

Series: **Exodus: Seeing God in the Journey**
Title: **Blessing and Birthright of the Firstborn**
Text: **Exodus 13:1-16**

ILLUSTRATIONS:

- First in line at the Empire Strikes Back
 - Best seat
 - Bragging rights

- First in state USSSA championship
 - Fought for
 - Trophy
 - Memories for a lifetime

The text today covers the Lord's position regarding the Firstborn.

- It begins with a call to consecrate the firstborn.
- Then it commands the people to remember this consecration of the firstborn with an annual feast called the feast of the unleavened bread.
 - This is a reminder to them that the Lord cares for His firstborn and they belong to Him. They must recall that they could not have the time to leaven the bread and had to be ready to leave in an instant.
 - And it begins the time of the harvest. It is the time of the firstfruits.
 - "Firstfruits" in Hebrew is *bukkurim* – the promise of what is to come.

CONTRASTING THE FIRSTBORN (Israel vs. Egypt)

- Israel is called the firstborn.
 - Punishment on Egypt was on the firstborn.

Ex 4:22-23

²² "...Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, Israel is my firstborn son,' ²³ and I say to you, 'Let my son go that he may serve me.' If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.'"

- Israel is the firstfruits
 - ***Bukkurim* - Promise of what is coming**

Jer. 2:3 "Israel was holy to the Lord, the firstfruits of his harvest"

- In a symbolic use of the term, Jeremiah called Israel the firstfruits of God's harvest.
- Just as the first and choicest crops were devoted to God, Israel were God's chosen and set apart people.
- But the fact that Israel was God's firstfruits, not His only fruit, also anticipated other peoples and nations coming to the Lord.

CONSECRATING EVERY FIRSTBORN

Ex. 13:1-2

"Consecrate to me every firstborn male. The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether human or animal."

The Firstborn of Everything Belongs to the Lord

Numbers 3:13

"...for all the firstborn are mine. On the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I consecrated for my own all the firstborn in Israel, both of man and of beast. They shall be mine: I am the Lord."

The firstlings of animals

- *"...I consecrated for my own all the firstborn in Israel, both of man and of beast. They shall be mine: I am the Lord."*
- A sacrificial system would be put into place
 - But the firstlings were the Lord's

The firstfruits of the harvest

- Ex 23:16 – *You shall keep the Feast of Harvest, of the firstfruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field.*
- Festival of Firstfruits established to bring in the firstfruits of the Harvest
- **Firstfruits = bukkurim = promise to come**

The firstborn of families

- The pagan world
- The Lord's world

Ex. 34:20 – *All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem. And none shall appear before me empty-handed.*

The Firstborn's Consecration Must Be Accounted For

The Sacrifice or the Shekel

Num.3:46-48

⁴⁶ *And as the redemption price for the 273 of the firstborn of the people of Israel, over and above the number of the male Levites, ⁴⁷ you shall take five shekels per head; you shall take them according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel of twenty gerahs, ⁴⁸ and give the money to Aaron and his sons as the redemption price for those who are over."*

The Child or the Chosen

Num.3: 40-41

⁴⁰ *And the Lord said to Moses, "List all the firstborn males of the people of Israel, from a month old and upward, taking the number of their names. ⁴¹ And you shall take the Levites for me—I am the Lord—instead of all the firstborn among the people of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the cattle of the people of Israel."*

The Lord took the Levite tribe as His own in redemption for the firstborn of every household.

Num. 3:11-13

¹¹ *And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ¹² "Behold, I have taken the Levites from among the people of Israel instead of every firstborn who opens the womb among the people of Israel. The Levites shall be mine, ¹³ for all the firstborn are mine. On the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I consecrated for my own all the firstborn in Israel, both of man and of beast. They shall be mine: I am the Lord."*

- The custom of redeeming the firstborn son is preserved among the Jews to this day.

- After thirty days the father invites the “*Kohen*,” i.e. a supposed descendant of Aaron, the priest, to the house.
- The child is brought and shown to the “*Kohen*,” and the father declares the mother of the child to be an Israelite. If she is a “*Kohen*,” redemption is not necessary.
- The “*Kohen*” asks the father which he prefers, his child or the five shekels; the father answers that he prefers his son, and pays to the “*Kohen*” a sum equivalent to five shekels.
- After receiving the redemption-money, the “*Kohen*” puts his hands on the child’s head and pronounces the Aaronic (priestly) blessing (Num. 6:22-27).

CLARIFYING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FIRSTBORN

Two Implications

- The first from the womb
- The first in pre-eminence

Two Impacts

- The blessing
- The birthright
 - Firstborn was to receive both
 - Esau rejected – Jacob received the birthright and the blessing.

CHRIST THE FIRSTBORN

“Yet, let us not merely dwell on historical precedence, but let our minds ascend to loftier truths. For in our Lord Jesus Christ, we witness the ultimate fulfillment of this typology. He is the preeminent Firstborn, who bestows upon us not only blessings untold but also the eternal birthright of salvation. As heirs of His grace, let us, therefore, consecrate our lives unto Him, acknowledging His preeminence and surrendering our all at His feet.”

Christ is the first born of the womb of Mary.

But he is seen as firstborn in authority and pre-eminence as the carrier of the blessings and the birthright.

Romans 8:29

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

- Pre-eminence
- Among many brothers – that is, you and I as we are conformed into His image.

Colossians 1:15, 18

¹⁵ *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.*

¹⁸ *And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.*

Hebrews 1:6

And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”

Revelation 1:5

...and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood...

THE CHOSEN SHARES WITH THE FIRSTBORN

Heb. 12:23

...and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

In Him comes the blessing and the birthright to all who call him Lord.

He brings the birthright

Heirs

Romans 8:17

Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.

Firstfruits of Harvest

Rom. 16:5 (Berean Literal Bible)

...and the church at their house. Greet Epenetus, my beloved, who is a firstfruit of Asia for Christ.

James 1:18

Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

He brings the blessing

The Holy Spirit

Rom. 8:23

And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

The Hope of Heaven

1 Corinthians 15:20

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

Remember that you are share in the blessings and the birthright of the Firstborn in Jesus Christ

Twice in this text and repeated throughout the Torah are these words:

Ex. 13:9, 16

This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that this law of the Lord is to be on your lips.

- Your hand
- Your mind
- Your lips

Challenge

Live in the identity of one who has the Birthright – We are children of God

Live in the identity of one who has the Blessing – We are the chosen of God