



goats.

**ספר שמות פרק יב Shemot / Exodus 12:1-5**

א ויאמר יהוה אל-משה  
ואל-אהרן בארץ מצרים  
לאמר: ב החדש הזה לכם  
ראש חֲדָשִׁים ראשון הוא לכם  
לחדשי השנה: ג דברו אל-  
כל-עַדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל לאמר בעשר  
לחדש הזה ויקחו להם איש  
שה לבית-אבתו שה לבית:  
ד ואם-ימעט הבית מהיות  
משוה ולקח הוא ושכנו הקרוב  
אל-ביתו במכסת נפשות איש  
לפי אכלו תכסו על-השה: ה  
שה תמים זכר בן-שנה יהיה  
לכם מן-הכבשים ומן-העזים  
תקחו:

12:1 Now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 12:2 ‘This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. 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. 12:4 ‘Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. 12:5 ‘Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. (NASB)

In the middle of Parashat Bo we read, ה שה תמים זכר בן-שנה יהיה, 12:5 *‘Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. (NASB)* The text states the lamb is to be taken from either the sheep or the goats. The taking from either the sheep or the goats seems to be an interesting point that is seldom mentioned. Rashi has the following to say concerning this verse.

**Rashi on Exodus 12:5, Part 3**

מן הכבשים ומן העזים — *i. e. either from these (a lamb) or from these (a goat) (i. e. the וּמִן does not signify “and”, but “or”); for a goat, also, is called שה, as it is said, (Deuteronomy 14:4) “the שה of the goats” (שה means the young animal, either of the sheep or of the goats) (cf. Mekhilta).*

Rashi states the obvious, based upon the Torah portion, that the word Seh (שֵׁה) is a description of a young animal of either the sheep or the goats. Rashi refers to the Mekhilta which states the following:

***Mekhilta d’Rabbi Yishmael 12:5, Part 4***

*“shall you take”: What is the intent of this? (i.e., it seems redundant.) It is written (Devarim 16:2) “And you shall slaughter the Pesach for the L rd your G d, sheep and cattle” — sheep for the Pesach (offering) and cattle for the chagigah (the festive offering.) You say this, but perhaps (the meaning is) both for the Pesach? And how would I understand (Exodus 12:5) “an unblemished lamb, a male”? As referring to the Pesach of Egypt, but Pesach for all the generations he could bring either (sheep or cattle). It is, therefore, written “Of the lambs or of the goats shall you take.” Why (the redundant) shall you take?” That the Pesach for all the generations be brought only from the sheep or from the goats (but not from the cattle). These are the words of R. Yoshiyah. R. Yonathan says: sheep for the Pesach and cattle for the chagigah. You say this, but perhaps (the meaning is) both for the Pesach? And how would I understand (Exodus 12:5) “an unblemished lamb, a male”? As referring to the Pesach of Egypt, but the Pesach for all the generations he could bring either (sheep or cattle). It is, therefore, written Ibid. 13:5) “then (in Canaan) you shall perform this service (of Pesach) on this month” — As the service that you performed in Egypt (i.e., from the sheep or from the goats), thus shall you perform in all the generations. These are the words of R. Yonathan. R. Eliezer says: Sheep for the Pesach and cattle for the chagigah. You say this, but perhaps both are for the Pesach? And how would I understand “an unblemished lamb, etc.”? As referring to the Pesach of Egypt, but for the Pesach of all the generations (I would say that he brings from both. It is, therefore, written (Ibid. 12:24) “And you shall keep this thing as a statute for you and for your children forever.”*

*This refers to the Pesach of all the generations. How, then, am I to understand “And you shall slaughter the Pesach to the L-rd your G d, sheep and cattle”? Sheep for the Pesach and cattle for the chagigah. R. Akiva says: One verse states “And you shall slaughter the Pesach to the L rd your G d, sheep and cattle,” and another, “From the sheep and from the goats shall you take.” How are these two verses to be reconciled? This is a (hermeneutical) rule, viz. If two verses in the Torah seem to be mutually contradictory, let them remain in their place until a third verse comes to decide between them. It is, therefore, written (Ibid. 12:21) “Draw forth and take unto yourselves sheep for your families and slaughter the Pesach.” R. Yishmael says: That verse (Devarim 16:2) (“sheep and cattle”) speaks of the chagigah that is brought on Pesach. You say this, but perhaps it speaks of the Pesach itself? “An unblemished lamb, a male” speaks of the Pesach itself. How, then, am I to understand “And you shall slaughter the Pesach to your G d (sheep and cattle)”? As referring to the chagigah that comes with the Pesach. Rabbi says: That verse is speaking of an offering that comes from either sheep or cattle, i.e., peace-offerings (shelamim) — whence they ruled: A Pesach “surplus” is used for peace-offerings. (i.e., in the instance of an intended Pesach offering which was lost and replaced by another, and then found.)*

The rabbis have quite the discussion on the differences between the sheep and the goats (cattle). The Mekhilta divides the meaning of the verse from *Shemot / Exodus 12:5* as a reference to sheep for Pesach, and cattle for Chagigah (the festival offering). The basic consensus is that for the Pesach of Egypt they used a lamb. For the generations to come they could use either a young animal from the sheep or the goats. The discussion proceeds with why either sheep or goat may be used during Pesach. The conclusion by the rabbis is for Pesach one uses a lamb, and for Chagigah one may take from the goats. The idea here is that there are significant differences between using a goat as opposed to using a lamb for Pesach. Why do you think these differences are significant?

In addition, Moshe writes specifically in the Torah that the מְשֻׁפָּחוֹת (families, *Shemot / Exodus 12:21-23*) are to take a lamb rather than directing the individual to take the lamb for slaughter. This is very significant. Can you think of the reason why? The reason may be related to the individual being a part of the family unit. Families (מְשֻׁפָּחוֹת) are a composition of individuals. The deliverance from the destroyer is found within the context of the first born and the entire family. Having a faithful family is an important part of our faith before God. This appears to be implied according to Parashat Lech Lecha when the Lord told Abram that all of the מְשֻׁפָּחוֹת (families) of the earth would be blessed in his seed. Note also the family of God is a composition of individuals from all nations, which may be alluded to from the Torah text. (*Shemot / Exodus 12:5*) This may be further emphasized from the covenant blessings given to Abraham in the Torah.

In Parashat Lech Lecha (*Bereshit / Genesis 12:1-17:27*) the Lord God calls on Abraham to go out from his land from his father's house, and from his people (וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם לֵךְ-לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל-) (הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָרָאךָ) to a new place, a new land, and a new way of living. The Lord promises to bless Abraham and make him into a great nation (וְאָעֲשֶׂה לְךָ לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל) and that those who bless him, the Lord will bless, and those who curse him, the Lord will curse (וְאִבְרַכָּה מְבַרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אָאֵר). Again, in God's call on Abraham's life, we are told all the families of the earth will be blessed (וַנְּבַרְכֶנּוּ בָךְ כָּל מְשֻׁפָּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה).

In the MT, Moshe uses the word ha'adamah (הָאָדָמָה, Earth) as opposed to ha'aretz (הָאָרֶץ), which may be a reference to the families of "the Earth" versus the families of "the Land" (Israel) will be blessed (see *Bereshit / Genesis 12:3*, וַנְּבַרְכֶנּוּ אֶת-אָאֵר וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אָאֵר וַנְּבַרְכֶנּוּ אֶת-אָאֵר וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אָאֵר). The Scriptures say "all of the families of the ground" taking from the meaning that God created man from the dust of the earth (וַיִּצְרָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם עָפָר מִן-הָאָדָמָה) in *Bereshit / Genesis 2:7*. The Targum Onkelos translates these Scriptures into Aramaic saying, all the "seed of the earth" will be blessed (וַיְתַבְּרֶנּוּ בְדִילָךְ כָּל יִרְ-). Families are translated as the seed of the ground (adamah) to suggest God's covenant is for all who would join themselves with Israel.

In the covenant the Lord God is making with Abraham, the Lord makes a promise personally with Abram, and to his descendants (Israel), and to all the world (non-Jewish peoples). Remember, in the *Talmud Bavli Avodah Zarah 2b* and in *Midrash Rabba Bamidbar Parashat 1, Part 7*, the rabbis say our Father in Heaven offered the Torah to all the nations of the earth, and Israel was the only nation who accepted it. The rabbis also conclude that God intended for all men (both Jew and non-Jew) to receive and accept His Torah and to be blessed in His promised Messiah.

The Torah provides six places where the Lord reaffirms (confirms) His covenant with Abraham in the MT (*Bereshit / Genesis 15:18-21, 17:1-8, 18:18, 22:18, 26:4, and 28:14.*)

### פרשת לך לך ספר בראשית פרק יב פסוק ג

ג וְאַבְרָהָהּ מְבָרְכִיהָ וּמְקַלְלָהּ אָאָר וְנִבְרָכֹוּ בָהּ כָּל מְשֻׁפָּחֹת  
הָאָדָמָה:

### פרשת וירא ספר בראשית פרק יח פסוק יח

יח וְאַבְרָהָם הָיָו יְהִיָה לְגוֹי גָדוֹל וְעַצוֹם וְנִבְרָכֹוּ-בּוֹ כָּל גּוֹיֵי  
הָאָרֶץ:

### פרשת וירא ספר בראשית פרק כב פסוק יח

יח וְהִתְבָּרְכֹוּ בְּזֵרְעָהּ כָּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ עֲקֵב אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקִלְיִ:

### פרשת תולדת ספר בראשית פרק כו פסוק ד

ד וְהִרְבִּיתִי אֶת-זֵרְעָהּ כְּכֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנָתַתִּי לְזֵרְעָהּ אֶת כָּל-  
הָאָרֶצַת הָאֵל וְהִתְבָּרְכֹוּ בְּזֵרְעָהּ כָּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ:

### פרשת ויצא ספר בראשית פרק כח פסוק יד

יד וְהָיָה זֵרְעָהּ כְּעֵפֶר הָאָרֶץ וּפְרָצְתָּ יָמָה וְקִדְמָה וְצַפְנָה וְנִגְבָּה  
וְנִבְרָכֹוּ בָהּ כָּל-מְשֻׁפָּחֹת הָאָדָמָה וּבְזֵרְעָהּ:

Comparing these texts with *Bereshit / Genesis 12:3*, it is interesting to note the differences in the Hebrew words used when God made the covenant blessing of Abraham's seed at different times. Examining the differ-

ences between the various verses, in *Bereshit / Genesis 12:3* it states that “in you all the families (מִשְׁפָּחֹת) of the earth shall be blessed,” whereas in *Bereshit / Genesis 18:18*, the Scriptures say, “and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed” (וַיְבָרְכוּ-בוֹ כָּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ) using the word goyim. The Targum Onkelos states, “all the peoples of the earth will be blessed” (וַיִּתְבָּרְכוּ בְדִילִיָּה כָּל עַמְמֵי אֲרֻעָא). *Bereshit / Genesis 22:18* states “and in your descendants (וְעַצְמוֹם, in your bones) all the nations of the earth will be blessed.” *Bereshit / Genesis 26:4* states “by your seed (בְּזֶרְעֶךָ) all the nations of the earth shall be blessed” and *Bereshit / Genesis 28:14* states that “in you (בְּךָ) shall all the families (מִשְׁפָּחֹת) of the earth be blessed, even in your seed (וּבְזֶרְעֶךָ).” The significance of the change in wording from מִשְׁפָּחֹת (families), to גּוֹיֵי (nations), and עַמְמֵי (people) is the manner in which God is making his covenantal promise to Abraham, by incorporating a future expectation of the Lord calling out to all the peoples of the earth, all the nations, all families, whether Jewish or non-Jewish inviting everyone to this promise that the Lord is giving His blessing to His people in and through Abraham and his seed. Could this be representative of the Torah text regarding הַשֶּׁה תָּמִים וְזָכָר בֶּן-שָׁנָה יְהִי לָכֶם מִן-הַכְּבָשִׂים וּמִן-הָעִזִּים תִּקְחוּ: 12:5 *Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.*(NASB) the lamb is to be taken from either the sheep or the goats?

Again, the interesting point about all of these things is that the individual is not mentioned, rather, within the context we are given, according to the Torah, is a family and nation that are described as being blessed. These Scriptures in and of themselves speak of the importance of community rather than individuality. This is emphasized in all of Scripture. Today the individuality in the church seems to be more and more prevalent, regarding interpretation and truth of God’s word. The Lord is not about “*individuality*,” He is about community, family, and relationship.

Based upon the Torah, the family is very important. In addition, the individual within the family, specifically the father of a family, is also very important according to the Tanach. Joshua chapter 7 provides insight on this topic.

### **Joshua 7:1-26**

*7:1 But the sons of Israel acted unfaithfully in regard to the things under the ban, for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, took some of the things under the ban, therefore the anger of the Lord burned against the sons of Israel. • • • 7:4 So about three thousand men from the people went up there, but they fled from the men of Ai. 7:5 The men of Ai struck down about thirty-six of their men, and pursued them from the gate as far as Shebarim and struck them down on the descent, so the hearts of the people melted and became as water. 7:6 Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the Lord until the evening, both he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust on their heads. 7:7 Joshua said, 'Alas, O Lord God, why did You ever bring this people over the Jordan, only to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? If only we had been willing to dwell beyond the Jordan! 7:8 'O Lord, what can I say since Israel has turned their back before their enemies? 7:9 'For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it, and they will surround us and cut off our name from the earth. And what will You do for Your great name?' 7:10 So the Lord said to Joshua, 'Rise up! Why is it that you have fallen on your face? 7:11 'Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. And they have even taken some of the things under the ban and have both stolen and deceived. Moreover, they have also put them among their own things. 7:12 'Therefore the sons of Israel cannot stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, for they have become accursed. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy the things under the ban from your midst.*

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*7:16 So Joshua arose early in the morning and brought Israel near by tribes, and the tribe of Judah was taken.*

*7:17 He brought the family of Judah near, and he took the family of the Zerahites; and he brought the family of the Zerahites near man by man, and Zabdi was taken. 7:18 He brought his household near man by man; and Achan, son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, was taken. 7:19 Then Joshua said to Achan, 'My son, I implore you, give glory to the Lord, the God of Israel, and give praise to Him; and tell me now what you have done. Do not hide it from me.' 7:20 So Achan answered Joshua and said, 'Truly, I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel, and this is what I did: 7:21 when I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight, then I coveted them and took them; and behold, they are concealed in the earth inside my tent with the silver underneath it.' (NASB)*

According to *Joshua 7:1*, the sons of Israel acted unfaithfully in the things that were banned in the war with Ai. Because of their unfaithfulness, thirty six men died. In *Joshua 7:10*, the Lord God said that Israel had transgressed His covenant and sinned. Something very important here to take note of, God says that the men transgressed the covenant, however, the Torah does not say they are never allowed to take from the spoils of the war. The command not to take from the spoils of war was given to Joshua and to the people for that specific time. The violation of the covenant described here is connected to someone coveting, taking, and hiding an unclean thing in his home. Note the possible connection to Tzaraat, the uncleanness of the home. Coveting is a violation of God's covenant. *Joshua 7:12* states that because of their sin of violating the covenant, they have become accursed and are unable to stand before their enemies. The Lord goes on to say that they must remove the sin and the accursed thing from their midst before they will be able to stand before their enemies. The Lord calls this "*consecrating*" yourself (setting apart, making holy). Do you think this is important for us today? Are we unable to stand in life, health, and before our enemies because of sin? Does the Lord work in the same way today as we are reading here in the Tanach?

The important point is to ask ourselves, "*have I been violating the*

*covenant of God by what I have been bringing into my life?"* Examples may consist of the music you listen to, television (images) that you allow in your house or privately in your heart and mind (the internet). The people or conversation you privately or publicly participate with. Examples are swearing, cursing, or sexually explicit material that comes by way through a persons eyes, or ears. Listening to and bringing these things into one's heart (see *Matthew 5:28*) causes one to break the covenant of God, does not feed the spirit, and will cause one to continually live a defeated life. If one participates in these things, and breaks the covenant of God on a daily basis, is there any question why one would have trouble living a successful life in the Messiah (in Christ) or why the ekklesia is so sick today? Is there any question why so many people objectifying women, or being abusive towards others? Obeying Torah in this case would have a significant influence in such a person's life (not to mention one's entire family), just as we read in the book of Joshua.

*Joshua 7:22-26* describes one man's sin causing the destruction of his entire family. Achan took these things and hid them in the floor of his tent. His entire family knew and participated in his sin. This is why Paul says if you see someone openly sinning in the ekklesia (kahal), then you are to formally remove the individual from the ekklesia (*1 Corinthians 5*). The issue at hand was the other members of the body of believers might also participate in this sin seeing that it was an acceptable practice. This would ultimately result in their destruction as Paul describes in *1 Corinthians 11:30* (compare what Paul says to *Joshua 7*).

According to the Torah, and in the book of Joshua, the blessing of God comes to the family by being faithful to the Lord, and the curses come by the way of sin and disobedience to the covenant. *Joshua 7* shows us that destruction may come to an entire family by the unfaithfulness of the father. It is interesting to note that by the faithfulness of the father, salvation may also come to an entire family. The Apostolic Writings has a lot to say on this topic:

### ***John 4:50-53***

*4:50 Jesus said to him, 'Go; your son lives.' The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started off.*

*4:51 As he was now going down, his slaves met him, saying that his son was living. 4:52 So he inquired of them the*

*hour when he began to get better. Then they said to him, 'Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.' 4:53 So the father knew that it was at that hour in which Jesus said to him, 'Your son lives'; and he himself believed and his whole household. (NASB)*

### **Acts 11:12-18**

*11:12 'The Spirit told me to go with them without misgivings. These six brethren also went with me and we entered the man's house. 11:13 'And he reported to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, 'Send to Joppa and have Simon, who is also called Peter, brought here; 11:14 and he will speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household.' 11:15 'And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning. 11:16 'And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 11:17 'Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?' 11:18 When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, 'Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.' (NASB)*

### **Acts 16:27-34**

*16:27 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. 16:28 But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!' 16:29 And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, 16:30 and after he brought them out, he said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' 16:31 They said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.' 16:32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. 16:33*

*And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. 16:34 And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household. (NASB)*

### **Acts 18:4-10**

*18:4 And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. 18:5 But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. 18:6 But when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his garments and said to them, ‘Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.’ 18:7 Then he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next to the synagogue. 18:8 Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized. 18:9 And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, ‘Do not be afraid any longer but go on speaking and do not be silent; 18:10 for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city.’ (NASB)*

In each of these cases, when the father believed in Yeshua the Messiah, we read that the entire house (family) also believed. It is important to note that this blessing comes in and through Abraham and his seed and specifically to the “*families*” of the earth. The ending phrase of the Hebrew text on the Blessing in *Bereshit / Genesis 12:3* suggests that the blessing to the nations is central to the coming of this seed of Abraham. The words of Parashat Bo which says, ה' שְׂוֹהַ תְּמִיִּם זָכָר בֶּן-שָׁנָה יִהְיֶה לָּכֶם, 12:5 מִן-הַכֹּבָבִשִׁים וּמִן-הָעִזִּים תִּקְחוּ: *‘Your שְׂוֹהַ (young animal) shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.(NASB)* The taking from either the sheep or the goats may be an

allusion to the families of the earth, but Jew and non-Jew. According to the Hebrew text, a blessing is going to come to all of the world; the magnitude of such a blessing being for all the peoples of the earth alludes to and requires a Messianic expectation and interpretation because it is only in and through the One Messiah the Lord would ultimately bring that such a great blessing is able to come to everyone (to all the families of the earth).

During this Passover season, remember the joy of the Torah and the point and the purpose for the coming of Yeshua the Messiah. His purpose was for bringing the deliverance and salvation of the Lord God of Israel. The reason the Lord instituted the Passover was so that His people would always remember and proclaim their redemption from slavery. *“This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.” (Shemot / Exodus 12:14)* The Passover represents our salvation and deliverance by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. This Passover, let’s celebrate our salvation, justification, and the resurrection of Yeshua that we have in the Lamb of God (*2 Corinthians 5:21, Revelation 7:14*). As often as we eat this Passover meal remember the deliverance and salvation of God in and through His Messiah. For He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and brought us into His kingdom, where we find the forgiveness of sin, rest, and joy forever. Amen!



