

A TALE OF TWO COVENANTS: PRE-PESACH SHIUR #1

Source 1: Sefer Shemot Ch. 4

יח וַיֵּלֶךְ מֹשֶׁה וַיָּשָׁב | אֶל־יִתְרֹ חַתָּנוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֵלֶיךָ נָא וְאָשׁוּבָה אֶל־אַחֵי
 אֲשֶׁר־בְּמִצְרַיִם וְאַרְאֶה הַעֲוֹדָם חַיִּים וַיֹּאמֶר יִתְרוֹ לְמֹשֶׁה לֵךְ לְשָׁלוֹם: יט וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
 אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְיָן לֵךְ שָׁב מִצְרָיִם כִּי־מֵתוּ כָּל־הָאֲנָשִׁים הַמְּבַקְשִׁים אֶת־נַפְשְׁךָ: כ וַיִּקַּח
 מֹשֶׁה אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו וַיֵּרָכְבוּ וַיֵּרָכְבוּ עַל־הַחֲמֹר וַיָּשָׁב אֶרְצָה מִצְרָיִם וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת־מִטָּה
 הָאֱלֹהִים בְּיָדוֹ: כא וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּלִקְתָּךְ לָשׁוּב מִצְרַיִמָּה רְאֵה כָּל־הַמּוֹפְתִים
 אֲשֶׁר־שָׁמַתִּי בְיָדְךָ וַעֲשִׂיתָם לִפְנֵי פַרְעֹה וְאֲנִי אַחְזֶק אֶת־לְבָבוֹ וְלֹא יִשְׁלַח אֶת־הָעָם: כב
 וְאָמַרְתָּ אֶל־פַּרְעֹה כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה בְּנִי בְכָרִי יִשְׂרָאֵל: כג וְאָמַר אֵלֶיךָ שְׁלַח אֶת־בְּנִי
 וַיַּעֲבֹדֵנִי וְתִמְאֵן לְשַׁלְּחוֹ הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי הֹרֵג אֶת־בְּנִי בְכֹרֶךָ: כד וַיְהִי בַדֶּרֶךְ בְּמִלּוֹן וַיִּפְגְּשׁוּ
 יְהוָה וַיִּבְקֹשׁ הַמֵּיתוֹ: כה וַתִּקַּח צַפְרָה צֹר וַתַּכֶּרֶת אֶת־עַרְלַת בְּנֵהּ וַתַּגַּע לְרַגְלָיו וַתֹּאמֶר
 כִּי חֲתוּדֵמַי אֵתָּה לִי: כו וַיִּרַף מִמֶּנּוּ אִזּוֹ אָמְרָה חֲתָן דָּמַיִם לְמוֹלֶת: {פ} כז וַיֹּאמֶר
 יְהוָה אֶל־אַהֲרֹן, לֵךְ לְקַרְאֵת מֹשֶׁה הַמִּדְבָּרָה; וַיֵּלֶךְ, וַיִּפְגְּשׁוּ בְּהַר הָאֱלֹהִים--וַיִּשְׁקֹ-
 לו.

- 4:18 Moses left and returned to his father-in-law Jethro. He said, 'I would like to leave and return to my people in Egypt, to see if they are still alive.' 'Go in peace,' said Jethro to Moses.
- 4:19 While Moses was still in Midian, God said to him, 'Go return to Egypt. **All the men who seek your life have died.**'
- 4:20 Moses took his wife and sons and, putting them on a donkey, set out to return to Egypt. He also took the divine staff in his hand.
- 4:21 God said to Moses, 'On your way back to Egypt, keep in mind all the wondrous powers that I have placed in your hand. You will use them before Pharaoh. But I will make him obstinate, and he will not allow the people to leave.
- 4:22 **You must say to Pharaoh, 'This is what God says: Israel is My son, My firstborn.**
- 4:23 **I have told you to let My son go and serve Me. If you refuse to let him leave, I will [ultimately] kill your own first-born son.'**
- 4:24 **When they were in the place where they spent the night along the way, God confronted Moses and wanted to kill him.**
- 4:25 Tzipporah took a stone knife and cut off her son's foreskin, throwing it down at [Moses'] feet. 'As far as I am concerned, you're married to blood, she said [to the child].

4:26 [God] then spared [Moses]. '[You were] married to blood because of circumcision,' she said.

4:27: 27 And God said to Aaron: 'Go into the wilderness to meet Moses.' And he went, and met him in the mountain of God, and kissed him.

The above translation has Hashem trying to kill Moshe; What's hard to understand about the simple meaning of the text? (there is another view that Hashem was trying to kill his son; it's actually ambiguous because it says ויבקש המיתו and therefore unclear as to whom Hashem is trying to kill.)

Source 2: Commentary of Rashi

ויחי: משה בדרך במלון: **ויבקש המיתו:** המלאך למשה, לפי שלא מל את אליעזר בנו, ועל שנתרשל נענש מיתה. תניא אמר רבי יוסי חס ושלוש לא נתרשל, אלא אמר אמול ואצא לדרך, סכנה היא לתינוק עד שלשה ימים, אמול ואשה שלשה ימים, הקב"ה צוני (פסוק י"ט) לך שוב מצרים. ומפני מה נענש, לפי שנתעסק במלון תחלה. במסכת נדרים (דף לא ב). והיה המלאך נעשה כמין נחש ובולעו מראשו ועד ירכיו, וחוזר ובולעו מרגליו ועד אותו מקום, הבינה צפורה שבשביל המילה הוא: ותגע לרגליו: השליכתו לפני רגליו של משה ותאמר: על בנה **כי חתן דמים אתה לי:** אתה היית גורם להיות החתן שלי נרצח עליך, הורג אישי אתה לי **וירף:** המלאך ממנו. אז הבינה שעל המילה בא להורגו **אמרה חתן דמים למולת:** חתני היה נרצח על דבר המילה **למולת:** על דבר המולות. שם דבר הוא, והלמ"ד משמשת בלשון על, כמו (שמות יד ג) ואמר פרעה לבני ישראל. ואונקלוס תרגם דמים, על דם המילה

Now he was: [I.e.,] Moses.

on the way, in an inn and sought to put him to death: [I.e., He sought] Moses, because he had neglected to circumcise his son Eliezer. Because he neglected it, he was [to be] punished with death. It was taught in a Braitha: Rabbi Jose said: God forbid! Moses did not neglect it, but he reasoned: Shall I circumcise [him] and go forth on the road? It will be dangerous for the child for three days. Shall I circumcise [him] and wait three days? The Holy One, blessed be He, commanded me, "Go, return to Egypt." [Moses hurried to Egypt intending to circumcise Eliezer upon his return.] Why [then] was he to be punished with death? Because first he busied himself with [the details of] his lodging. [This appears] in tractate Nedarim (31b). The angel turned into a sort of serpent and swallowed him [Moses] from his head to his thighs, and then [spit him out and] swallowed him from his feet to his private parts. Zipporah therefore understood that it was because of [the failure to perform] the circumcision [that this occurred]. — and cast it to his feet: She cast it before Moses' feet. —

and she said: about her son. For you are a bridegroom of blood to me: You were a cause that my bridegroom would [almost] be murdered. You are to me the slayer of my bridegroom. **So He released:** [I.e.,] the angel [released] him. Then she understood that [it was] because of the circumcision that he had come to slay him. she said, "A bridegroom of blood concerning the circumcision": My bridegroom would have been murdered because of the circumcision. concerning the circumcision: Heb. **למולת** concerning the circumcision. This is a noun, and the "lammed" serves as an expression meaning "concerning," similar to "And Pharaoh will say

concerning the children of (לְבָנֵי) Israel” (Exod. 14:3). Onkelos, however, translates דָּמִים as referring to the blood of the circumcision.

Source 3: HaKetav Vihakabbalah

And if not for the opinion of our predecessors, I would have said that **‘Vayevakesh hamito’ does not refer to Hashem, but rather to Moshe**, and its meaning is that through his encounter [pegisha] with Hashem, Moshe realized that his sin was visited upon him, and that he had not done well by delaying the performance of his Creator’s will, and so much did his sin become great in his own eyes that this encounter was mild and not sufficient to remove his sin, and he said in his heart, ‘If I am evil before God, why should I live? It would be better for me to cease to exist, and to choose death over life,’ and this is the meaning of ‘vayevakesh hamito,’ that Moshe wanted Hashem to kill him

ולולי דעת קדמונינו הייתי אומר שאין ויבקש המיתו מוסב על ה' רק על משה וטעמו ע"י פגישת הדבר הרע נתעורר משה כי נפקד עליו עונו, ולא טוב עשה בהתאחרו בעשיית רצון קונו, וכל כך הגדיל עון זה בעיניו עד שפגישה זו היתה קלה ואינה מספקת לנשוא בו עונו ואמר בלבו אם אהיה רשע לפני האלקים למה לי חיים טוב לי להתבטל מן המציאות ולבחור במותי מבחי, וזהו ויבקש המיתו - חפץ משה שימיתוהו

How does Haketav Vehakabbalah address the philosophical difficulty of understanding Hashem’s actions in the story?

Source 4: Don Isaac Abravanel

Prophecy descended upon Moshe always, and he always needed to meditate and think about his mission. Therefore, when he came to the inn and occupied himself all that night with making provisions for lodging, and he did not meditate on the matters of his mission and his prophecy first, when the prophetic flow came upon him, it found him unprepared for prophecy. When it says “vayifgeshehu Hashem,” it means that prophecy came upon him while his heart and his thoughts were burdened with the matters of his lodging and his wife and sons, and since he was found unprepared for the acceptance of prophecy, he experienced pain and danger and his spirit was rattled. And the meaning of “vayevakesh hamito” is not that Hashem wanted to kill him, for He desires kindness, but rather that the divine flow came upon him when he was unprepared, and therefore he was endangered and reached the gates of death.

הנבואה היתה יורדת על משה תמיד והיה צריך לעמוד תמיד בהתבודדותו ומחשבתו בשליחותו ולכן כשבא במלון ונתעסק בעסקי לינה כל אותו הלילה ולא התבודד בעיני שליחותו ונבואתו תחילה הנה כשחל עליו שמה השפע מצאו בלתי מוכן לנבואה וז"א ויפגשוהו ה' שבא רוצה לומר' הנבואה עליו ולבו ומחשבותיו היו טרודים בעסקי לינתו ואשתו ובניו ומפני שנמצא בלתי מוכן לקבול השפע ההוא היה עליו הצער והסכנה ההיא ותפעם רוחו. וה"א ויבקש המיתו לא שהיה רוצה הש"י להמיתו כי חפץ חסד הוא אלא שפגש אותו השפע העליון בהיותו בלתי מוכן ולכן נסתכן והגיע

Mrs. Rivka Kahan: The interpretations of Haketav Vehakabbalah and Abarbanel, in addition to addressing the moral justification for Hashem's actions, solve a linguistic difficulty as well. The usage of the word "vayevakesh" is perplexing when used to describe an action of God; if Hashem "seeks" to do something, then it is done.

Source 5: Shadal – R. Shemuel David Luzzato

[נכב] בני בכרי ישראל: אעפ"י שלקץ הימים אהפוך אל העמים שפה ברורה לקרוא כולם בשם ה' ולעבדו שכס אחד, מ"מ ישראל נכבד אצלי מכולם מצד מה שהיה הראשון בעבודתי בתעות כל האומות מעלי

Hashem has an ultimately universalistic vision, but He cannot ignore Am Yisrael's role in being the first to serve Him:

[כג] הנה אנכי הרג את בנך בכורך יקשה כי הנה זאת היא האחרונה שבמכות, ומשה לא הזכירה לפרעה אלא לבסוף, ולמה יזכירה לו כאן?

Shadal begins his commentary with the question of why Hashem's speech to Moshe at this point includes a mention of *makkat bekhrot*, given that Moshe does not warn Pharaoh of *makkat bekhrot* until much later:

ואשר אני אהזה לי כי הנה משה אמר ליתרו (למעלה י"ח) ואראה העודם חיים, מוכח מזה שלא הגיד לו דבר משליחות ה', רק אמר כי נכסף לראות בית אביו

Shemot 4:23 includes a veiled warning from Hashem to Moshe that if he does anything to delay the geulah, his own bechor will be in danger. Given Moshe's reluctance to accept the mission of returning to Mitzrayim to redeem Bnei Yisrael, the necessity of such a warning is perhaps self-evident. When Moshe tells Yitro of his plan to return to Mitzrayim, he presents his purpose as a reunion with his kinsmen, not as a mission to redeem Bnei Yisrael from slavery

א"כ בהוליכו עמו את אשתו ואת בניו, שלא ידעו דבר מענין השליחות, אין ספק כי אשתו ובנו הגדול כשיראו, שילך לפני מלך מצרים לדבר לו לשלח את ישראל, יניאו את לבו ויעכבוהו מעשות שליחותו מיראתם שמא פרעה ימיתהו, וה' ידע זאת ורע בעיניו על שהולך אשתו, ובניו עמו, ובפרט כי משה כבר נפתה אחר עצת אשתו והיה שומע לעצתה יותר מן הראוי, כי איחר מילת בנו אחר עבור שמונת ימים, שאם היה

בתוך שמונת ימים ללידתו, לא ייתכן שתצא אשתו עמו לדרך, א"כ נראה ששמע בקולה למול אותו בן י"ג שנה כמשפט הישמעאלים והמדינים

Shadal suggests that, given the backdrop that Yitro (and, presumably, Tziporah) does not know Moshe's true intentions in returning to Mitzrayim, Moshe's decision to bring Tziporah and his children with him is problematic. In all probability, Tziporah will prevail upon Moshe not to antagonize Pharaoh, out of concern for their family's safety. Furthermore, Shadal thinks that the text indicates that Tziporah has already influenced Moshe to circumcise their sons at the age of thirteen in keeping with the customs of her family's culture, rather than at eight days.

על כן אמר לו ה' כדבר הזה, למען יבין כי גם הוא, אם לא יעשה שליחותו, באופן שיהיה סיבה לעיכוב יציאת ישראל ממצרים, גם הוא כך יהיה ענשו, שיהרוג ה' את בנו בכורו, וכן היה, כי בהיותם במלון והיה רע בעיני ה' כי הולך הוא עם אשתו ובניו, ויפגשו ה' ויבקש המיתו, אומר אני, שהכוונה להמית את בנו בכורו הנזכר למעלה שתי פעמים

Therefore, Hashem said to him the following – so that he would also understand: If he does not fulfil his mission, and there would therefore be a delay in the exodus from Egypt, his punishment will be that Hashem kills his first born son. And that is what actually occurred: While they were in the inn, God became angry that he was going with his wife and sons and Hashem sought to kill his son – I say: His first born son mentioned earlier

Who was Hashem seeking to kill? The Bekhor of Moshe and Tzipora – Gershom!

Source 6: Ch. 2 of Shemot

22 **כב** וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן, וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-שְׁמוֹ גֶרְשֹׁם: כִּי אָמַר--גֵּר הֵייתִי, בְּאֶרֶץ נְכַרִּיהָ. {פ}

22 And she bore a son, and he called his name Gershom; for he said: 'I have been a stranger in a strange land.' {P}

ואז אמר משה לצפורה שאירע להם זה על שאיחרו למול את בנם הקטון, ואז צפורה חשה ולא התמהמהה ומלה את ערלת בנה, לא הבן החולה הנרמז בכינוי המיתו ובכינוי ויפגשו, שהוא היה הבן הגדול שכבר נימול, אלא מלה את הקטון שלא הגיע ל"ג שנה ולא מלוהו, ותגע לרגליו של משה ותאמר כנגד משה חתן דמים אתה לי, בעינך ולא בעיני בנינו הגדול חולה, ואתה סיבת מיתתו, אולי חשבה כי טורח הדרך היה סיבת חליו; וכשראתה כי מיד רפה החולי ממנו, אמרה חתן

דמים למולות. ולהיות כי עדיין קרובים היו למדין, חזרה צפורה עם בניה לבית אביה, ומשה הלך לבדו, וזה היה רצון האל, כדי שלא יהיה למשה מעכב לעשות שליחותו. וזה טעם אחר שלוחיה כי כאן שילח אותה והלכה אל בית אביה.

Then Moshe said to Tzipporah that this occurred because they had not yet circumcised their younger son, and Tzipporah then hurried and did the Berit Milah, not on the ill son who was hinted at in the phrase “and he confronted him” - he was the older son who was already circumcised, but the younger who had not yet reached the age of thirteen...since they were still close to Midian, Tzipporah returned with her sons to her father’s home, and Moshe went on his own, and this was the desire of God, that nothing should hold Moshe back from completing his mission. And this is the meaning of (the verse in Perashat Yitro) “....after her having being sent....” - because this is where he sent her - and she went to her father’s house.

Source 7: Shemot Ch. 18

- א** וַיִּשְׁמַע יִתְרוֹ כֹּהֵן מִדְיָן, חֵתֵן מֹשֶׁה, אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֱלֹהִים לְמֹשֶׁה, וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ: כִּי-הוֹצִיא יְהוָה אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל, מִמִּצְרָיִם.
- 1** Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel His people, how that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt.
- ב** וַיִּקַּח, יִתְרוֹ חֵתֵן מֹשֶׁה, אֶת-צִפּוֹרָה, אִשְׁתּוֹ מֹשֶׁה--אֲחֵר, שְׁלֹחֶיהָ.
- 2** And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her away,
- ג** וְאֵת, שְׁנֵי בָנֶיהָ: אֲשֶׁר שֵׁם הָאֶחָד, גֵּרְשֹׁם--כִּי אָמַר, גֵּר הָיִיתִי בְּאֶרֶץ נְכַרִּיהָ.
- 3** and her two sons; of whom the name of the one was Gershom; for he said: 'I have been a stranger in a strange land';
- ד** וְשֵׁם הָאֶחָד, אֱלִיעֶזֶר--כִּי-אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי בְּעֶזְרִי, וַיַּצִּילֵנִי מִחַרְבַּת פַּרְעֹה.
- 4** and the name of the other was Eliezer: 'for the God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh.'

Advantage of Shadal's approach?

Literary Connections.....

- יט** וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְיָן, לֵךְ שׁוּב מִצְרָיִם: כִּי-מֵתוּ, כָּל-הָאֲנָשִׁים, הַמְּבַקְשִׁים, אֶת-נַפְשְׁךָ.
- 19** And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian: **'Go, return into Egypt; for all the men are dead that sought thy life.'**
- כ** וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת-אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת-בָּנָיו, וַיִּרְכָּבֵם עַל-הַחֲמֹר, וַיָּשׁוּב, אֶרְצָה מִצְרָיִם; וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת-מִטֵּה הָאֱלֹהִים, בְּיָדוֹ.
- 20** And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt; and Moses took the rod of God in his hand.
- כא** וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה, בְּלָכְתְּךָ לָשׁוּב מִצְרָיִמָּה, רְאֵה כָּל-הַמִּפְתָּיִם אֲשֶׁר-שַׂמְתִּי בְיָדְךָ וַעֲשִׂיתָם לִפְנֵי פַרְעֹה; וְאֲנִי אֲחַזֵּק אֶת-לִבּוֹ, וְלֹא יִשְׁלַח אֶת-הָעָם.
- 21** And the LORD said unto Moses: **'When thou goest back into Egypt, see that thou do before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in thy hand; but I will harden his heart, and he will not let the people go.'**
- כב** וְאָמַרְתָּ, אֶל-פַּרְעֹה: כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה, בְּנִי בְכֹרִי יִשְׂרָאֵל.
- 22** And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh: Thus saith the LORD: **Israel is My son, My first-born.**
- כג** וְאָמַר אֵלֶיךָ, שְׁלַח אֶת-בְּנִי וַיַּעֲבֹדְנִי, וְתָמְאוּ, לְשַׁלְּחוֹ--הֲנֵה אֲנֹכִי הָרֵג, אֶת-בְּנִי בְּכֹרֶךָ.
- 23** And I have said unto thee: Let My son go, that he may serve Me; and thou hast refused to let him go. Behold, I will slay thy son, thy first-born.'--
- כד** וַיְהִי בַדְרֹךְ, בַּמְּלוּן; וַיִּפְגְּשֵׁהוּ יְהוָה, וַיִּבְקֹשׁ הַמִּיתוֹ.
- 24** And it came to pass on the way at the lodging-place, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him.
- כה** וַתִּקַּח צִפּוֹרָה צַפְרָה זָרָה, וַתִּכְרֹת אֶת-עֶרְלַת בְּנֵהּ, וַתַּגֵּעַ, לְרַגְלָיו; וַתֹּאמֶר, כִּי חַתָּן-דְּמַיִם אַתָּה לִּי.
- 25** Then Zipporah took a flint, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet; and she said: **'Surely a bridegroom of blood art thou to me.'**
- כו** וַיַּרְף, מִמֶּנּוּ; אִזּוֹ, אָמְרָה, חַתָּן דְּמַיִם, לַמּוֹלֵת. {פ}
- 26** So He let him alone. Then she said: **'A bridegroom of blood in regard of the circumcision.'** {P}
- כז** וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אַהֲרֹן, לֵךְ לִקְרַאת מֹשֶׁה הַמִּדְבָּרָה; וַיֵּלֶךְ, וַיִּפְגְּשֵׁהוּ בְּהַר הָאֱלֹהִים--וַיִּשְׁקֵה לּוֹ.
- 27** And the LORD said to Aaron: **'Go into the wilderness to meet Moses.'** And he went, and met him in the mountain of God, and kissed him.

The Two Covenants

The Berit Bein HaBetarim, (**Bereishit Ch. 15**) “The Covenant of Parts,” is one of the most important events in Jewish history. In the covenant, G-d told Abraham about the destiny of his descendants: They would be strangers in a land where they would become oppressed and enslaved. Ultimately, however, G-d would redeem them, and they would inherit the Land of Canaan (the Land of Israel).

There are two parts to the Abrahamic covenant:

1. Abraham’s descendants would be enslaved and eventually redeemed.
2. They would forever inherit the Land of Canaan.

The first half of the promise was fulfilled when the children of Israel were subjugated in the land of Egypt. The second half was mostly fulfilled when Joshua conquered and settled most of the land promised to Abraham.

Source 8: Bereishit Ch. 17 – Berit Milah

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>א וַיְהִי אַבְרָם, בֶּן-תְּשָׁעִים שָׁנָה וְתִשְׁעַ שָׁנָיִם; וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם, וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי-אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיִם--הִתְחַלֵּף לִפְנֵי, וְהָיָה תָמִים.</p> | <p>1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him: 'I am God Almighty; walk before Me, and be thou wholehearted.</p> |
| <p>ב וְאֶתְנָה בְרִיתִי, בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ; וְאַרְבָּה אוֹתְךָ, בְּמֵאֵד מְאֹד.</p> | <p>2 And I will make My covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.'</p> |
| <p>ג וַיִּפֹּל אַבְרָם, עַל-פָּנָיו; וַיְדַבֵּר אֵתוֹ אֱלֹהִים, לֵאמֹר.</p> | <p>3 And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him, saying:</p> |
| <p>ד אֲנִי, הִנֵּה בְרִיתִי אֵתְךָ; וְהָיִיתָ, לְאָב הַמּוֹן גּוֹיִם.</p> | <p>4 'As for Me, behold, My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations.</p> |
| <p>ה וְלֹא-יִקְרָא עוֹד אֶת-שְׁמֶךָ, אַבְרָם; וְהָיָה שְׁמֶךָ אַבְרָהָם, כִּי אַב-הַמּוֹן גּוֹיִם</p> | <p>5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall</p> |

נְתַתִּיךָ. be Abraham; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made thee.

ו וְהִפְרֵתִי אֶתְךָ בְּמֵאֵד מְאֹד, וְנִתַּתִּיךָ לְגוֹיִם; וּמְלָכִים, מִמֶּךָ יֵצְאוּ. 6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

ז וְהִקְמַתִּי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ, וּבֵין זְרַעֲךָ אַחֲרַיִךָ לְדֹרֹתָם--לְבְרִית עוֹלָם: לְהִיּוֹת לְךָ לְאֱלֹהִים, וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרַיִךָ. 7 And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee.

ח וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרַיִךָ אֶת אֶרֶץ מִגְרִיד, אֶת כָּל-אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן, לְאֶחְזָת, עוֹלָם; וְהִיִּיתִי לָהֶם, לְאֱלֹהִים. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.'

ט וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-אַבְרָהָם, וְאַתָּה אֶת-בְּרִיתִי תִשְׁמֹר--אֶתָּה וְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרַיִךָ, לְדֹרֹתָם. 9 And God said unto Abraham: 'And as for thee, thou shalt keep My covenant, thou, and thy seed after thee throughout their generations.

י זֹאת בְּרִיתִי אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְרוּ, בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם, וּבֵין זְרַעֲךָ, אַחֲרַיִךָ: הַמּוֹל לְכֶם, כָּל-זָכָר. 10 This is My covenant, which ye shall keep, between Me and you and thy seed after thee: every male among you shall be circumcised.

יא וּנְמַלְתֶּם, אֶת בְּשַׁר עֶרְלַתְכֶם; וְהָיָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית, בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם. 11 And ye shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of a covenant betwixt Me and you.

יב וּבֶן-שְׁמֹנֶת יָמִים, יְמוֹל לְכֶם כָּל-זָכָר--לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם: יֵלִיד בְּיַת--וּמִקְנַת-כֶּסֶף מִכָּל בֶּן-נֶכֶר, אֲשֶׁר לֹא מִזְרַעֲךָ הוּא. 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every

male throughout your generations,
he that is born in the house, or
bought with money of any foreigner,
that is not of thy seed.

יג המול ימול יליד ביתך, ומקנת כסף; והיתה בריתי בבשרכם, לברית עולם. **13** He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised; **and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.**

יד וערל זכר, אשר לא-ימול את-בשר ערלתו--ונקרחה הנפש ההוא, מעמיה: את-בריתי, הפר. {ס} **14** And the uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken My covenant.'

Comparing and Contrasting the Two Beritot

Berit Bein HaBetarim	Berit Milah
Foretells B'nai Yisrael's enslavement	Does not foretell enslavement
No mention of Mitzvah of Milah	Mitzvah of Milah
Miraculous, supernatural involvement of God in history	Redemption a function of B'nai Yisrael's dedication to mitzvot
Hashem will redeem B'nai Yisrael from bondage and give them the land of the seven nations.	Natural vision of redemption, with no mention of liberation from slavery and no mention of the seven nations who must be defeated for B'nai Yisrael to take possession of Canaan. Rather, the emphasis is on B'nai Yisrael's responsibility to keep the mitzvah of milah as a "brit olam" – eternal covenant

מו בְּבַיִת אֶחָד יֵאָכֵל, לֹא-
תוֹצִיא מִן-הַבַּיִת מִן-הַבָּשָׂר
חוּצָה; וְעַצְמוֹ, לֹא תִשְׁבְּרוּ-בוֹ.
46 In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.

מִזֵּ כָּל-עֵדֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל, יַעֲשׂוּ אֹתוֹ.
47 All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.

מִח וְכִי-יִגּוֹר אֲתָדָה גֵר, וְעָשָׂה
פְּסַח לַיהוָה--הַמּוֹל לּוֹ כָּל-זָכָר
וְאִזּוּ יִקְרַב לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ, וְהָיָה כְּאִזְרַח
הָאָרֶץ; וְכָל-עֶרְלָה, לֹא-יֵאָכֵל בוֹ.
48 And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land; **but no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.**

Source 10: Sefer Yehoshua Ch. 5

ג וַיַּעַשׂ-לוֹ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ,
חַרְבוֹת צְרִימוֹ; וַיִּמַּל אֶת-
בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֶל-גִּבְעַת
הָעֶרְלוֹת.
3 And Joshua made him knives of flint, and circumcised the children of Israel at Gibeath-ha-araloth.

ד וְזֶה הַדָּבָר, אֲשֶׁר-מָל
יְהוֹשֻׁעַ: כָּל-הָעָם הַיֹּצֵא
מִמִּצְרַיִם הַזְּכָרִים כֹּל
אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּדְבָּר, מֵתוּ
בַמִּדְבָּר בְּדֶרֶךְ, בְּצֵאתָם,
מִמִּצְרַיִם.
4 And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: all the people that came forth out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came forth out of Egypt.

ה כִּי-מְלִים הָיוּ, כָּל-הָעָם
הַיֹּצֵאִים; וְכָל-הָעָם
הַיֹּלְדִים בַּמִּדְבָּר בְּדֶרֶךְ,
בְּצֵאתָם מִמִּצְרַיִם--לֹא-
מָלוּ.
5 For all the people that came out were circumcised; but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, had not been circumcised.

ו כִּי אַרְבַּעִים שָׁנָה, הִלְכוּ בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִדְבָּר, עַד-תָּם כָּל-הַגּוֹי אֲנָשֵׁי הַמְּלַחְמָה הַיְצָאִים מִמִּצְרַיִם, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-שָׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה: אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה, לָהֶם, לְבָלְתִי הָרְאוֹתָם אֶת-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לְאֲבוֹתָם לָתֵת לָנוּ, אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ.

7 And He raised up their children in their stead; them did Joshua circumcise; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised by the way

ז וְאֶת-בְּנֵיהֶם הִקִּים תַּחֲתָם, אֹתָם מָל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ: כִּי-עֲרָלִים הָיוּ, כִּי לֹא-מָלוּ אוֹתָם בַּדֶּרֶךְ.

9 And the LORD said unto Joshua: 'This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.' Wherefore the name of that place was called Gilgal, unto this day.

ט וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה, אֶל-יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, הַיּוֹם גָּלַתִּי אֶת-חֲרֹפַת מִצְרַיִם, מֵעַלְיֶיכֶם; וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא, גִּלְגָּל, עַד, הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה.

10 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal; and they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.

י וַיַּחֲנוּ בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּגִלְגָּל; וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת-הַפֶּסַח בְּאַרְבַּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ, בְּעֶרְב--בְּעֲרֵבוֹת יְרִיחוֹ.

Source 11: Shemot 12:22

וּלְקַחְתֶּם אֲגָדַת אֲזוּב וּטְבַלְתֶּם בְּדָם אֲשֶׁר בַּסֹּף וְהַגַּעְתֶּם אֶל הַמִּשְׁקוֹף וְאֶל שְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזוֹת מִן הַדָּם אֲשֶׁר בַּסֹּף וְאֹתָם לֹא תִצְאוּ אִישׁ מִפֶּתַח בֵּיתוֹ עַד בֹּקֶר.

Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and to the two doorposts. None of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning

Source 12: Shemot Rabba 17:3

וטבלתם בדם אשר בסף

מה ראה הקדוש ברוך הוא להגן עליהם בדם ?
 כדי לזכור להם דם מילת אברהם, ובשני דמים ניצולו ישראל ממצרים,
 בדם פסח ובדם מילה, שנאמר (יחזקאל טז, ו): **ואומר לך בדמיך חיי**
ואומר לך בדמיך חיי, בדם פסח ובדם מילה.

Source 13: From the Haggada:

"And numerous" - as it is stated (Ezekiel 16:7), "I have given you to be numerous as the vegetation of the field, and you increased and grew and became highly ornamented, your breasts were set and your hair grew, but you were naked and barren;" **"And I passed over you and I saw you wallowing in your blood, and I said to you, you shall live in your blood, and I said to you, you shall live in your blood"** (Ezekiel 16:6).

וְרַב. כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: רַבָּה
 כְּצִמַּח הַשָּׂדֶה נִתְתִּיף, וְתַרְבִּי
 וְתִגְדְּלִי וְתִבְאִי בַעֲדֵי עַדָּיִים,
 שָׂדִים נִלְנוּ וְשָׁעֲרָךְ צִמַּח, וְאַתְּ
 עָרִם וְעָרִיָה. וְאַעֲבֵר עָלֶיךָ
 וְאַרְאֶךָ מִתְבוֹסֶסֶת בְּדַמֶּיךָ,
**וְאֵמַר לְךָ בְּדַמֶּיךָ חַיִּי, וְאֵמַר לְךָ
 בְּדַמֶּיךָ חַיִּי**

Pesach – Mila - Geula – Bekhora (Rivka Kahan)

Just as the mitzvah of korban Pesach is linked halakhically to the mitzvah of brit milah, the story of geulat Mitzrayim is linked thematically to the concept of bekhora. "Beni bekhori Yisrael" serves as the thesis statement of Yetziat Mitzrayim, because Yetziat Mitzrayim demonstrates the unique, intense love relationship between Hashem and Bnai Yisrael... **The reason that makkat bekhoret is the culmination of the makkot is not only because it is the most horrific, but also because it most vividly demonstrates the truth of "beni bekhori Yisrael":** because

Pharoah did not free Hashem's bekhor, Hashem shows no mercy to Pharoah's bekhor.

The structure of Sefer Shemot that emphasizes the interrelationship of these themes. Part A of the chiasm is the bekhora, which is mentioned in Shemot 4:22-23, immediately preceding the story of the hatan damim. Part B is the mitzvah of milah as described in the hatan damim story in Shemot 4:24-26. The second B of the chiasm is the mitzvah of korban Pesach (Shemot 12:3-13), which is related to the hatan damim story because of the connection between brit milah and korban Pesach. Finally, the concluding A of the chiasm is makkat bechorot (Shemot 12:29-30), which revisits the theme of bekhora. This chiasm illustrates that the concept of bekhora and the mitzvah of brit milah are the central themes of yetziat Mitzrayim. Moreover, the center of the chiasm is formed by the mitzvah of brit milah and the related mitzvah of korban Pesach; the whole story of geulah hinges on the dam brit and dam Pesach. The hatan damim story thus serves two literary purposes: it presents the mitzvah of brit milah as the crux of the geulah, and it also incorporates the themes of bekhora, parenthood, and brit milah into one short episode, thereby creating a prelude that introduces all of the primary themes of the story of geulah.