

I Have Surely Visited You

By Dan & Brenda Cathcart

The scripture reading is Genesis 15:13-21,50:24-25, Exodus 3:15-17

The video version is at: <https://youtu.be/1Ez0vJXN8bo>

This week, we observed the Passover Seder and remembered the death of Yeshua as our Passover Lamb. As the Passover Lamb, He was and is the Threshold Covenant Sacrifice that allows us to invite God into our lives. We are now in the midst of the week long Feast of Unleavened Bread marking the flight of the Children of Israel out of Egypt and the burial of Yeshua. Sunday, we celebrate the Feast of Fruitfruits which seemingly has no connection to the events of the Exodus from Egypt. It is, however, the day on which Yeshua rose from the grave. These feasts fall one on top of the other and have all come to be lumped together under the title of "Passover" or Pesach. In reality, each one of these feasts is unique and corresponds to part of God's promise to Abraham and his descendants.

When the children of Israel were in slavery in Egypt, God heard their cries and remembered His promise to Abraham.

Exodus 2:23-25 NKJV 23 Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage. 24 So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. 25 And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them.

God chose Moses as His servant to fulfill His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He gave Moses specific words to say to the elders of the people so they would know that God sent him.

Exodus 3:15-17 NKJV 15 Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.' 16 "Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared to me, saying, "I have surely visited you and seen what is done to you in Egypt; 17 "and I have said I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.'"

Moses' message from God had three parts to it. He started by stating that God had visited the children of Israel and seen what was done to them. Next, He declared that God would take them out of the affliction that they endured in Egypt. Finally, Moses stated God's intention to bring them into the Promised Land. Each of these parts corresponds to one of the three feasts celebrated this week as well as a promise made to Abraham. These promises made to Abraham were marked by a formal covenant ratification ceremony. Abraham prepared the covenant sacrifices.

Genesis 15:9-11 NKJV 9 So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." 10 Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. 11 And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

After preparing the sacrifices, Abram patiently waited for further instructions. As he waited, the day ended, and Abram fell deeply asleep.

Genesis 15:12 NKJV 12 Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him.

The Hebrew word for the phrase “deep sleep” is “tardemah,” number 8639 in Strong’s Concordance meaning a lethargy or trance. This is the same deep sleep that God caused to fall on Adam when God took one of Adam’s ribs to create Eve. Out of the darkness, God spoke to Abram.

Genesis 15:13-14 NKJV 13 Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

God, also, reminded Abram that He would inherit the Promised Land.

Genesis 15:18 NKJV 18 On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates-

To seal these words and the covenant, a burning torch passed between the parts of the covenant sacrifice.

Genesis 15:17 NKJV 17 And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.

Instead of the usual practice of both parties passing between the parts of the covenant sacrifice, only God in the form of the burning torch passed through the parts. Only God was responsible for fulfilling His promises to Abram.

Years later, when Joseph went before the children of Israel into Egypt, Joseph remembered the words of this covenant. Before his death, Joseph reminded his brothers of the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Genesis 50:24-25 NKJV 24 And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." 25 Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here."

With this background, let’s look at the words that God gave Moses to speak to the elders of Israel. The first words were that God had visited them and saw what was done to them. The word for “visited” is “paqad,” number 6485 in Strong’s Concordance meaning to visit, oversee, charge, care for, appoint, avenge, bestow, or do judgment. A visitation from God can be either a good thing or a bad thing. In this case God’s visit to the children of Israel was a good thing for Israel and not a good thing for Egypt! God had told Abraham that his descendants would be servants in another land and that they would be mistreated, but God would see it and bring judgment against that nation. Joseph looked forward to the day that God would visit His people in Egypt!

This visitation became real and personal when God gave the children of Israel instructions for preparing the Passover. They were to prepare a threshold covenant by killing the covenant sacrifice at the doorway of their homes and putting the blood of the sacrifice on the doorposts and lintel of the doorway. When night had fallen, God visited His people entering each home through the blood of the sacrifice. At the same time that

God was visiting His people who had accepted Him into their homes, God was visiting the Egyptians with judgment killing each of the firstborn of man and beast.

Exodus 12:23 NKJV 23 "For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.

The feast of Passover, then, is in remembrance of God's visitation of His people where He entered into a threshold covenant with them and spared the lives of their firstborn.

The second part of the words Moses spoke to the elders of Israel was that He would bring them out of the affliction of Egypt. God had told Abram that his descendants would come out with great possessions. Joseph reminded his brothers that God would take them out of Egypt and instructed them to take his bones with them. When the children of Israel ate their Passover meal, they were to be prepared to leave Egypt quickly.

Exodus 12:11 NKJV 11 'And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD'S Passover.

As they left, the Egyptians showered the children of Israel with articles of clothing, silver and gold.

Exodus 12:33-35 NKJV 33 And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead." 34 So the people took their dough before it was leavened, having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders. 35 Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing.

The children of Israel left Egypt so quickly that their bread did not have time to rise so they ended up eating unleavened bread when they stopped at Succoth.

Exodus 12:39 NKJV 39 And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is in remembrance of deliverance from Egypt. Once deliverance from Egypt began, it proceeded quickly! They were on their way out of Egypt at daybreak! When they stopped at Succoth, God gave them further instructions.

Exodus 13:3 NKJV 3 And Moses said to the people: "Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out of this place. No leavened bread shall be eaten.

The last part of Moses' words to the elders of Israel was that God would take them into the Promised Land! God had promised Abram that, after four generations, his descendants would inherit the land. Joseph instructed them to take his bones to the Promised Land when God took them out of Egypt. When the children of Israel left Succoth, they had Joseph's bones with them.

Exodus 13:19 NKJV 19 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you."

The fulfillment of receiving the Promised Land would not be fulfilled until forty years later. As such, it doesn't seem like part of the Exodus story. However, it is a crucial part of the promise to Abram reiterated by both Joseph and Moses. God wouldn't just take the children of Israel out of Egypt, He would give them the land promised to Abraham!

The instructions for when they entered the land were given at Mt. Sinai when the children of Israel were preparing to actually go to the Promised Land.

Leviticus 23:9-11 NKJV 9 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 10 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. 11 'He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.

The Feast of Firstfruits is in remembrance of receiving the land. Forty years after leaving Egypt just before entering the land, Moses reminds them to bring the first fruits to the LORD as a remembrance that God gave them the land.

Deuteronomy 26:1-3 NKJV 1 "And it shall be, when you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you possess it and dwell in it, 2 "that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground, which you shall bring from your land that the LORD your God is giving you, and put it in a basket and go to the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. 3 "And you shall go to the one who is priest in those days, and say to him, 'I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come to the country which the LORD swore to our fathers to give us.'

Joshua writes of the first Passover and Feast of Firstfruits they observed when they entered the land. The children of Israel entered the land on the tenth day of Nisan, the day the Passover lambs were chosen in Egypt. They kept the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Firstfruits as instructed.

Joshua 5:10-12 NKJV 10 Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. 11 And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and parched grain, on the very same day. 12 Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.

Some fifteen hundred years later, God again visited His people. Israel was under harsh taskmasters once again, this time, serving the Roman Empire. Although physically present in the land, the land was not truly theirs. The cries of the people were once again heard by God. The priest Zacharias proclaimed the visitation of God.

Luke 1:68-75 NKJV 68 "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people, 69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David, 70 As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, Who have been since the world began, 71 That we should be saved from our enemies And from the hand of all who hate us, 72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers And to remember His holy covenant, 73 The oath which He swore to our father Abraham: 74 To grant us that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, 75 In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

But this visitation from God was not to bring them merely into an earthly covenant; it was to bring them into an eternal covenant. The Passover Lamb would not be a lamb slain at the doorposts of the home; it would be slain at the doorposts of God's eternal city Jerusalem and symbolically at the doorposts of the hearts of every person who accepts Yeshua as the Passover Lamb. Yeshua spoke of this in the hours leading up to His death.

Mark 14:22-25 NKJV 22 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." 23 Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. 24 And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. 25 "Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Those who accept Yeshua and believe in Him will, like the children of Israel, be protected by the blood of the Passover, and have life. They will not be like the Egyptians who received judgment.

John 5:24 NKJV 24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

Paul tells us that we have been delivered from sin. Just like the children of Israel were not to continue to live in Egypt, we are not to continue to live in our sin.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8 NKJV 6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Just like the children of Israel received their inheritance in the Promised Land, we receive our inheritance in the eternal life to come.

John 5:25-27 NKJV 25 "Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. 26 "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, 27 "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

If you have not received this promise of salvation from the Father through Yeshua, it is available to you. All you need to do is accept Yeshua as the LORD's Passover sacrifice through which you invite God into your life. Trust that He will deliver you out of your bondage to sin and grant you eternal life.

God has fulfilled His covenant promises to Abraham. God has visited us with salvation, deliverance and new life! We celebrate the Feast of Passover in remembrance that Yeshua is our Passover sacrifice who has saved us from judgment and brought us into covenant with God. We celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread in remembrance that Yeshua delivered us out of slavery to sin. We celebrate the Feast of Firstfruits in remembrance that through Yeshua we live in newness of life and the hope of eternal life to come.

Study Questions:

1. Moses' arrival in Egypt and Yeshua's "arrival" in Israel were both announced as visitations from God. Compare these two visitations.
2. In Genesis 15:12, what is the horror and great darkness that fell on Abram?
3. What are some other places in scripture that refer to or allude to a threshold covenant? Why is this type of covenant so important?

4. The element of haste is cited as being the reason the children of Israel ate unleavened bread when they came out of Egypt. We, also, learn that all offerings involving grain that are brought to the LORD must be unleavened (with the exception of the Shavuot offering). What, if any, is the connection between the unleavened bread they ate coming out of Egypt and the unleavened bread of the offering?
5. If Yeshua's death brought us into covenant with God, why was it necessary the Yeshua, also, rise from the dead? How is this connected to God's covenant with Abram?
6. What new insight did you gain from this teaching? How do you respond to this new insight? How will you realign your life based on this new understanding?

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