

Goats & Coats: The Korban Pesach and the Sale of Yosef

Shabbat Learning — Shalev Family

Part 1 — The Brothers and Yosef (Bereishit 37:23–33)

The brothers strip Yosef's coat, throw him in a pit, sell him, and deceive their father.

כג (23)

וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר-בָּא יוֹסֵף אֶל-אֶחָיו וַיַּפְשִׁיטוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף אֶת-כְּתֹנֶתוֹ אֶת-כְּתֹנֶת הַפָּסִים אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו:

When Joseph came up to his brothers, they stripped Joseph of his **tunic**, the **ornamented tunic** that he was wearing,

כד (24)

וַיִּקְחֵהוּ וַיִּשְׁלְכוּ אֹתוֹ הַבְּרֵה וְהַבּוֹר רֶק אֵין בּוֹ מַיִם:

and took him and cast him into the **pit**. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

כה (25)

וַיֵּשְׁבוּ לְאֶכְל־לֶחֶם וַיֵּשְׂאוּ עֵינֵיהֶם וַיֵּרְאוּ וְהִנֵּה אַרְחַת יִשְׁמַעֲאֵלִים בָּאָה מִגִּלְעָד וּגְמָלֵיהֶם נִשְׂאִים נָכָת וּצְרִי וְלֹט הוֹלְכִים לְהוֹרִיד מִצְרָיִמָּה:

Then they **sat down to a meal**. Looking up, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, their camels bearing gum, balm, and ladanum to be taken to Egypt.

כו (26)

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה אֶל-אֶחָיו מִה-כִּצָּע כִּי נִהְרַג אֶת-אֶחָיו וַיִּכְסִּינוּ אֶת-דָּמּוֹ:

Then Judah said to his brothers, "What do we gain by killing **our brother** and covering up his blood?

כז (27)

לָכֵן וְנִמְכְּרֵנוּ לְיִשְׁמַעֲאֵלִים וְיִדְּנוּ אֶל-תְּהִיבּוֹ כִּי-אֶחָיו בְּשָׁרֵנוּ הוּא וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶחָיו:

Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, but let us not do away with him ourselves. After all, **he is our brother, our own flesh**." His brothers agreed.

כח (28)

וַיַּעֲבְרוּ אַנְשֵׁים מִדְּיָנִים סֹחְרִים וַיִּמְשְׁכוּ וַיַּעֲלוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף מִן-הַבּוֹר וַיִּמְכְּרוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף לְיִשְׁמַעֲאֵלִים בְּעֶשְׂרִים כֶּסֶף וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף מִצְרָיִמָּה:

When those Midianite traders passed by, the brothers pulled Joseph up out of the pit. They sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites, who brought Joseph to **Egypt**.

כט (29)

וַיָּשָׁב רְאוּבֵן אֶל-הַבּוֹר וְהִנֵּה אֵין-יוֹסֵף בַּבּוֹר וַיִּקְרַע אֶת-בְּגָדָיו:

When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he rent his clothes.

(30) ל

וַיָּשָׁב אֶל־אֶחָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הִלֵּד אֵינֶנּוּ וְאֲנִי אָנֹכִי אֲנִי־בָא:

Returning to his brothers, he said, "The boy is gone! Now, what am I to do?"

(31) לא

וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־כְּתֹנֶת יוֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁחָטוּ שְׂעִיר עִזִּים וַיִּטְבְּלוּ אֶת־הַכְּתֹנֶת בָּדָם:

Then they took Joseph's tunic, slaughtered a kid, and dipped the tunic in the blood .

(32) לב

וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ אֶת־כְּתֹנֶת הַפָּסִים וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶל־אֲבִיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ זֹאת מָצָאנוּ הַכֹּרֶן־נָא הַכְּתֹנֶת בְּנֶךְ הוּא אִם־לֹא:

They had the ornamented tunic taken to their father, and they said, "We found this. Please examine it ; is it your son's tunic or not?"

(33) לג

וַיִּכְרָה וַיֹּאמֶר כְּתֹנֶת בְּנִי חַיָּה רָעָה אֲכָלָתָהּ טָרֵף טָרֵף יוֹסֵף:

He recognized it, and said, "My son's tunic! A savage beast devoured him! Joseph was torn by a beast!"

Part 2 — The Korban Pesach (Shemot 12:1–13)

God commands the Israelites — as families and as a nation — to prepare the Passover sacrifice in Egypt.

(1) א

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאַל־אַהֲרֹן בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֵאמֹר:

GOD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt:

(2) ב

הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם רִאשׁוֹן חֳדָשִׁים רִאשׁוֹן הוּא לָכֶם לְחֹדֶשִׁי הַשָּׁנָה:

This month shall mark for you the beginning of the months; it shall be the first of the months of the year for you.

(3) ג

דַּבְּרוּ אֶל־כָּל־עַדַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר בְּעֶשֶׂר לַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה וַיִּקְחוּ לָהֶם אִישׁ שֹׂה לְבֵיתֹהוּ:

Speak to the whole community of Israel and say that on the tenth of this month each family shall take for itself a lamb, a lamb to a household.

(4) ד

וְאִם־יִמְעַט הַבַּיִת מִהְיוֹת מִשֹּׂה וְלָקַח הוּא וְשִׁכְנוֹ הַקָּרֹב אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ בְּמִכְסַּת נֶפֶשׁ אִישׁ לִפִּי אֲכָלוּ תִּכְסּוּ עַל־הַשֹּׂה:

But if the household is too small for a lamb, let it share one with a neighbor who dwells nearby, in proportion to the number of persons: you shall contribute for the lamb according to what each household will eat.

(5) ה

שֹׂה תָּמִים זָכָר בֶּן־שָׁנָה יִהְיֶה לָכֶם מִן־הַבָּכְשִׁים וּמִן־הָעִזִּים תִּקְחוּ:

Your lamb shall be without blemish, a yearling male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

(6) ו

וְהָיָה לָכֶם לִמְשַׁמֶּרֶת עַד אֶרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה וְשִׁחֲטוּ אֹתוֹ כָּל קָהָל עַד־יִשְׂרָאֵל בֵּין הָעֶרְבָּיִם:

You shall keep watch over it until the fourteenth day of this month; and all the assembled congregation of the Israelites shall slaughter it at twilight.

(7) ז

וְלָקְחוּ מִן־הַדָּם וַיָּתִינוּ עַל־שְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזוֹת וְעַל־הַמַּשְׁקוּף עַל הַבָּתִּים אֲשֶׁר־יֹאכְלוּ אֹתוֹ בָּהֶם:

They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they are to eat it.

(8) ח

וְאָכְלוּ אֶת־הַבָּשָׂר בַּלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה צֹלִי־אֵשׁ וּמִצּוֹת עַל־מַרְרִים יֹאכְלֶהוּ:

They shall eat the flesh that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs.

(9) ט

אֶל־תֹּאכְלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ נֶא וּבִשָּׁל מִבֶּשֶׁל בְּמִים כִּי אִם־צִלִּי־אֵשׁ רֹאשׁוֹ עַל־כַּרְעֵיו וְעַל־קַרְבּוֹ:

Do not eat any of it raw, or cooked in any way with water, but roasted — head, legs, and entrails — over the fire.

(10) י

וְלֹא־תוֹתִירוּ מִמֶּנּוּ עַד־בֹּקֶר וְהַנֶּתֶר מִמֶּנּוּ עַד־בֹּקֶר בָּאֵשׁ תִּשְׂרֹפוּ:

You shall not leave any of it over until morning; if any of it is left until morning, you shall burn it.

(11) יא

וְכַכֵּה תֹאכְלוּ אוֹתוֹ מִתְנַיִכֶם חֲגָרִים נַעֲלֵיכֶם בְּרַגְלֵיכֶם וּמִקְלַכֶּם בְּיָדְכֶם וְאָכַלְתֶּם אוֹתוֹ בְּחִפְזוֹן פֶּסַח הוּא לַיהוָה:

This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly: it is a **passover offering** to GOD.

(12) יב

וְעִבְרָתִי בְּאַרְצ־מִצְרַיִם בַּלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה וְהַכִּיתִי כָל־בְּכוֹר בְּאַרְצ־מִצְרַיִם מֵאָדָם וְעַד־בְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם אֶעֱשֶׂה שְׁפָטִים אֲנִי יְהוָה:

For that night I will go through the land of Egypt and strike down every first-born in the land of Egypt, both human and animal; and I will mete out punishments to all the gods of Egypt, I GOD.

(13) יג

וְהָיָה הַדָּם לָכֶם לְאֹת עַל הַבָּתִּים אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם שָׁם וְרָאִיתִי אֶת־הַדָּם וּפָסַחְתִּי עֲלֵכֶם וְלֹא־יְהִי־בָכֶם נֶגֶף לְמַשְׁחִית בְּהֶכְתִּי בְּאַרְצ־מִצְרַיִם:

And the **blood** on the **houses** where you are staying shall be a sign for you: when I see the blood I will pass over you, so that no plague will destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

Discussion Questions

Read both sections. Look for connections between the two stories. Underline or circle words and ideas that appear in both.

1. **The Animal:** In Bereishit 37:31, what animal do the brothers slaughter? In Shemot 12:5, what animal can the Korban Pesach come from? What do you notice?
2. **The Blood:** What do the brothers do with the blood in Bereishit 37:31? What do the Israelites do with the blood in Shemot 12:7? One is used to *deceive* — what is the other used for?
3. **The Meal:** What do the brothers do right after throwing Yosef in the pit (37:25)? What are the Israelites commanded to do with the Korban Pesach (12:8)? How are these two meals different in spirit?
4. **Together or Apart:** What happens to the family in the Yosef story — do the brothers stay together or break apart? What does the Korban Pesach require about how it's eaten (12:3–4)? What's the Torah trying to teach by making this a *family* sacrifice?
5. **Egypt:** Where does Yosef end up (37:28)? Where are the Israelites when they bring the Korban Pesach (12:1)? The brothers *sent* one person to Egypt — now the whole nation is there. What happened?
6. **The Big Question:** If the Korban Pesach is a "do-over" of the sale of Yosef, what is God asking the nation to fix? What went wrong the first time, and how does the Pesach night fix it?
7. **For Us Today:** What does this teach about what Pesach is really about — beyond "we were slaves and God freed us"?

Sources: Bereishit 37:23–33, Shemot 12:1–13 (JPS translation). Highlighted words mark key parallels.
Inspired by Rabbi David Fohrman's "Goats & Coats" teaching (AlephBeta.org).