



Passover and our Calling to be a Blessing

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Have you ever considered our annual celebration of Passover as both a commemoration of deliverance, but also a recounting of our Adonai's blessings, and equally, our commission to be a blessing? This is something which has recently struck me, as I have considered both our calling as a Messianic Jewish community, and the fact that as the Jewish people, we are called to extended God's hand of blessing to the world, and are commissioned to be schluchim (ambassadors) of

blessings for the whole world. In Judaism, this is nothing new and is shored up in the phrase "Tikkun Olam", our calling to repair the world. This is likewise true as we live as Messianic-believers in Yeshua, (and as both Jews and Gentiles) are called to extend eternal and transformational blessings in proclaiming that our Mashiach, Yeshua has come!

It is in the Tanakh that we find the foundation of blessing for Israel, where in Genesis chapter 3 Adonai calls to our father, Abram saying, *"My heart's desire is to make you into a great nation, to bless you, to make your name great so that you may be a blessing."* (Gen. 12:2 TLV) Within the context of this declaration of the Abrahamic covenant at Genesis 12:1-3, five-times God promises blessings for Israel, while ensuring curses (v. 3b) to those who oppose, oppress or harm Israel. From this we are reminded of not only the Lord's great love for His people, but also how He will judge without mercy those who harm the apple of His eye. (Zech. 2:8-9) From a practical perspective, the words of the Abrahamic covenant is both a defense and mandate for moral and transformational leadership, and a reminder of our mission as the Lord's beloved is to be proclaimers of both blessings and justice! We are called above all things to be a blessing!

Interestingly enough, this was recently echoed by Israeli actress Gal Gadot (Wonder Woman) on March 4th when she spoke after receiving Anti-Defamation League International Leadership Award in stating, *"It is time to pass onto our children a love of who they are. So, who are we? We the Jewish people are an ancient people, with an ancient story, and an ancient homeland. We are the people that celebrate life! We work to see a better and more peaceful future, we [are the ones who] challenge hate when we face it, but we do it with love, while*



always striving to make the world a better place."

In recent years, transformational leadership has emerged as a popular theme for both business schools, fields of ministerial training and both Graduate and post-Graduate programs. Although many would like to "credit" the concept of transformational leadership studies to those like James MacGregor Burns, I believe that the real source is Adonai and His calling to Abraham, national Israel and to us (both Jewish and Gentile believers) to be the sh'lichim of blessings to all of creation. For this reason, Justin Irving and Mark Strauss aptly note how in a biblical context that,

"Servant leadership [as embodied in blessing] is focused on people rather than on tasks, then valuing and appreciating those people should be among the highest priorities of the leader."

It is from this that we are ever reminded that our greatest callings is to be a blessing to others and to proclaim the eternal blessings of our God in Messiah Yeshua our Passover Lamb! In reading this, you might be asking me, "How in fact do the promises and callings of the Abrahamic covenant apply to, or be seen in the context of our annual celebration?" Furthermore, you may reason saying, "Aren't these two separate things where Moses is simply chronicling Adonai's promises to Abram and his seed, while Passover stands as a marker of our deliverance from Egypt?" To these friends, the answer is clear, when we remember that "blessing" and "the calling to be a blessing" is embedded in every Jewish holy day, celebration and even our weekly remembrance of creation on Shabbat! It is in blessing and blessing alone that God has chosen a people as His very own, and has called us to be agents of those blessings who do not know. Through every celebration we proclaim God's goodness, faithfulness and His calling that we reflect, illuminate hope and blessing. Our calling as both recipients and ambassadors of blessing is best seen in the Passover Seder itself, within the "Four Questions" where we read:

"We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD our God brought us out with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. And if the Holy One, blessed be He, had not brought our fathers out from Egypt – then we and our children and children's children would still be slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt."

From our Haggadah we see that it was the blessings of God which delivered our ancestors from Egypt, as so we are commanded from God in His Torah to recount our deliverance from bondage, as being brought from slavery to freedom and from death to life in His great and everlasting love! As we celebrate Pesach, we not only experience blessing, but also extend blessing to the world as a reminder of God's unfailing love for all of creation. Most notably however, the word Egypt in the Hebrew (*mitzra'im*) can literally be translated "to strangle," and so, it is sin which strangles our lives and keeps us from fellowship with Avienu, our loving, Heavenly Father. Through Messiah, all of us (both Jews and Gentiles alike) are brought close, redeemed and given eternal hope and blessings. Where sin once strangled us and separated us from God, now through Yeshua our slain and risen Passover Lamb, we have the promise of eternal life - This is the greatest of all blessings!





For this Passover dear friends, above all things – take hold of Messiah’s blessings of hope, life and redemption for you. Take upon your hearts and your lives, our Heavenly Fathers calling to be sh’lichim (ambassadors) of Blessing, Hope and Salvation for the world!

Chag Pesach Sameach! 



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