

Torah Reading for Bo

Parshat Bo

Shabbat, 6 Shevat, 5780
1 February, 2020

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7th Portion: (Exodus 13:1-16)

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HIDE RASHI'S COMMENTARY

Exodus Chapter 13

1. The Lord spoke to Moses, saying,
2. "Sanctify to Me every firstborn, every one that opens the womb among the children of Israel among man and among animals; it is Mine."

every one that opens the womb: Heb. פָּטַר קֶל-רְחִם, which opened the womb first, [רְחִם meaning to open] as "in The beginning of strife is like letting out water" (Prov. 17:14); "פָּטַרוּ בְשָׁפָה, they will open their lips" (Ps. 22:8). — [from Mechilta, targumim]

it is Mine: For Myself I have acquired them by smiting the firstborn of Egypt. — [from Mechilta]

3. Moses said to the people, "Remember this day, when you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, for with a mighty hand, the Lord took you out of here, and [therefore] no leaven shall be eaten.

Remember this day: This teaches us that we are to mention the Exodus from Egypt daily. — [from Mechilta]

4. Today you are going out, in the month of spring.

א וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לְאֹמֶר:

ב קָדְשָׁלִי כָּל-בָּנָזֶר פְּטַר כָּל-רְחִם בְּבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאָדָם וּבְבָהָמָה לֵי
הוּא:

פְּטַר כָּל רְחִם: שִׁפְתָּח אֶת הָרֶחֶם תְּחִלָּה, כְּמוֹ (מִשְׁלֵי יְהוָה יְהוָה) פְּטַר מִים רְאשִׁית
מַדּוֹן, וְכֵן (תְּהִלָּם כְּבָבָח) יְפִתְחֵר בְּשָׁפָה, יְפִתְחֵה שְׁפָתִים:

לִהְוָא: לְעַצְמֵי קְנִיתִים עַל יְדֵי שְׁהָכִיתִי בְּכּוֹרִי מִצְרָיִם:

ג וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֱלֹהִים זְלֹזֶר אֶת-הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר יְצַאֲתֶם מִמִּצְרָיִם
מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה תְּזִכְּרָה יְהוָה יְהוָה אֶת-בְּנֵיכֶם מִזֶּה וְלֹא יָאֵל חֶםֶז:

זְכֹר אֶת הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: לְמַד שָׁמֹצִירִין יְצִיאַת מִצְרָיִם בְּכָל יוֹם:

ד הַיּוֹם אַתֶּם יְצַאַתֶּם בְּחַדְשֵׁת הַאֲבִיב:

in the month of spring: Now do we not know in what month they went out? [Early editions read: Now did they not know in what month they went out?] Rather, this is what he [Moses] said to them, "See the lovingkindness that He bestowed upon you, that He took you out in a month in which it is suitable to go out, when there is neither heat nor cold nor rain," and so it says: "He takes the prisoners out at the most opportune time (פָּשָׁר) in the month when it is best suited (בְּכָשָׁר֙ת) to go out. — [from Mechilta]

5. And it will come to pass that the Lord will bring you into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivvites, and the Jebusites, which He swore to your forefathers to give you a land flowing with milk and honey and you shall perform this service in this month.

into the land of the Canaanites, etc.: Although [Scripture] enumerated [here] only five nations, it means all seven [of the nations], for they are all included in the [term] Canaanites, [even though] there was one of the families of Canaan that had only the name Canaanite. — [from Mechilta; Tanchuma, Bo 12]

swore to your forefathers, etc.: Concerning Abraham, it says: "On that day, the Lord formed a covenant with Abram, [saying, 'To your seed I have given this land']" (Gen. 15:18); and concerning Isaac it says: "Sojourn in this land [...] for to you and to your seed I will give all these lands, and I will set up the oath that I swore to Abraham your father" (Gen. 26:3); concerning Jacob it says: "the land upon which you are lying [to you I will give it and to your seed]" (Gen. 28:13). — [from Mechilta]

flowing with milk and honey: Milk flows from the goats' [udders], and honey flows from the dates and the figs. — [from Kethuboth 111b]

this service: [that] of the Passover sacrifice (Mechilta, Pes. 96a, Mechilta d'Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai). Now was it not already stated above (12:25): "And it shall come to pass when you enter the land [that you should keep this service], etc." Now why did [Scripture] repeat it? Because of the thing that was newly introduced in it. In the former chapter (12:26), it says: "And it will come to pass if your children say to you, 'What is this service to you?'" [There,] Scripture refers to a wicked son, who excludes himself from the community [by saying "to you"], and here (verse 8), "And you shall tell your son," refers to a son who does not know to ask. Scripture teaches you that you yourself should initiate the discourse for him (Mechilta 14) with words of the Aggadah, which draw his interest [lit., draw the heart]. — [from Mechilta 18:14]

6. For seven days you shall eat unleavened cakes, and on the seventh day, there is a festival for the Lord.

7. Unleavened cakes shall be eaten during the seven days, and no leaven shall be seen of yours [in your possession], and no leavening shall be seen of yours throughout all of

בְּחִדְשָׁה הַאֲבִיב: וְכֵי לֹא הִי יְדֻעַן בְּאֵיזָה חֶדֶשׁ, אֶלָּא כִּי אָמַר לָהֶם, רָאוּ חֶסֶד שְׁגָמְלָכֶם שְׁהַוֹּצִיא אֲתֶכֶם בְּחִדְשָׁה שֶׁהָא כָּשֵׁר לְצָאת, לֹא חֶמֶת וְלֹא צְנַח וְלֹא גְּשָׁמִים. וּכְנֹה אָמַר (תְּהִלִּים סָחָז) מַוְצִיא אֲסִירִים בְּכּוּשָׁרוֹת, חֶדֶשׁ שֶׁהָא כָּשֵׁר לְצָאת:

ה וְהִי כִּי־יְבִיאָךְ יְהֹהָא אֶל־אָרֶץ הַכְּנָעָנִי וְהַחֲתִי וְהַעֲמָרִי וְהַחֲנִי וְהַיּוֹפִי אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְתָּיךְ לְנַחַת לְךְ אָרֶץ זֹבֵת חֶלְבָּן וְדָבָשׂ וְעַבְדִּתָּת אֲתִיהָעָבָדָה הַזֹּאת בְּחִדְשָׁה הַזֶּה:

אֶל אָרֶץ הַכְּנָעָנִי וְגוֹן: אָף עַל פִּי שֶׁלֹּא מְנָה אֶלָּא חֶמֶת עַמִּינִין, כָּל שְׁבָעָה גּוֹיִם בְּמִשְׁמָעָן, שְׁכּוֹלָן בְּכָל בְּנֵעַי הַמִּן, וְאַחֲתָה מִשְׁפָּחָת בְּנֵעַן הִיְתָה שֶׁלֹּא נִקְרָא לָהּ שֶׁם אֶלָּא בְּנֵעַן:

נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְתָּיךְ וְגוֹן: באברהם הוא אומר (בראשית טו ייח) ביום ההוא כרת ה' את אברהם וגו', וביצחק הוא אומר (שם כו ג) גור בארץ הַזֹּאת וגו', וביעקב הוא אומר (שם כח יג) הארץ אשר אתה שוכב עליה וגו':

זֹבֵת חֶלְבָּן וְדָבָשׂ: הַחֶלְבָּן זֹבֵת מִן הַעַזִּים וְהַדָּבָשׂ זֹבֵת מִן הַתְּמִרִים וְמִן הַתְּאַנְּבָם:

אֶת הַעֲבָדָה הַזֹּאת: שֶׁל פֶּסַח. וְהַלָּא כִּי בְּכָר נָאָמֵר לְמַעַלָּה (יב כה) וְהִי כִּי תָבֹאוּ אֶל הָאָרֶץ וגו', וְלֹמַה חֹזֶר וְשָׁנָאָה, בְּשִׁבְיל דָּבָר שְׁנַחֲדֵשׁ בָּה. בְּפִרְשָׁה רָאשׁוֹנָה נָאָמֵר (שם כו) וְהִי כִּי יָאִמְרוּ אֶלְיכֶם בְּנֵיכֶם מִהְעָבָדָה הַזֹּאת לְכֶם, בְּבִן רְשֵׁעַ הַכְּתוּב מִדְבָּר שְׁהַוֹּצִיא אֶת עַצְמֹוּמָן הַכָּלֵל, וּכְאָן (פסוק ח) וְהַגְּדָת לְבָנֶךָ, בְּבִן שֶׁאָנֹי יְדֻעַ לְשָׁאוֹל, וְהַכְּתוּב מִלְמָדָך שְׁתַפְתַּח לֹא אַתָּה בְּדִבְרֵי אָגָּדָה הַמוֹשְׁכִּין אֶת הַלְּבָב:

ו שְׁבָעַת יְמִים תִּאְכַּל מִצְאָת וּבִזּוֹת הַשְּׁבִיעִי חֶג לְהַזָּה:

ז מִצְאָת יָאַכְלָת שְׁבָעַת הַיּוֹם וְלֹא־יָרָאָה לְכֶן חֶמֶת וְלֹא־יָרָאָה לְכֶן

your borders.

שָׁאַר בְּכָל־גָּבְלָה:

8. And you shall tell your son on that day, saying, "Because of this, the Lord did [this] for me when I went out of Egypt."

Because of this: In order that I fulfill His commandments, such as these [commandments of] the Passover sacrifice, matzah, and bitter herbs. — [from Jonathan, Passover Haggadah]

the Lord did [this] for me: [Scripture] alluded to a reply to the wicked son, to say, "the Lord did [this] for me," but not for you. Had you been there, you would not have been worthy of being redeemed. — [from Mechilta]

9. And it shall be to you as a sign upon your hand and as a remembrance between your eyes, in order that the law of the Lord shall be in your mouth, for with a mighty hand the Lord took you out of Egypt.

And it shall be to you as a sign: The Exodus from Egypt shall be to you as a sign. — [from Jonathan]

upon your hand and as a remembrance between your eyes: This means that you shall write these passages [verses 1:10 and 11:16] and bind them on the head and on the arm.

upon your hand: On the left hand. Therefore, in the second section, (Verse 16) is written with the full spelling, to explain thereby [that it means] the hand (תְּבַחַת) that is weaker (בְּכַחַת) that is weaker (תְּבַחַת). — [from Men. 37b]

10. And you shall keep this statute at its appointed time, from year to year.

from year to year: Heb. מִמֵּתִים 'מִמֵּתִים, from year to year. — [from Onkelos].

11. And it will come to pass when the Lord will bring you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and to your forefathers, and He has given it to you,

And it will come to pass when... will bring you: Some of our Sages learned from here that the firstborn that were born in the desert were not sanctified. The one who rules that they were sanctified explains this "entry" as saying: If you fulfill it [this commandment] in the desert, you will merit to fulfill it there [in the Holy Land]. — [from Bechoroth 4b]

as He swore to you: Now where did He swear to you? "And I will bring you to the land, concerning which I

ח וְהִגְדַּת לְבִנְךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר בַּעֲבוּר זֶה עָשָׂה יְהוָה לְיִצְחָקְךָ מִמּוֹצָרִים:

בעבור זה: בעבור שאקיים מצוותין, כגון פסח מצה ומרור הללו:

עָשָׂה ה' לְיִצְחָק: רמז תשובה לבן רשות לומר, עשה ה' לְיִצְחָק, שאלות היה שם לא היה כדאי ליגאל:

ט וְהִיה לְךָ לְאֹזֶת עַל־דֶּקֶךְ וְלֹזֶרֶן בֵּין עַיִּינֶךָ לְמַעַן תַּהֲרֵה תּוֹרַת יְהוָה בְּפִידָּךְ בַּיּוֹם חִזְקָה הַזֹּאת יְהוָה מִמּוֹצָרִים:

והיה לך לאות: יציאת מצרים תהיה לך לאות:

על דֶּקֶךְ וְלֹזֶרֶן בֵּין עַיִּינֶךָ: שתכתב פרשיות הללו ותקשרם בראש ובזרוע:

על דֶּקֶךְ: יד שמאל, לפיכך יזכה מלא בפרשה שנייה (פסוק טז) לחדש בה, יד שהייא כהה:

וְשִׁמְרָת אֶת־הַחֲקָקָה הַזֹּאת לְמַזְעָדָה מִימִים יִמְמִהָה:

ימים ימימה: משנה לשנה:

יא וְהִיא כִּי־יָבָאָךְ יְהוָה אֶל־אֶרֶץ הַכָּנָעָנִי בְּאַשְׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְךָ וְלֹא־בְּתִיכְתַּיב וְנִתְגַּנֵּה לך:

והיה כי יבאך: יש מרבותינו שלמדו מכאן שלא קדשו בכוורות הנולדים במדבר, והואומר שקדשו מפרש ביה ז' לומר אם תקייםו במדבר תזכו ליבכם לארץ ותקיימוהו שם:

נִשְׁבַּע לְךָ: והיכן נשבע לך, והבאתי אתכם אל הארץ אשר נשאתי וגו' (שמות

raised, etc." ([Exod. 6:8](#)). — [from Mechilta]

and He has given it to you: It should seem to you as if He gave it to you today, and it should not seem to you as an inheritance from your forefathers. — [from Mechilta]

12. that you shall give over to the Lord whatever opens the womb, and every miscarriage that opens the womb of an animal which will be yours, the males belong to the Lord.

That you shall give over: Heb. **וְהַעֲבֹרָת** is only an expression of separation, and so [Scripture] states: "and you shall give over (וְהַעֲבֹרָתֶם) his inheritance to his daughter" ([Num. 27:8](#)). — [from Mechilta]

and every miscarriage: Heb. **שְׁגָרָתָן**, an aborted fetus, which its mother ejected (שְׁגָרָתָן) and sent out before its time. The text teaches you that it is holy in regards to freeing the one that follows it. A fetus that is not aborted is also called **שָׁגָר**, like "the offspring (שָׁגָר) of your cattle" ([Deut. 7:13](#)), but this [verse] came only to teach [us] about the aborted fetus, because [Scripture] already stated: "whatever opens the womb." If you say that the firstborn of an unclean animal is meant, [Scripture] came and explained elsewhere "of your cattle and of your flocks" ([Deut. 15:19](#)). In another way we can explain: "you shall give over to the Lord whatever opens the womb," that the text speaks of the firstborn of man. — [from Mechilta]

13. And every firstborn donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, and if you do not redeem [it], you shall decapitate it, and every firstborn of man among your sons, you shall redeem.

firstborn donkey: But not the firstborn of other unclean animals (Mechilta). This is a biblical edict [decreed that the firstling donkey be redeemed] because the firstborn of the Egyptians were likened to donkeys. Moreover, because they [the donkeys] assisted the Israelites in their departure from Egypt, (for there was not a single Israelite who did not take donkeys from Egypt) laden with the silver and gold of the Egyptians. — [from Bech. 5b]

you shall redeem with a lamb: He must give the lamb to a kohen. The firstborn donkey is permitted to be used, and the lamb is the ordinary property [i.e., unconsecrated] of the kohen. — [from Bech. 9a, b] [i.e., the lamb has no sanctity and may be used by the kohen.]

you shall decapitate it: He decapitates it with a cleaver from behind and kills it (Bech. 13a). He caused the kohen to lose his money [by neglecting to give him the redemption lamb]. Therefore, he must lose his own money [by decapitating his donkey]. — [from Bech. 10b]

and every firstborn of man among your sons, you shall redeem: His redemption [price] is established elsewhere ([Num. 18:16](#)) as five selas.

ו (ח):

ונתנה לך: תהא בעיניך כאלו נתנה לך בו ביום, ולא תהי בעיניך כירושת אבות:

יב וְהַעֲבֹרָת כָּל-פְּטַר-רָחֶם לִיהְוָה וְכָל-פְּטַר | שְׁגָר בְּהִמָּה אֲשֶׁר יְהִי לְךָ מִזְכָּרִים לִיהְוָה:

והעברת: אין והעברת אלא לשון הפרשה, וכן הוא אומר (במדבר כז ח) והעברתם את נחלתו לבתו:

שְׁגָר בְּהִמָּה: נפל שוגרתו אמו ושלחוו בלי עתו, ולמדך הכתוב שהוא קדוש ברכורה לפטור את הבא אחריו. ואף שאינו נפל קרווי שגר, כמו ([דברים ז יג](#)) שגר אלף. אבל זה לא בא אלא למד על הנפל שהרי כבר כתיב כל פטור רחם. ואם תאמר אף בכור מה מה טמאה במשמע בא ופירש במקום אחר ([דברים טו יט](#)) בברך ובצאנך. לשון אחר יש לפירוש והעברת כל פטור רחם, בבורא אדם הכתוב מדבר:

יג וְכָל-פְּטַר חָמֵר תִּפְדֹּה בְּשָׁה וְאַסְמָלָא תִּפְדֹּה וְעַרְפָּתָו וְכָל בְּכֹר אָדָם בְּבָנֵיךְ תִּפְדֹּה:

פטור חמץ: ולא פטור שאר בהמה טמאה, וגזרת הכתוב היא לפני שנמשלו בכורי מצרים לחמורים. ועוד, שסיעו את ישראל ביציאתן ממצרים, שאין לך אחד מישראל שלא נטל הרבה חמורים טעונים מכספים ומזהבם של מצרים:

תפודה בשעה: נותן שה לכהן ופטור חמוץ מותר בהנאה והשה חולין ביד כהן:

וערפתו: עורפו בקופץ מאחוריו והורגנו. הוא הפסיד ממונו של כהן, לפיכך יפסיד ממונו:

וכל בכור אדם בבניך תפודה: חמץ סלעים פדיונו קצוב במקום אחר:

14. And it will come to pass if your son asks you in the future, saying, "What is this?" you shall say to him, "With a mighty hand did the Lord take us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

if your son asks you in the future: Heb. מִקְרָר מִקְרָר sometimes means "now" and sometimes means "at a later time," such as it does here and such as "In time to come מִקְרָר, your children might say to our children" (Josh. 22:24), which refers to the children of Gad and the children of Reuben. — [from Mechilta]

"What is this?": This is [the question of] the simple child, [referred to in the Haggadah,] who does not know how to pose his question in depth, and asks a general question: "What is this?" Elsewhere it [Scripture] says: "What are the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments, etc.?" (Deut. 6: 20). This is the question of the wise son. The Torah spoke regarding four sons: the wicked one (Exod. 12:26), the one who does not understand to ask (Exod. 13:8), the one who asks [a] general [question], and the one who asks in a wise manner. — [from Yerushalmi, Pes. 10:4]

15. And it came to pass when Pharaoh was too stubborn to let us out, the Lord slew every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore, I slaughter [for a sacrifice] all males that open the womb, and every firstborn of my sons I will redeem.

16. And it shall be for a sign upon your hand and for ornaments between your eyes, for with a mighty hand did the Lord take us out of Egypt.

and for ornaments between your eyes: Heb. אֶל-תְּשִׁפְתָּה, tefillin. Since they are [composed of] four compartments, they are called טפּות, טפּות in Coptic meaning two, and פּתּ in Afriki (Phrygian) meaning two (Men. 34b) [thus 2+2=4 boxes of tefillin]. Menachem (Machbereth Menachem p. 99), however, classified it [טפּות] with "Speak (תֹּאמֶר) to the south" (Ezek. 21:2) and "Preach not (תֹּאמֶר) not" (Micah 2:6), an expression of speech, like "and as a remembrance" (Exod. 13:9), for whoever sees them [the tefillin] bound between the eyes will recall the miracle [of the Exodus] and speak about it.

ד וְהִיא כִּי-יִשְׁאַלְךָ בָּנֶךָ מַחָר לְאָמֵר מַה-זֶּאת וְאָמְרָתָךָ אֶלָּיו בְּחִזְקָךְ זֶה הַזְּעִינָנוּ יְהוָה מִמְּצָרִים מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים:

כִּי-יִשְׁאַלְךָ בָּנֶךָ: יְשַׁׁ מַחָר שְׁהָוָא לְאָחָר זָמָן, כְּגֹון זֶה וְכֹגֹון (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כְּבָבְדָּה) מַחָר יְאָמְרוּ בְּנֵיכֶם לְבָנֵינוּ, דְּבָנֵי גָּד וְבָנֵי רָאוּבָן:

מַה-זֶּאת: זֶה תִּינּוּק טְפֵשׁ שְׁאַיְנוּ יְדַעַּ לְהֻמֵּיק שְׁאַלְתָּו וְסָוָתָם וְשָׁוָאַלְתָּו מַה-זֶּאת, וּבָמָקוֹם אַחֲרָה הוּא אָוָמֵר (דְּבָרִים 1 כ) מַה-הָעֲדוֹת וְהַחֲקִים וְהַמִּשְׁפְּטִים וְגוֹ', הַרְזִיאָת שְׁאַלְתָּה בְּנֵחֶם. דְּבָרָה תּוֹרָה כְּנֶגֶד אַרְבָּעָה בְּנִים, רְשֻׁעַ וְשְׁאַיְנוּ יְדַעַּ לְשָׁאַל וְהַשְׁוֹאַל דָּרְךָ סְתֻומָה וְהַשְׁוֹאַל דָּרְךָ חַכְמָה:

טו וַיֹּאמֶר יְהֹוָה פְּרֻעָה לְשִׁלְחָנָנוּ וַיֹּהֶג יְהֹוָה כָּל-בְּכֹור בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם מִבְּלָר אָדָם וְעַד-בְּכֹור בְּהָמָה עַל-כֵּן אֲנֵי זָבֵחׁ לְיהֹוָה כָּל-פְּטַר לְחַטָּאת הַזּוּכָּרִים וְכָל-בְּכֹור בְּנֵי אֱפָדָה:

טו וְהִיא לְאֹתָה עַל-יָדֶךָ וְלְטוּטָף בֵּין עַינִיךָ בַּי בְּחִזְקָךְ זֶה הַזְּעִינָנוּ יְהוָה מִמְּצָרִים:

וְלְטוּטָף: תְּפִלִין, וְעַל שֵׁם שָׁהָם אַרְבָּעָה בְּתִים קְרוּיִין טְפִיפָת, טְט בְּכַתְפִי שְׁתִים, פָת בְּאָפְרִיקִי שְׁתִים. וּמְנַחַם חֲבָרוּ עַם (יְחִזְקָאֵל כָּא ב) וְהַטָּף אֶל דָרוּם, (מִיכָה ב ו) אֶל תְּטִיפָו, לְשׁוֹן דָבוּר, כְמו (לְעַל פְּסָוק ט) וּלְכָרְזָן, שְׁהָרְאָה אֶתְכָסְרָם קְשָׁוִרִים בֵּין הָעִינִים יִזְכּוּרָה הַנֵּס וַיַּדְבֵר בָו:

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