing under the tutelage of his own father as well as other qualified men in the community around him. He should be intentionally building/growing a business or career that can support his future family. Dating or 'chasing girls' is *not* what a single man is focused on. In fact, if he is, he is not yet mature. Hormones may be working, but his brain is not.

**Married woman:** A married woman will seek to be assimilated to her husband. She understands his vision and calling and asks how she can help him fulfill it. She builds her house and is a blessing to him every day of her life. She is not in competition with him, nor does she undermine him. She is a witness and ambassador into the community and represents him well at all times. More [details here](#).

**Single woman:** A single woman is under the headship and authority of her father. (In the case of older women, i.e., widows or divorcees, they should be under the headship of a man, whether father, brother or elder in the community, until such time as they are remarried. Simply, there is not a Torah allowance for uncovered women in the community.) The single woman should be learning how to be a wife and build her master's house. She is learning submission and assimilation as well as all of the skills necessary to operate a home and rear children.

**Children:** The very young 'singles' are growing in wisdom and knowledge in schooling, Torah and life skills. Little boys should be at the beginning stages of learning skills and wise decision making skills. They should be following dad around and exploring interests to discern gifts and possible business/career paths. Little girls should be learning the basics of managing a home and performing the tasks necessary to care for a family. She should also be learning how to be a helpmeet that relates properly to leadership and authority.

The world will find these things to be laughable at best, abhorrent at worst. The adversary *desires* rebellion and any attack against Yah's created order is a 'good' day. Conversely, learning and walking in Yah's design for family and personal roles leads to blessing and ultimately to restoration!! This, then, is the vision every Torah observant person, particularly non-Jew, needs to grasp to speed the redemption of the kingdom. Anything short of getting the most basic building blocks, man and family, correct is going to fail.

I challenge every reader to ponder deeply what it means to walk in the ways of the King. Are we willing to step up and be the generation that gets it right, or do we continue to follow the ways of the world? Men? Women?

[End of second article]

In studying this Torah portion, most will quickly gloss over the specific nature of the Passover command being given directly to the whole congregation, the 'edah, however its uniqueness and obvious connection to Galatians 3:28 cannot be overstated. Revealed here is the monumental fact that all can directly approach God through His prescribed way, the Messiah, pictured in the Passover, Equally important is the clear absence of similar direct command to women and/or children in the rest of the Torah. The Torah is *read* to the whole congregation in Deuteronomy 29:10-5, and the covenant is made with the whole congregation, both present and future, but the performance and responsibility for implementation is given to the men and at points, specifically to the Levites. We must understand this point and carry it forward as it is critical in the forming of a nation and having that nation function as God ordained: a patriarchal tribal nation with the power and authority centred in the home imaged and performed by the man. Remember, 1 Corinthians 11:3, God => Messiah => man => woman.

Within the Passover commands, there are some specific commands given to heads of households and to the elders. Note the role of elders and 'sons' in this passage,

**Exodus 12:21** Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover *lamb*. **22** You shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts; and none of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning.

**23** For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite *you*. **24** And you shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children [sons] forever. **25** When you enter the land which the LORD will give you, as He has promised, you shall observe this rite. **26** And when your children [sons] say to you, 'What does this rite mean to you?' **27** you shall say, 'It is a Passover sacrifice to the LORD who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but spared our homes.'" And the people bowed low and worshiped.

**28** Then the sons of Israel went and did so; just as the LORD had

commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

The point is that the redemption of Passover was for every member of Israel, as pictured in Messiah, the elders and heads of households were specifically tasked with the priestly duties of taking and preparing the lamb and of telling their sons. Again, the priestly role of instruction falls on the men and is passed father to sons.

In the instructions God gives to Moses, there are additional specifics concerning how to handle a sojourner, or ‘ger.’ It is important to note that a clear distinction is made between a sojourner and the various other stations of men, whether foreigner, slave or similar. The Ger is one who is joining himself and his whole house to Israel. Note that he *and all the males in his house, ie, under his headship*, are all to be circumcised. Clearly, the head is making a decision for the family and all males in the family follow in faith by taking the sign of the covenant.

**Exodus 12:43** The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the ordinance of the Passover: no foreigner is to eat of it; **44** but every man’s slave purchased with money, after you have circumcised him, then he may eat of it. **45** A sojourner or a hired servant shall not eat of it. **46** 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. **47** All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this. **48** 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. **49** The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you.”

Several passages should come to mind when reading that the Ger and all his males are to be circumcised. An example is

**Acts 16:25** But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; **26** and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone’s chains were unfastened. **27** When the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself,

supposing that the prisoners had escaped. **28** But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!" **29** And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, **30** and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

**31** They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, **you and your household.**" **32** And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. **33** And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his *household*. **34** And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God **with his whole household.**

The man's salvation seems to somehow be extended into his family, just as the Ger's whole house.

The requirement for the Ger and 'all his males' to be circumcised introduces another thought as well. While I have not sorted this one out entirely, I have recently noticed something interesting regarding headship and the role of the father as it relates to covenants with God.

Males are required to be circumcised, but not females, yet both may approach the Passover table. Is this because it is assumed the females are under the headship of their respective males and therefore subject to his covenant? Consider several details. God's covenant with Abraham was extended to all of Abraham's descendants who are circumcised. When a man is circumcised there is a show of blood and an alteration of the flesh. When a virgin is taken and mastered, she is permanently in covenant with that man and there is a show of blood and a permanent change in the flesh. Because we understand the authority structure to be clearly defined in 1 Corinthians 11:3 as God => Messiah => man => woman, then it stands to reason the sign of the covenant with Abraham is a sign between the Messiah and His men, where the women then fall under the headship of a man under the Messiah's authority. There was no expectation of an uncovered woman coming to the Passover table. Every woman present would be under the headship of a man there, whether her father, husband or a man to whom she answered, ie, master, elder, etc. I need to test this further, but it makes perfect sense and fits exactly into the paradigm we continue to consistently see in the Scriptures.

As a side note, the need to circumcise the flesh as it relates to Passover is clear from the commands of Moses in this portion. We later understand circumcision of the heart is of paramount importance, but



the flesh must not be ignored. To that end, it is wise for every man who belongs to Abraham to consider very carefully the need to take on this most important sign at the point that they are ready and convicted. The Scriptures seem very clear on the matter. [Within your study of circumcision, consider that in the Second Temple period (Paul) the term ‘circumcision,’ as in ‘party of the circumcision,’ was a shorthand way of referring to those who chose to walk out the complete Rabbinic halacha and the cutting of the flesh was only a very small part of their definition. It is *this requirement to keep oral law* that Paul stood against. Not the physical sign as clearly commanded by Moses.]

Our final thought has to do with the consecration, the setting apart of the firstborn sons and animals.

**Exodus 13** Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **2** “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.”

..... **8** You shall tell your son on that day, saying, ‘It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.’ **9** And it shall serve as a sign to you on your hand, and as a reminder on your forehead, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth; for with a powerful hand the LORD brought you out of Egypt. **10** Therefore, you shall keep this ordinance at its appointed time from year to year.

**11** “Now when the LORD brings you to the land of the Canaanite, as He swore to you and to your fathers, and gives it to you, **12** you shall devote to the LORD the first offspring of every womb, and the first offspring of every beast that you own; the males belong to the LORD. **13** But every first offspring of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, but if you do not redeem *it*, then you shall break its neck; and every firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem. **14** And it shall be when your son asks you in time to come, saying, ‘What is this?’ then you shall say to him, ‘With a powerful hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery. **15** It came about, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the LORD killed every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore, I sacrifice to the LORD the males, the first offspring of every womb, but every firstborn of my sons I redeem.’ **16** So it shall serve as a sign on your hand and as phylacteries on your forehead, for with a powerful hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt.”

The firstborn is to be returned to the Lord and he is to serve as a sign that God redeems His own firstborn, Israel.

Shabbat shalom!