



Parsha Bo' / Go

Shemot / Exodus 10:1 ~ 13:16

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This week's Torah portion is "**Bo**" or "**Go**" and begins in **Shemot / Exodus 10:1**, where we read; ***And YHVH said to Moshe, "Go in to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, so that I show these signs of Mine before him,..."*** This is one of those Hebrew words that has two slightly different spellings in Scripture depending on where you look. Here it is spelled simply "*Beit-aleph*" and means "**come**", "**enter**", "**come with**", "**go**", "**go in**", "**bring near**" or "**to go**", "**go out**". The letters in "**Bo**" equal the number "**3**", which is significant in many ways. While seven is the number of spiritual perfection or completeness, **three** is the number of a divine perfection or completeness. Yahshua spent **three** days and nights in the grave. B'nei Yisra'el was separated from Mitsrayim by darkness for **three** days; then they had to separate themselves completely by a journey of **three** days into the wilderness in order to make offerings to Yahweh, according to **Shemot 3:18**.

Three is also the numeric value of the letter "*gimmel*". The pictograph for *gimmel* was a camel. However, it is thought of as a "**bridge**" between people and opinions. However, the meaning of the word "*gimmel*" is "**to deal out**" of "**give out**" as with Tzedakah or charity. How does this all relate to our text? Perhaps in that Moshe in "**going in**" to Pharaoh was a bridge between Yahweh, His people and Mitsrayim. Plus he was "**dealing out**" judgment, in order to show Pharaoh, the Egyptians and the Children of Yisra'el just Who Yahweh is.

Let's begin our parsha by reading **Shemot 10:1-19**; ***And YHVH said to Moshe, "Go in to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, so that I show these signs of Mine before him, and that you relate in the hearing of your son and your son's son what I have done in Mitsrayim, and My signs which I have done among them. And you shall know that I am YHVH." And Moshe and Aharon came in to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus said YHVH Elohim of the Hebrews, 'Till when shall you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, so that they serve Me. Or else, if you refuse to let My people go, see, tomorrow I am bringing locusts within your borders. And they shall cover the surface of the land, so that no one is able to see the land. And they shall eat the rest of what has escaped, which remains to you from the hail, and they shall eat every tree which grows up for you out of the field. And they shall fill your houses, and the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Mitsrites, which neither your fathers nor your fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were on the earth to this day.'*** Then he turned and went out from Pharaoh. And Pharaoh's servants said to him, "***Till when would this one be a snare to us? Let the men go, so that they serve YHVH their Elohim. Do you not yet know that Mitsrayim is destroyed?***" And Moshe and Aharon were brought back to Pharaoh, and

he said to them, “Go, serve YHVH your Elohim. Who are the ones that are going?” And Mosheh said, “We are going with our young and our old, with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds we are going, for we have a festival to YHVH.” And he said to them, “Let YHVH be with you as I let you and your little ones go! Watch, for evil is before your face! Not so! You men go now, and serve YHVH, for that is what you desired.” And they were driven out from the presence of Pharaoh. And YHVH said to Moshe, “Stretch out your hand over the land of Mitsrayim for the locusts to come upon the land of Mitsrayim, and eat every plant of the land – all that the hail has left.” And Moshe stretched out his rod over the land of Mitsrayim, and YHVH brought an east wind on the land all that day and all that night. Morning came, and the east wind brought the locusts. And the locusts went up over all the land of Mitsrayim and settled within all the borders of Mitsrayim, very grievous. There had never been locusts like them before, nor would there again be like them. And they covered the surface of all the land, so that the land was darkened. And they ate every plant of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left, and no greenness was left on the trees or on the plants of the field, in all the land of Mitsrayim. Pharaoh then called for Moshe and Aharon in haste, and said, “I have sinned against YHVH your Elohim and against you. And now, please forgive my sin only this once, and pray to YHVH your Elohim, that He would only turn away this death from me.” And he went out from Pharaoh and prayed to YHVH. And YHVH turned a very strong west wind, which took the locusts away and blew them into the Sea of Reeds. Not one locust was left within all the border of Mitsrayim.

Here we have plague number eight, the **locusts**. Along with the plagues from last week, this is starting to get like those old 1950’s horror movies, “Attack of the Locusts”, “The Flies”, “The Night of the Frogs” and “Gnats To You”. This word for locusts is very interesting. It is “**arbeh**” (aleph-reish-beit-hey) and has several meanings; one of which is “locust” as in a “swarm of locusts” or more precisely “**swarming locusts**”. It also means, according to Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon, “**floodgates**”, as in the *floodgates of heaven*, that open up during hard rains. Further, the letters that make up “**arbeh**” have the numeric value of 211 which equals; “**gibor**” or “**mighty**”, “**e’ra**” or “**you fear**”, “**ha ber’ad**” or “**the hail**” and “**El Pa’al**” or “**El of Recompense**”, This is the equivalent Aramaic word used in **Revelation 9:1-11** which speaks of the locusts that come out of the pit.

This is also the same word “**arbeh**” used in **Yo’el 2:25**; “**Then I shall repay you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the crawling locust, and the consuming locust, and the gnawing locust, My great army which I sent among you.**” And, **Nachum 3:15-19**; **There a fire shall consume you, a sword cut you off, eat you up like a locust. Make yourself many like the locust, make yourself many like the swarming locust! You have increased your merchants more than the stars of the heavens. The locust shall strip off and fly away. Your officials are like the locusts, and your marshals are like the great grasshoppers, which settle in the hedges on a cold day – when the sun rises they flee away, and the place where they are is unknown. Your shepherds have slumbered, O sovereign of Ashshur, your nobles lie down to rest. Your people are scattered on the mountains, and no one gathers them. Your injury has no healing, your wound is grievous. All who hear news of you shall clap their hands over you. For over whom did your evil not pass continually?** These verses in **Yo’el 2** and **Nachum 3** really paint a different and interesting picture of the “**locusts**” in **Revelation 9**.

Now, let’s continue with **Shemot / Exodus 10:20-29**; **However, YHVH hardened the heart of Pharaoh and he did not let the children of Yisra’el go. And YHVH said to Moshe, “Stretch**

out your hand toward the heavens, and let there be darkness over the land of Mitsrayim, even a darkness which is felt.” And Moshe stretched out his hand toward the heavens, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Mitsrayim for three days. They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, while all the children of Yisra’el had light in their dwellings. And Pharaoh called to Moshe and said, “Go, serve YHVH, only leave your flocks and your herds behind. Let your little ones go with you too.” But Moshe said, “You yourself are to provide us with slaughterings and burnt offerings, to prepare for YHVH our Elohim. And our livestock are to go with us too, not a hoof is to be left behind, for we have to take some of them to serve YHVH our Elohim, and we ourselves do not know with what we are to serve YHVH until we come there.” However, YHVH hardened the heart of Pharaoh and he would not let them go. And Pharaoh said to him, “Get away from me! Watch yourself and see my face no more, for in the day you see my face you die!” And Moshe said, “You have spoken rightly – never again do I see your face!”

Here we see another kind of plague, that of **darkness**; darkness that can be felt. This kind of darkness is talked about throughout Scripture. First Avraham had this same darkness fall over him in **B’reshith 15:12-17**; *And it came to be, when the sun was going down, and a deep sleep fell upon Avram, that see, a frightening great darkness fell upon him. And He said to Avram, “Know for certain that your seed are to be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years. But the nation whom they serve I am going to judge, and afterward let them come out with great possessions. Now as for you, you are to go to your fathers in peace, you are to be buried at a good old age. Then, in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the crookedness of the Amorites is not yet complete.” And it came to be, when the sun went down and it was dark, that see, a smoking oven and a burning torch passing between those pieces.*

This is the darkness that came between the Mitsrites and the Children of Yisra’el when they were at the Sea of Reeds in **Shemot 14:19-21**; *And the Messenger of Elohim, who went before the camp of Yisra’el, moved and went behind them. And the column of cloud went from before them and stood behind them, and came between the camp of the Mitsrites and the camp of Yisra’el. And it was the cloud and the darkness, and it gave light by night, and the one did not come near the other all the night. And Moshe stretched out his hand over the sea. And YHVH caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided.* Here, the darkness also gives light at night, just like it did for B’nei Yisra’el in Mitsrayim, back in **Shemot 10:23**, where it said; *They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, while all the children of Yisra’el had light in their dwellings.*

And, this is the same darkness mentioned at the giving of the “**Ten Commandments**” in **Shemot 20:18-21**; *And all the people saw the thunders, the lightning flashes, the sound of the ram’s horn, and the mountain smoking. And the people saw it, and they trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Moshe, “You speak with us and we hear, but let not Elohim speak with us, lest we die.” And Moshe said to the people, “Do not fear, for Elohim has come to prove you, and in order that His fear be before you, so that you do not sin.” So the people stood at a distance, but Moshe drew near the thick darkness where Elohim was.*

How many are familiar with the song that King David wrote and told to Yahweh after all his enemies had been defeated, in **2 Shemu’el 22**? You should read the whole thing. However, let’s compare **2 Shemu’el 22:7-13**; *“In my distress I called upon YHVH, And to my Elohim I cried.*

And from His Hekal He heard my voice, And my cry was in His ears. And the earth shook and trembled, The foundations of the heavens were troubled, Because He was wroth. Smoke went up from His nostrils, And devouring fire from His mouth; Coals were kindled by it. And He bowed the heavens and came down, And thick darkness was under His feet. And He rode upon a kerub, and flew, And was seen upon the wings of the wind. And He put darkness around Him as booths, Darkness of waters, thick clouds. From the brightness before Him Coals of fire were kindled.

Then, there's the darkness of **Yeshayahu 60:1-3**; *“Arise, shine, for your light has come! And the esteem of YHVH has risen upon you. For look, darkness covers the earth, and thick darkness the peoples. But YHVH arises over you, and His esteem is seen upon you. And the gentiles shall come to your light, and sovereigns to the brightness of your rising.* And, **Yehezqel 34:12**; *“As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so I shall seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered in a day of cloud and thick darkness.”*

Then, there is the darkness in the **“Day of Yahweh”**, as in **Yo’el 2:1-2**; *Blow a ram’s horn in Tsiyon, and sound an alarm in My set-apart mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the earth tremble, for the day of YHVH is coming, for it is near: a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, like the morning clouds spread over the mountains – a people many and strong, the like of whom has never been, nor shall there ever be again after them, to the years of many generations.* And, **Yo’el 2:30-32**; *“And I shall give signs in the heavens and upon the earth: blood and fire and columns of smoke, the sun is turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of YHVH. And it shall be that everyone who calls on the Name of YHVH shall be delivered. For on Mount Tsiyon and in Yerushalayim there shall be an escape as YHVH has said, and among the survivors whom YHVH calls.* How about **Amos 6:18-20**? *Woe to you who are longing for the day of YHVH! What does the day of YHVH mean to you? It is darkness, and not light, as when a man flees from a lion, and a bear shall meet him; or entered his house, rested his hand on the wall, and a serpent shall bite him. Is not the day of YHVH darkness, and not light? Is it not very dark, with no brightness in it?* Finally, **Tsephanyah 1:14-17**; *Near is the great day of YHVH, near and hurrying greatly, the noise of the day of YHVH. Let the mighty man then bitterly cry out! That day is a day of wrath, a day of distress and trouble, a day of waste and ruin, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of ram’s horn and alarm – against the walled cities and against the corner towers. And I shall bring distress on men, and they shall walk like blind men – because they have sinned against YHVH, and their blood shall be poured out like dust and their flesh like dung.”*

I guess you see that we can go on with this darkness thing for days. The whole **“darkness and light”** thing is in itself a study of huge proportions. Brother Judah has devoted many volumes of commentary on this. What I find interesting here is how the **“darkness”** is used in **“deliverance”** and **“judgment”** at the same time. Yahweh’s judgment and deliverance are never far apart. Just as He used judgment against Pharaoh to deliver Yisra’el once, He will do so yet again in that **“Great and Terrible Day of Yahweh”** that is to come.

Next, Yahweh gave Mosheh and Aharon specific instructions regarding the first Passover. He told them to tell the Children of Yisra’el how to protect their homes from the plague that would kill all the first-born in Mitzrayim, how to prepare to leave Egypt and how to observe this most set-apart festival throughout their generations as this was to be an everlasting law. The Children of Yisra’el

did as Moshe commanded them and at Midnight, on the 14th day of Abib, Yahweh killed all the first-born in Mitsrayim, of man and beast. But those who obeyed Yahweh's instructions lived to depart Mitsrayim and the slavery of four generations, just as Yahweh had promised Avraham over 400 years earlier.

Next, Yahweh gives a **"right-ruling"** that is very significant. First, in **Shemot 13:1-10** we read; ***And YHVH spoke to Moshe, saying, "Set apart to Me all the first-born, the one opening the womb among the children of Yisra'el, among man and among beast, it is Mine." And Moshe said to the people, "Remember this day in which you went out of Mitsrayim, out of the house of slavery. For by strength of hand YHVH brought you out of this place, and whatever is leavened shall not be eaten. "Today you are going out, in the month Abib, And it shall be, when YHVH brings you into the land of the Kena'anites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hiwwites, and the Yebusites, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall keep this service in this month. Seven days you eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day is a festival to YHVH. Unleavened bread is to be eaten the seven days, and whatever is leavened is not to be seen with you, and leaven is not to be seen with you within all your border. And you shall inform your son in that day, saying, 'It is because of what YHVH did for me when I came up from Mitsrayim.' And it shall be as a sign to you on your hand and as a reminder between your eyes, that the Torah of YHVH is to be in your mouth, for with a strong hand YHVH has brought you out of Mitsrayim. And you shall guard this law at its appointed time from year to year.***

Here, Yahweh has Moshe tell all the Children of Yisra'el to set apart all the first born males (children and animals). Then Moshe tells the people that to remember how Yahweh brought them out of slavery and that **leaven** is **not** to be eaten for seven days (the Feast of Unleavened Bread). He makes the connection here between the **"first-born"** and **"unleavened bread"** or **"sinless doctrine"**. Remember, the term **"unleavened"** refers to **"removal of sin"** and **"bread"** refers to the **"bread of life"** or Torah. So, am I saying that only the first-born have to be **"sinless"**? We'll see in a bit.

Now, in **Shemot 13:11-16** we read; ***And it shall be, when YHVH brings you into the land of the Kena'anites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you, that you shall pass over to YHVH every one opening the womb, and every firstborn that comes from your livestock, the males belong to YHVH. But every first-born of a donkey you are to ransom with a lamb. And if you do not ransom it, then you shall break its neck. And every first-born of man among your sons you are to ransom. And it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What is this?' then you shall say to him, 'By strength of hand YHVH brought us out of Mitsrayim, out of the house of bondage. And it came to be, when Pharaoh was too hardened to let us go, that YHVH killed every first-born in the land of Mitsrayim, both the first-born of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore I am slaughtering to YHVH every male that open the womb, but every first-born of my sons I ransom.' And it shall be as a sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes, for by strength of hand YHVH brought us out of Mitsrayim.*** I thought it was so cool that Yahweh says in **verse 12** that **"you shall pass over to YHVH everyone opening the womb..."** Because, Scripture tells us that our fathers **"passed over"** the Sea of Reeds and later, passed over the Yarden River into Eretz Yisra'el. So, we are to **"pass over"** our first-born to Yahweh. This is also what we see the pagan nations and those of Yisra'el doing, that were drawn into idolatry, when they **"passed their children over the fire"** to their pagan mighty ones.

So, what about the donkey thing? Let's address the "*donkey thing*" first. Here we see that Yahweh killed the first-born throughout Mitzrayim; but, by the blood of the lamb ransomed the first-born of Yisra'el. Yahweh instructs us that the first-born of the animals are His, except that we are to ransom the first-born of the donkeys, or asses, with a lamb. Hmmm. Now, I can state the obvious in comparing men and asses. Ladies, be quiet please. But, the donkeys are a picture of us; and here's how. The Hebrew word used here for "**donkey**" is "**cham'or**" (Strong's #2543) literally meaning "**ass**", "**troubled**" or "**in turmoil**". **Cham'or** is spelled "chet-mem-reish". Chet means "**fear**", mem means "**water**" or "**fountain of Wisdom**" and reish means "**head**" or "**beginning**"; showing us that fear (*or reverence*) of the water (*the washing of the Word*) is at the "*beginning*" of our relationship to Yahweh. In other words, these donkeys represent those who have fear (*or reverence*) of the Word. Our turmoil, then, is to understand and learn it. These are as "*first-born*" who are ransomed. Those who don't care for the Word are not ransomed and their necks are broken. Stiff necks get broken. The gematria of **cham'or** is 248, which equals "**Avraham**" and "**Avri'el**" or "**Light of El**". So, being an ass isn't always a bad thing.

Now, let's look a little deeper at "**first-born**". In this week's *parsha*, we see two Hebrew words that come into play here. First, the word "**be'qor**" means literally "**born first**" and the word "**peh'ter**" which means "**to separate**" or "**first to open**". Here we see clearly the intent to set apart or separate the ones born first, just as they were first to *open* or *separate* the womb. The first-born son in the family was assigned several important functions. He was the kinsman-redeemer of family members who were captured, abducted, or taken in slavery. The stories of Judah and Tamar, and Boaz and Ruth depict the role of the firstborn head of the family as one who "**raised**" the name and seed of the dead, which was tantamount to the act of resurrection. The firstborn was also the blood avenger, if any family member had lost his life at the hand of another. He was responsible to restore family property that had been lost, taken or seized. In order to be able to respond to all these contingencies the father bestowed upon his first-born, before death, a '*double portion*' of his material wealth, above the other siblings. With ill health or the death of the father, the firstborn son became the head of the family. Up until then he was more like a prince. In taking full responsibility for all matters in his family, he became to his clan like a king or ruler and a servant of Yahweh, as well as a judge and a guardian of Torah for the family.

Abraham, for example, was instructed to command his children in the ways of righteousness according to **B'reshith 18:19**. Also, the Levites, who were given the priesthood of the firstborn, were to bestow, inspire, and be an example of "*life and peace*" in **Mal'aki 2:5**. But, in order to meet the standards required for this all-important role, the firstborn had to fulfill several prerequisites. He had to prove his faithfulness to his father and to the Torah of Yahweh. Had he violated these requirements he stood a good chance of losing this position to a younger brother, as did Esaw and Rueben.

We also see through the examples of Yitsaq being chosen over Yishma'el, as Yitsaq was "*the child of promise*" from Yahweh to Avraham and Ya'aqob being chosen over Esaw who despised his birthright, that Yahweh chooses His first-born according to His will and often times our heart. Yahweh gave Ya'aqob revelation and the insight to adopt Manasseh and Ephraim in order to give Yoseph a "*double portion*" as first-born. Then similarly, he chose to give the "*rulership*" to Yehudah in **B'reshith 49:9-10**; "**Yehudah is a lion's cub; from the prey you have gone up, my son! He bowed down, he crouched like a lion. And like a lion, who does rouse him? The scepter shall not turn aside from Yehudah, nor a Lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to Him is the obedience of peoples.** But, to Yoseph, Ya'aqob gives the blessings of multiplicity and the priesthood. Yes the priesthood. Let's look at **B'reshith 49:22-26**; "**Yoseph is an offshoot of a fruit-bearing tree, an offshoot of a fruit-bearing tree by a fountain, his**

branches run over a wall. And the archers have bitterly grieved him, shot at him and hated him. But his bow remained in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty One of Ya'aqob – from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Yisra'el – from the El of your father who helps you, and by the Almighty who blesses you with blessings of the heavens above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of your father have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, up to the limit of the everlasting hills. They are on the head of Yoseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separated from his brothers.

Now, I've got to admit that I assumed, like most people, this reference in the last part of **verse 26** that talks about "**him who was separated from his brothers**" meant that Yoseph was separated for those 22 years when he was sold into slavery and sent to Egypt. However, when you look at the Hebrew, as usual, you get the whole story. The word used for "**separated**" here is "**na'zir**" (Strong's #5139) meaning "**consecrated**", "**dedicated**" or "**set-apart one**" and is the root for **Nazarite**. Yoseph was set-apart and given the "**priesthood**" according to the order of the Melek Tzaddik (*first-born, righteous king*) Sound familiar? Mashiach Yahshua is our High Priest after the order of Melek Tzaddik according to **Ibrim, chapter 7**. Shim'on Kepha tells us in **Kepha Aleph 2:4-5**; ***Drawing near to Him, a living Stone – rejected indeed by men, but chosen by Elohim and precious – you also, as living stones, are being built up, a spiritual house, a set-apart priesthood, to offer up spiritual slaughter offerings acceptable to Elohim through Yahshua Messiah.*** Here's something else I found in the Hebrew. This word "**na'zir**" comes from the word "**na'zar**" which means "**to set one's self apart**" or to literally be a "**Nazarite**". But, it has another meaning as well; "**a diadem**", the "*precious stones used as a token or sign of those set-apart as with kings and priests*". Again, I ask, "*Sound familiar*"? In the King James, **Yeshayahu 62:2-3** says; ***And the gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy esteem: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of Yahweh shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of esteem in the hand of Yahweh, and a royal diadem in the hand of Elohim.*** **Todah Rabah Yahweh!**

So, if Yoseph was given the priesthood, what happened? **Hoshea 4:6-7** tells us; ***“My people have perished for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being priest for Me. Since you have forgotten the Torah of your Elohim, I also forget your children. As they were increased, so they sinned against Me. My esteem they have changed into shame.”*** The word here for "**perished**" is "**damah**" which literally means "**cut off**", as in "*cut off from one's people*". As we will learn in the weeks ahead, when the Children of Yisra'el did not keep Yahweh's Torah, they were *cut off from their people*, or Yisra'el. So Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom) was indeed cut off from their people for their grievous sins and for lack of repentance. But, through Yahshua, redemption has come. The first-born donkeys are ransomed by Yahweh, through His Son, the Lamb.

Yahweh in His foreknowledge planned for this rejection and exile. When the Children of Yisra'el sinned with the golden calf, while Mosheh was on Mt. Sinai, Yahweh chose the Levites as the priesthood and servants of Elohim and His Hekal, in the later verses of **Shemot 32**. Because the men of Levi chose to serve as Yahweh's judgment, in spite of the lives of their brethren, He chose them for a priesthood until His plan for the ransoming of His chosen first-born was complete.

Folks, this ransomed first-born thing is a big deal. Yahweh repeats this ransom, or redeeming of the first-born command 18 times in the Torah. Remember too, that Yahweh called Yisra'el His first-born in **Shemot 4:22**; ***And you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus said YHVH, “Yisra'el is My son, My firstborn,”*** Oh, it gets better folks. I'm not sure where to begin this next verse, so let's go

to Yirmeyahu 31:7-11; *For thus said YHVH, “Sing with gladness for Ya’aqov, and shout among the chief of the nations. Cry out, give praise, and say, ‘O YHVH, save Your people, the remnant of Yisra’el!’ See, I am bringing them from the land of the north, and shall gather them from the ends of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together – a great assembly returning here. With weeping they shall come, and with their prayers I bring them. I shall make them walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way in which they do not stumble. For I shall be a Father to Yisra’el, and Ephraim – he is My first-born. Hear the word of YHVH, O gentiles, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, ‘He who scattered Yisra’el gathers him, and shall guard him as a shepherd his flock.’ For YHVH shall ransom Ya’aqov, and redeem him from the hand of one stronger than he.”*

Ya’aqob indeed gave the “**first-born**” blessing to Ephraim over Manasseh, when he adopted them from Yoseph. He set Ephraim apart, made him “**na’zir**”, just as he had done for Yoseph. But, Ephraim sinned and led the whole of the Northern Kingdom into idolatry. But, because it was Yahweh Who instructed and guided Ya’aqob to bless Yoseph and then Ephraim with the priesthood of Melek Tzadik, He provided the “**Lamb**” for the redemption of His first-born donkey, just as he did for all Yisra’el, His first-born, in Mitzrayim.

In past teachings, we’ve discussed what it means to be “**chosen**”. We learned how we are a “**chosen people**”. As we’ve also learned that Yahweh chooses the first-born, as with Yitsaq, Ya’aqob, Yoseph and Ephraim. This is how Rabbi Sha’ul can say in **Romans 8:19-30**; *For the intense longing of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of Elohim. WOW! All creation waits for the revealing of the sons of Elohim (the chosen first-born) For the creation was subjected to futility, not from choice, but because of Him who subjected it, in anticipation, that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage to corruption into the esteemed freedom of the children of Elohim. For we know that all the creation groans together, and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only so, but even we ourselves who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, we ourselves also groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For in this expectation we were saved, but expectation that is seen is not expectation, for when anyone sees, does he expect it? And if we expect what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with endurance. And in the same way the Spirit does help in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray, but the Spirit Himself pleads our case for us with groanings unutterable. And He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the set-apart ones according to Elohim. And we know that all matters work together for good to those who love Elohim, to those who are called according to His purpose. Because those whom He knew beforehand, He also ordained beforehand to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, for Him to be the first-born among many brothers. And whom He ordained beforehand, these He also called, and whom He called, these He also declared right. And whom He declared right, these He also esteemed.*

In His foreknowledge, He knew Esaw would despise his birthright, that Re’uben would lose his birthright and that Yoseph (*through Ephraim and the rest of the Northern Kingdom*) would lose their priesthood; until they were redeemed by a High Priest after the order of the Melek Tzaddik.

As Sha’ul also says in **Colossians 1:9-15**; *That is also why we, from the day we heard, have not ceased praying for you, and asking that you be filled with the knowledge of His desire in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, to walk worthily of the Master, pleasing all, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of Elohim, being*

empowered with all power, according to the might of His esteem, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father who has made us fit to share in the inheritance of the set-apart ones in the light, who has delivered us from the authority of darkness and transferred us into the reign of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, who is the likeness of the invisible Elohim, the first-born of all creation. And Ibrim 12:22-24; But you have drawn near to Mount Tsiyon and to the city of the living Elohim, to the heavenly Yerushalayim, to myriads of messengers, to the entire gathering and assembly of the first-born having been enrolled in heaven, and to Elohim the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, and to Yahshua the Mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaks better than the blood of Hebel.

We also get our first mention of the ordinance of "**first-fruit**" in **Shemot 23:19**; "**Bring the first of the first-fruits of your land into the House of YHVH your Elohim.**" We see many times throughout Torah that the "**first-fruits**" are indeed Yahweh's. How are the "**first-fruits**" and the "**first-born**" related? As we read above in **Romans 8:23**; **And not only so, but even we ourselves who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, we ourselves also groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.** Ya'aqob/James **1:17-18** tells us; **Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change, nor shadow of turning. Having purposed it, He brought us forth by the Word of truth, for us to be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures.** And Yohanan, speaking of the 144,000 (*and we know who they are*) in **Revelation 14:4**; **They are those who were not defiled with women, for they are maidens. They are those following the Lamb wherever He leads them on. They were redeemed from among men, being first-fruits to Elohim and to the Lamb.**

Family, I urge you today to study what it means to be a "**first-born**". Consider not only your blessings; but also, what's required of you. Set yourselves apart to be what Yah has called you to. Remember, the word is "**na'zir**", "**separated**" from this world and this world system. We have a job to do and next week, we'll look at the connection our redemption and our calling have to the Land of Yisra'el and its redemption and cleansing. We play an integral part in the redemption and cleansing of Eretz Yisra'el for the coming of Mashiach. Until next week.

Baruch HaShem Yahweh !