

עץ חיים

ETZ HAYIM

TORAH AND COMMENTARY

THE RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY
THE UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM



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Etz Hayim: Torah and Commentary
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prepared for you. ¹⁷You shall observe the [Feast of] Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your ranks out of the land of Egypt; you shall observe this day throughout the ages as an institution for all time. ¹⁸In the first month, from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. ¹⁹No leaven shall be found in your houses for seven days. For whoever eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from the community of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a citizen of the country. ²⁰You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your settlements you shall eat unleavened bread.

²¹Moses then summoned all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Go, pick out lambs for your families, and slaughter the passover offering. ²²Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the

17 וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת־הַמִּצְוֹת־זֶה בְּעֶצְמָם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הוֹצֵאתִי אֶת־עַבְדְּכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם חֻקַּת עוֹלָם: 18 בְּרֵאשִׁון בְּאַרְבַּעַת עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ בְּעָרֵב תֹּאכְלוּ מִצֵּת עַד יוֹם הָאֶחָד וְעֶשְׂרִים לַחֹדֶשׁ בְּעָרֵב: 19 שִׁבְעַת יָמִים שֶׁאֵר לֹא יִמָּצֵא בְּבֵיתְכֶם כִּי | כָּל־אֶכֶל מִחֻמֶּצֶת וְנִכְרַתָּה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מֵעַד־תֵּת יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגֵר וּבְאִזְרַח הָאָרֶץ: 20 כָּל־מִחֻמֶּצֶת לֹא תֹאכְלוּ בְּכָל־מוֹשְׁבֵיתְכֶם תֹּאכְלוּ מִצֵּת: פ
21 וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה לְכָל־זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם מִשְׁפַּחְתֵיכֶם וְשַׁחֲטוּ הַפֶּסַח: 22 וְלָקַחְתֶּם אֶגְדַּת אֵזוֹב וַיִּטְבַּלְתֶּם בָּדָם אֲשֶׁר־בַּסֶּף חמישי

as do *Shabbat* and the Day of Atonement. Hence the preparation of food on those festival days is permitted, exempted from the prohibition against labor.

17. The rationale for this springtime festival is now given.

You shall observe the [Feast of] Unleavened Bread Understanding the phrase “*u-sh’martem et ha-matzot*” (literally, “guard the *matzot*”) in this way is based on the next phrase—“on this very day”—which takes the word “*matzot*” to mean the festival (*Hag ha-Matzot*). (For a parallel passage, see 23:15.)

I brought Better: “I am bringing.”

18. As specified in Lev. 23:32, the duration of all festivals is from evening to evening.

19. a stranger The Hebrew word *ger* is a foreigner who has taken up permanent residence

among the people Israel. Like his Israelite neighbor, he is required to abstain from possessing leaven for this one week, because its presence within the closely knit community interferes with the ability of others to fulfill their religious obligation. Only the Israelite, however, has the duty to eat *matzah*.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PESAH ARE RELAYED (vv. 21–28)

Moses conveys to the people the divinely given instructions and supplements them with some clarifications.

21. Go, pick out Either select a lamb from your flock or purchase one.

22. a bunch of hyssop A brushlike plant. This explains how the directive of verse 7 is to be carried out. Three of the hyssop’s thin, woody

17. observe the [Feast of] Unleavened Bread Literally, “guard the *matzot*” (pl. of *matzah*). Traditional postbiblical Jewish interpretation

takes this to mean that one should supervise the process of making *matzot* to ensure that no fermentation occurs at any stage.

HALAKHAH L’MA’ASEH

12:19. No leaven shall be found Because disposing of foods prohibited on *Pesah* could impose financial hardship, Jewish law permits food to be stored away in the home of the owner provided that for the duration of *Pesah* it is neither seen nor used and its ownership is transferred to a non-Jew. This sale of *hametz* (*M’khirat Hametz*) can be arranged through a rabbi. All foods prohibited during *Pesah* that are not sold in this manner must be disposed of before the holiday; otherwise they may not be used after *Pesah* (*hametz she-avar alav ha-Pesah*).

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.²³ For when the LORD goes through to smite the Egyptians, He will see the blood on the lintel and the two doorposts, and the LORD will pass over the door and not let the Destroyer enter and smite your home.

²⁴“You shall observe this as an institution for all time, for you and for your descendants.²⁵ And when you enter the land that the LORD will give you, as He has promised, you shall observe this rite.²⁶ And when your children ask you, ‘What do you mean by this rite?’²⁷ you shall say, ‘It is the passover sacrifice to the LORD, because He passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but saved our houses.’”

The people then bowed low in homage.²⁸ And the Israelites went and did so; just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

branches make an ideal applicator. It is often used in rites of purification.

None . . . shall go outside On this night of danger and vigilance, the Israelites would be most secure inside their homes.

23. Destroyer The plague, although personified, is not an independent demonic being. It can operate only within the limits set by God.

24. observe this Ramban notes that this refers to the slaughter of the passover offering, not to the daubing of the blood.

25. when you enter the land Apart from the celebration on the first anniversary of the Exodus, as described in Num. 9:1–5, no further mention of

וְהִגַּעְתֶּם אֶל-הַמִּשְׁקוֹף וְאֶל-שְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזוֹת מִן-הַדָּם אֲשֶׁר בִּסֹּף וְאַתֶּם לֹא תֵצְאוּ אִישׁ מִפֶּתַח-בֵּיתוֹ עַד-בֹּקֶר: ²³ וְעָבַר יְהוָה לִנְגֹף אֶת-מִצְרַיִם וְרָאָה אֶת-הַדָּם עַל-הַמִּשְׁקוֹף וְעַל שְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזוֹת וַפָּסַח יְהוָה עַל-הַפֶּתַח וְלֹא יִתֵּן הַמַּשְׁחִית לָבֵא אֶל-בְּתִיכֶם לִנְגֹף:

²⁴ וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת-הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה לְחֻק־לֶכֶד וּלְבְנֵיךָ עַד-עוֹלָם: ²⁵ וְהָיָה כִּי-תָבֹאוּ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן יְהוָה לְכֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת-הָעֲבֹדָה הַזֹּאת: ²⁶ וְהָיָה כִּי-יֹאמְרוּ אֵלֵיכֶם בְּנֵיכֶם מַה הָעֲבֹדָה הַזֹּאת לְכֶם: ²⁷ וְאָמַרְתֶּם זָבַח-פֶּסַח הוּא לַיהוָה אֲשֶׁר פָּסַח עַל-בְּתֵי בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִצְרַיִם בְּנִגְפוֹ אֶת-מִצְרַיִם וְאֶת-בְּתֵינוּ הִצִּיל

וַיִּקַּד הָעָם וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ: ²⁸ וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת-מֹשֶׁה

שְׁשִׁי וְאֶהְרֹן כִּן עָשׂוּ: ס

the observance of Passover appears in the account of the wilderness wanderings until after the crossing of the river Jordan, as recorded in Josh. 5:2–12.

as He has promised To the patriarchs. See Comment to Exod. 6:8.

26–27. The ritual also serves a pedagogic function. Its oddities arouse the curiosity of children, presenting an opportunity to teach these traditions to the young.

our houses The passage of time never diminishes the significance of the events. The national culture is nurtured by their memory and by their repeated re-enactment, a theme later stressed in the *Pesah Haggadah*.

26. when your children ask you This is the origin of the familiar *Seider* custom of having the children present ask the Four Questions. Three references in this *parashah* to telling the story to our children and another in Deuteronomy gave rise to the *Haggadah* passage about the Four Children. Exodus 13:8 (“And you shall explain to your son”) em-

phasizes the parent’s role in informing children even if they do not ask, gearing our information to the child’s capacity for understanding. It is better to encourage children to ask questions while they are still at home and parents and teachers can respond to them, than to wait until others cause them to doubt and question.

²⁹In the middle of the night the LORD struck down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sat on the throne to the first-born of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the first-born of the cattle. ³⁰And Pharaoh arose in the night, with all his courtiers and all the Egyptians—because there was a loud cry in Egypt; for there was no house where there was not someone dead. ³¹He summoned Moses and Aaron in the night and said, “Up, depart from among my people, you and the Israelites with you! Go, worship the LORD as you said! ³²Take also your flocks and your herds, as you said, and begone! And may you bring a blessing upon me also!”

³³The Egyptians urged the people on, impatient to have them leave the country, for they said, “We shall all be dead.” ³⁴So the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading bowls wrapped in their cloaks upon their shoulders. ³⁵The Israelites had done Moses’ bidding and borrowed from the Egyptians objects

שִׁשִׁי ²⁹ וַיְהִי | בַּחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה וַיַּהֲרֹג ה' כָּל-
בְּכוֹרֵי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבְּכֹר פַּרְעֹה הַיֹּשֵׁב
עַל-כִּסֵּאוֹ עַד בְּכוֹר הַשְּׂבִי אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית
הַבּוֹר וְכָל בְּכוֹר בְּהֵמָה: ³⁰ וַיָּקָם פַּרְעֹה
לַיְלָה הוּא וְכָל-עַבְדָּיו וְכָל-מִצְרַיִם וַתְּהִי
צַעֲקָה גְדֹלָה בְּמִצְרַיִם כִּי-אֵין בֵּית אֲשֶׁר
אֵין-שָׂם מֵת: ³¹ וַיִּקְרָא לְמֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן
לַיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר קוּמוּ צֵאוּ מִתּוֹךְ עַמִּי גַם-
אֲתֶם גַּם-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְכוּ עִבְדוּ אֶת-
יְהוָה כַּדְּבַרְכֶם: ³² גַּם-צֹאנְכֶם גַּם-בְּקֹרְכֶם
קְחוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתֶּם וּלְכוּ וּבְרַכְתֶּם גַּם-
אֹתִי:

³³ וַתַּחֲזֹק מִצְרַיִם עַל-הָעָם לְמַהֵר
לְשַׁלְּחָם מִן-הָאָרֶץ כִּי אָמְרוּ כָּלֵנוּ מֵתִים:
³⁴ וַיִּשְׂא הָעָם אֶת-בִּצְקוֹ טָרֶם יַחְמֹץ
מִשְׂאֲרֹתָם צָרְרַת בְּשִׂמְלֹתָם עַל-שִׁכְמָם:
³⁵ וּבְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל עָשׂוּ כַּדְּבַר מֹשֶׁה וַיִּשְׁאַלוּ
מִמִּצְרַיִם כְּלֵי-כֶסֶף וְכֵלֵי זָהָב וּשְׂמֹלֹת:

TENTH PLAGUE (*makkat b'khorot*) (vv. 29–36)

All the preparations have been completed. The stage is set for the climactic plague, which will secure the release of the Israelites from bondage. The Torah recognizes that the entire Egyptian people is subject to judgment for having tolerated the perverse will of Pharaoh.

PHARAOH SURRENDERS (vv. 30–32)

The king himself has to rise during the night, thereby adding to his humiliation at having to surrender unconditionally to Moses’ demands. By summoning Moses and Aaron, he must retract the arrogant threat made at their last meet-

ing (10:28). He asks for their blessing, an ultimate humbling act.

31. Israelites Pharaoh uses this term for the first time, thereby at last granting recognition to the Israelites as a national entity. The narrative of the oppression opened with this term (1:1), and now closes with it.

34. before it was leavened In verse 39 this note is amplified in such a way as to provide a clear explanation for the eating of *matzot* on Passover. A similar reason is given in Deut. 16:3. Because the eating of the *matzot* was ordained and presumably carried out before the 10th plague struck (v. 8), the present rationale must be a reinterpretation of a pre-existing practice.

35. The silver and gold given (not lent) by the Egyptians constituted a protest against the policies of the royal tyrant. They demonstrated a renewal of public conscience. Similar gifts were given to the Jews leaving Babylonia to return to Judea (Ezra 1:4). Had the Israelites left Egypt with nothing after so many years of suffering, the hatred in their hearts toward the Egyptians would have been never ending. The

Torah wanted the Egyptian people to send them off with gifts, so that it would be easier for the Israelites to fulfill the *mitzvah* “you shall not abhor an Egyptian” (Deut. 23:8). (This comment is by Benno Jacob, who was born and grew up in Germany and had to escape to England after the Nazis came to power. He understood that the purpose of the commandment was to cleanse our memory of bitterness and hatred.)

of silver and gold, and clothing.³⁶And the LORD had disposed the Egyptians favorably toward the people, and they let them have their request; thus they stripped the Egyptians.

³⁷The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, aside from children. ³⁸Moreover, a mixed multitude went up with them, and very much livestock, both flocks and herds. ³⁹And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough that they had taken out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, since they had been driven out of Egypt and could not delay; nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves.

וַיְהִי־הָיָה נָתַן אֶת־חֵן הָעַם בְּעֵינֵי מִצְרַיִם
 וַיִּשְׁאַלֹּם וַיִּנְצְלוּ אֶת־מִצְרַיִם: פ
 וַיִּסְעוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִרַעַמְסֵס סֹכֶתָה
 בְּשֵׁשׁ־מֵאוֹת אֲלָף רַגְלֵי הַגְּבָרִים לְבַד
 מִטָּף: ³⁸ וְגַם־עָרַב רַב עִלָּה אֹתָם וְצֹאן
 וּבָקָר מְקֻנָּה כְּבֵד מְאֹד: ³⁹ וַיֵּאָפוּ אֶת־
 הַבֶּצֶק אֲשֶׁר הוֹצִיאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם עִגְתַּי מִצֹּת
 כִּי לֹא חָמֵץ כִּי־גָרְשׁוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם וְלֹא יָכְלוּ
 לְהַתְּמָה־מִּמֶּנָּה וְגַם־צִדְדָה לֹא־עָשׂוּ לָהֶם:

THE EXODUS (vv. 37–42)

37. Raamses This city served as the assembly point for the departing Israelites. See Comment to 1:11.

Succoth A one day’s journey from the royal palace at Raamses. This probably was the site known as Tjeku in Egyptian, the capital of the eighth province of Lower Egypt in the eastern part of the delta. The region is known to have served as pasture land for Semitic tribes and was the Egyptian gateway to and from Asia.

Six hundred thousand Women, children, and the elderly are not included. This number of men on foot would mean there was a total Israelite population of more than two million. The eastern part of the Nile delta or the peninsula of Sinai could not sustain such a vast population with water and food, not to mention the logistics involved in moving two million people together with their

cattle and herds across the Sea of Reeds with the Egyptian chariots in hot pursuit. In response to these problems, it has been suggested that the Hebrew word *elef*, usually rendered “thousand,” here means “clan” or that it signifies a small military unit—the number of fighting men levied from each tribe. Another theory construes the total number as envisaging the Israelite population at the close of the “Exodus era,” which culminated with the completion of the Temple by King Solomon: 600,000 adult males would be a realistic statistic for that period.

38. a mixed multitude Varied groups of forced laborers seem to have taken advantage of the confused situation and fled the country with the Israelites. Note that the Hebrew word translated as “mixed multitude” (*eirev*) is from the same root (ערב) as the plague in 8:17, suggesting the rabbinic tradition that these people were a major source of the troubles in the desert.

This practice of the Egyptians sending the Israelites off with gifts of gold and jewels anticipates the law (Deut. 15:13) that one who frees a slave must not send him or her away empty handed. According to the Midrash, there were three kinds of people among the Egyptians. One third wanted to keep the Israelites as slaves. They died in the plagues. A second group supported Israel’s bid for liberation and rose in revolt against Pharaoh’s stubborn policies. These were the Egyptians who gave Israel gold, silver, and jewels as they prepared to leave. Their “lending” these gifts to the Israelites was part of the public nature of

the Exodus. The Israelites did not sneak out furtively under cover of darkness. A third group of Egyptians celebrated the *Pesah* with Israel and then left with them, as we read (v. 38), “a mixed multitude went up with them” (Exod. R. 18:8).

39. nor had they prepared They had two weeks to prepare for the Exodus. Does this suggest a certain lack of confidence that God would in fact redeem them? Or does it reflect the slaves’ mentality of living day to day and not planning for the future? Perhaps it testifies to their faith, willing to march into the desert without having prepared food in advance.

⁴⁰The length of time that the Israelites lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years; ⁴¹at the end of the four hundred and thirtieth year, to the very day, all the ranks of the LORD departed from the land of Egypt. ⁴²That was for the LORD a night of vigil to bring them out of the land of Egypt; that same night is the LORD's, one of vigil for all the children of Israel throughout the ages.

⁴³The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: This is the law of the passover offering: No foreigner shall eat of it. ⁴⁴But any slave a man has bought may eat of it once he has been circumcised. ⁴⁵No bound or hired laborer shall eat of it. ⁴⁶It shall be eaten in one house: you shall not take any of the flesh outside the house; nor shall you

וּמוֹשֶׁב בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יָשְׁבוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם
שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וְאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה: ⁴¹ וַיְהִי
מִקֵּץ שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וְאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה
וַיְהִי בַעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יֵצְאוּ כָּל-צְבָאוֹת
יְהוָה מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: ⁴² לַיִל שְׁמֵרִים הוּא
לַיהוָה לְהוֹצִיאֵם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הוּא-
הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה לַיהוָה שְׁמֵרִים לְכָל-בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל לְדוֹרֹתָם: פ

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן זֹאת
חֻקַּת הַפֶּסַח כָּל-בֶּן-נֶכֶר לֹא-יֹאכַל בּוֹ:
וְכָל-עֶבֶד אִישׁ מִקְנֵת-בֵּטֶס וּמִלֵּתָהּ אִתּוֹ
אִזּוֹ יֹאכַל בּוֹ: ⁴⁵ תוֹשֵׁב וְשָׂכִיר לֹא-יֹאכַל-
בּוֹ: ⁴⁶ בְּבַיִת אֶחָד יֹאכַל לֹא-תוֹצִיאַ

40–41. This historical summation does not accord precisely with the 400 years of Egyptian oppression predicted in Gen. 15:13. Perhaps that round number and its division into neatly symmetrical periods of time—as explained by some of the rabbis and medieval commentators—are intended to be rhetorical rather than literal; i.e., they underline the biblical concept of history as the fulfillment of God's design. In the worldview of the Bible, history is not a series of disconnected and haphazard incidents.

42. The final night in Egypt, the night of redemption, is described as one of vigil for both God and the Israelites.

EXCLUSIONARY REGULATIONS (vv. 43–49)

This final section has its own title: "The Law of the Passover Offering." It largely defines who is ineligible to celebrate the festival. The primary emphasis is on the practice of circumcision. As the physical token of God's covenant and a symbol of commitment to a life lived in the full awareness of that covenant, it is the indispensable prerequisite for males who wish to participate in the paschal offering. This requirement was forcefully expressed in 4:24–26, when Moses set out to return to Egypt to commence his mission

of liberation, and it is stressed once again at the moment of the successful fulfillment of that mission.

43. foreigner The Hebrew term *ben nekhar* refers to a non-Israelite who resides in the land temporarily, usually for purposes of commerce. He does not profess the religion of Israel and does not identify with the community's historical experiences. He is, therefore, exempted from the religious obligations and restrictions imposed on Israelites.

44. Once the privately owned slave is circumcised (per the law of Gen. 17:12–13) he is treated as a member of the family and may participate fully in the paschal offering. The link between Passover and circumcision is also found in Josh. 5, a companion to this passage designated as the *haftarah* for the first day of *Pesah*.

45. bound or hired laborer These are two categories of non-Israelite wage earners who do not have the status of members of a household.

46. in one house This logically connects with the preceding verses, which stress that only those included within a household may participate. None may leave the house because every Israelite must be accounted for and prepared when the signal is given to depart.

HALAKHAH L'MA'ASEH

12:43. No foreigner shall eat of it This rule applied only to the sacrifice of the paschal lamb in biblical times. It does not apply to non-Jewish guests at a *Seider* meal in our time.

break a bone of it. ⁴⁷The whole community of Israel shall offer it. ⁴⁸If a stranger who dwells with you would offer the passover to the LORD, all his males must be circumcised; then he shall be admitted to offer it; he shall then be as a citizen of the country. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it. ⁴⁹There shall be one law for the citizen and for the stranger who dwells among you.

⁵⁰And all the Israelites did so; as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

⁵¹That very day the LORD freed the Israelites from the land of Egypt, troop by troop.

מִן־הַבֵּית מִן־הַבֶּשֶׂר הוֹצֵה וְעַם לֹא תִשְׁבְּרוּ־בּוֹ: ⁴⁷ כָּל־עַדְתֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל יַעֲשׂוּ אֹתוֹ: ⁴⁸ וְכִי־יִגְוֹר אֶתְךָ גֵר וְעָשָׂה פֶסַח לַיהוָה הַמּוֹל לוֹ כָּל־זָכָר וְאִזּוֹ יִקְרַב לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ וְהָיָה בְּאֶרֶץ הָאָרֶץ וְכָל־עַרְל לֹא־יֵאָכֵל בּוֹ: ⁴⁹ תּוֹרָה אַחַת יְהִי לְאִזְרָח וְלִגֵּר הֹגֵר בְּתוֹכְכֶם:

⁵⁰ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כָל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶת־אַהֲרֹן בְּן עָשׂוֹ: ס
⁵¹ וַיְהִי בַעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הוֹצִיא יְהוָה אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם עַל־שְׁבִיעֵי צְבָאָתָם: פ

break a bone Presumably, to suck out the marrow.

48–49. These instructions relate to the situation envisaged above in verse 25. Strangers in ancient Israel enjoyed numerous rights and privileges, such as the benefits of *Shabbat* rest, the protection afforded by the cities of refuge, and access to a share of certain tithes and to the produce of the sabbatical year. They could even offer sacrifices if they so wished and participate in religious festivals. They were obligated to refrain from certain actions that could undermine the social, moral, and spiritual well-being of the dominant society—such as immorality, idolatry, blasphemy, and the consumption of blood. They were not

required to celebrate *Pesah*; but if they desired to do so, and thus identify themselves and their families with the national experience of Israel, the men first had to undergo the rite of circumcision. Having done so, no discrimination between them and citizens was allowed. An uncircumcised Israelite was also excluded from participation.

50. This refers to the eating of the paschal offering.

51. This verse resumes the narrative of verses 37–41. It is connected to the next chapter by the traditional scribal division of the Torah, to indicate that the subsequent law of the firstborn came into effect on the very day of the Exodus.

48. The person of non-Jewish origin who chooses to join the Jewish people, the *ger*, is welcome to celebrate *Pesah* even though his or her ancestors were not literally slaves in Egypt and did not leave with Moses, even as immigrants to the United States sing, “Land where my fathers died.”

49. This may be taken as a major statement of the innate worth of all human beings and their right to equal treatment under the law.

Every spring at the *Pesah Seider*, every week

when we pause on *Shabbat* to demonstrate that we are free people and not slaves (praising *Shabbat* in the *Kiddush* as “a reminder of our liberation from Egypt”), indeed every day, the Jew is to recall that Jewish history began with God’s intervening on behalf of an enslaved people, leading them to freedom, and giving them the Torah. That memory is to be personal, not a fact of ancient history. (Exod. 13:8: “It is because of what the LORD did for me when I went free from Egypt.”)

HALAKHAH L'MA'ASEH

12:49. one law The non-Jew, though not subject to all the duties and privileges of Jewish law, must nevertheless be treated fairly and justly in all business and legal dealings, and Jews are commanded to care for all who are sick or poor, including non-Jews. (BT Git. 61a).

¹¹On your new moons you shall present a burnt offering to the LORD: two bulls of the herd, one ram, and seven yearling lambs, without blemish. ¹²As grain offering for each bull: three-tenths of a measure of choice flour with oil mixed in. As grain offering for each ram: two-tenths of a measure of choice flour with oil mixed in. ¹³As grain offering for each lamb: a tenth of a measure of fine flour with oil mixed in. Such shall be the burnt offering of pleasing odor, a gift to the LORD. ¹⁴Their libations shall be: half a *hin* of wine for a bull, a third of a *hin* for a ram, and a quarter of a *hin* for a lamb. That shall be the monthly burnt offering for each new moon of the year. ¹⁵And there shall be one goat as a purification offering to the LORD, to be offered in addition to the regular burnt offering and its libation.

¹⁶In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, there shall be a passover sacrifice

11 וּבְרֵאשִׁי חֲדָשֵׁיכֶם תִּקְרִיבוּ עֹלָה לַיהוָה פָּרִים בְּנֵי־בָקָר שְׁנָיִם וְאֵיל אֶחָד כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה שִׁבְעָה תְּמִימִם: 12 וּשְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֶלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן לֶפָר הָאֶחָד וּשְׁנַי עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֶלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן לְאֵיל הָאֶחָד: 13 וְעֶשְׂרֹן עֶשְׂרֹן סֶלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן לִכְבֹּשׂ הָאֶחָד עֹלָה רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה: 14 וְנִסְפִיָּהֶם חֲצִי הַהֵינִן יִהְיֶה לֶפָר וּשְׁלִישֵׁת הַהֵינִן לְאֵיל וּרְבִיעֵת הַהֵינִן לִכְבֹּשׂ יַיִן זֹאת עֹלֹת חֹדֶשׁ בְּחֹדְשׁוֹ לְחֹדְשֵׁי הַשָּׁנָה: 15 וּשְׁעִיר עֲזִים אֶחָד לְחֹטָאת לַיהוָה עַל־עֹלֹת הַתָּמִיד יַעֲשֶׂה וְנִסְכּוֹ: ס

16 וּבַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן בְּאַרְבַּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם

morning *tamid*, because there could be no offering after the *tamid* of the evening. It should be noted that purification sacrifices are never brought on *Shabbat*, because intimations of human wrongdoing are not permitted on this joyous day.

ROSH HODESH, THE NEW MOON (vv. 11–15)

In early Israel, this was an important festival celebrated by families and clans in a state of ritual purity at the local sanctuary.

14. Only here are the libation quantities

specified. Because they are always the same, they need not be repeated.

burnt offering Use of this term implies the auxiliary grain offering and libation.

new moon Hebrew: *hodesh*, “new moon,” as in 29:6. (The word can also mean “month.”)

PASCHAL SACRIFICE AND UNLEAVENED BREAD (vv. 16–25)

The day of the paschal offering and the seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread originally were separate and distinct holidays (cf. Lev. 23:5–6). The fact that the paschal offering is mentioned here

15. **purification offering to the LORD** Hebrew: *hattat l’Adonai*. Noting that this is the only place in the Torah where this phrase occurs, the Talmud understands it to mean “a purification offering for the LORD.” It is brought on God’s behalf on *Rosh Hodesh* (when the new moon appears) as an apology to the moon for having made it smaller and less consequential

than the sun (BT Hul. 60b). Did the Sages here picture God apologizing for all the unfairness of life—to people who are born less healthy, gifted, or fortunate than others? Given the traditional identification of *Rosh Hodesh* as a woman’s festival, did the Sages imagine God expressing regret to women for having a less prominent role than men for so much of history?

HALAKHAH L’MA’ASEH

28:11. new moons The Jewish calendar is based on the cycles of the moon. An extra month (Adar I) is added 7 times in 19 years to make the lunar calendar conform to the solar year. Each Hebrew month begins with the New Moon (*Rosh Hodesh*); it is announced in synagogue (except for the month of *Tishrei*) on the preceding *Shabbat*, in the Blessing of the Month (*Birkat Ha-Hodesh*). See Comment on Exod. 12:2.

to the LORD, ¹⁷and on the fifteenth day of that month a festival. Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days. ¹⁸The first day shall be a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations. ¹⁹You shall present a gift, a burnt offering, to the LORD: two bulls of the herd, one ram, and seven yearling lambs—see that they are without blemish. ²⁰The grain offering with them shall be of choice flour with oil mixed in: prepare three-tenths of a measure for a bull, two-tenths for a ram; ²¹and for each of the seven lambs prepare one-tenth of a measure. ²²And there shall be one goat for a purification offering, to make expiation in your behalf. ²³You shall present these in addition to the morning portion of the regular burnt offering. ²⁴You shall offer the like daily for seven days as food, a gift of pleasing odor to the LORD; they shall be offered, with their libations, in addition to the regular burnt offering. ²⁵And the seventh day shall be a sacred occasion for you: you shall not work at your occupations.

²⁶On the day of the first fruits, your Feast of Weeks, when you bring an offering of new grain to the LORD, you shall observe a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations. ²⁷You shall present a burnt offering of pleasing odor to the LORD: two bulls of the herd, one ram, seven yearling lambs. ²⁸The grain offering with them shall be of choice flour with oil mixed

לַחֹדֶשׁ פֶּסַח לַיהוָה: ¹⁷וּבַחֲמִישֵׁי עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה חַג שִׁבְעַת יָמִים מִצּוֹת יֹאכְל: ¹⁸בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן מִקְרֵא-קֹדֶשׁ כָּל-מְלֹאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ: ¹⁹וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אִשָּׁה עֹלָה לַיהוָה פָּרִים בְּנֵי-בָקָר שְׁנַיִם וְאֵיל אֶחָד וְשִׁבְעָה כִבְשִׁים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה תְּמִימִם יִהְיוּ לָכֶם: ²⁰וּמִנְחָתָם סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן שְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרִינִים לְפָר וּשְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרִינִים לְאֵיל תַּעֲשׂוּ: ²¹עֶשְׂרוֹן עֶשְׂרוֹן תַּעֲשֶׂה לַכֹּפֶשׁ הָאֶחָד לְשִׁבְעַת הַכִּבְשִׁים: ²²וְשַׁעִיר חֲטָאת אֶחָד לְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם: ²³מִלֶּבֶד עֹלֹת הַבָּקָר אֲשֶׁר לְעֹלֹת הַתָּמִיד תַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת-אֵלֶּה: ²⁴כְּאֵלֶּה תַעֲשׂוּ לַיּוֹם שִׁבְעַת יָמִים לֶחֶם אִשָּׁה רֵיחַ-נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה עַל-עֹלֹת הַתָּמִיד יַעֲשֶׂה וְנִסְכּוֹ: ²⁵וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִקְרֵא-קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם כָּל-מְלֹאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ: ²⁶וּבַיּוֹם הַבְּפוּרִים בְּהִקְרִיבְכֶם מִנְחָה חֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה בְּשִׁבְעַתֵיכֶם מִקְרֵא-קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם כָּל-מְלֹאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ: ²⁷וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם עֹלָה לְרֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה פָּרִים בְּנֵי-בָקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵיל אֶחָד שִׁבְעָה כִבְשִׁים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה: ²⁸וּמִנְחָתָם סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן שְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרִינִים

even though it is a private sacrifice (see Exod. 12:1–11) indicates that by this time the two festivals had become fused.

17. festival Both the paschal sacrifice and the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread are observed at the sanctuary, precisely as instituted by Deut. 16:1–6.

18. occupations Hebrew: *m'lekhet avodah*; literally, “laborious work,” of the sort that is forbidden on the festivals. This is in contrast to “any work” (*kol m'lakhal*), which is forbidden on *Shabbat* and *Yom Kippur* (Num. 29:7; Lev. 23:3,28). The nonlaborious work permitted (by implication) on the festivals is not defined, except for the explicit permission to pre-

pare food on the first and last days of *Pesah* (Exod. 12:16).

FEAST OF WEEKS (vv. 26–31)

This festival, which marks the start of the wheat harvest, does not depend on the lunar calendar. It occurs seven weeks after the beginning of the barley harvest (Lev. 23:15–16). In this regard it is like *Shabbat*, which is also independent of the lunar calendar.

26. day of the first fruits This day is also called “the Feast of the Harvest” (*Hag ha-Katzir*) in Exod. 23:16, and “the Feast of Weeks” (*Hag [ha-]Shavu-ot*) in Exod. 34:22, Deut. 16:10,16, and 2 Chron. 8:13.

הַפְּטָרָה לַפֶּסַח (יוֹם רֵאשׁוֹן)

HAFTARAH FOR PESAH, FIRST DAY

JOSHUA 3:5–7, 5:2–6:1, 6:27 (*Ashk'nazim*)

JOSHUA 5:2–6:1, 6:27 (*S'fardim*)

In this *haftarah* we read about early events in the life of the Israelites after they had reached the Promised Land. The sons of those who had died during the wilderness wanderings were circumcised at Gilgal. The celebration of *Pesah* at Gilgal is central to a series of events that parallel the Exodus from Egypt and repeat its message under new circumstances. The events at Gilgal and the angelic revelation to Joshua “near Jericho” constitute the reading recited by *Ashk'nazim*. Meanwhile, *S'fardim* continue the historical report and read about the ensuing fall of Jericho under Joshua's leadership.

Rituals, sacred space, and holy war pervade the *haftarah*. Each of them marks a stage in the transformation of both the people and the Land. When the young males whose parents died in the wilderness are circumcised at Gilgal, the sojourn in Egypt and its “disgrace” have come to an end. When the people eat of the *pesah* offering and consume the new grain of the Land, the food of the wilderness (manna) ceases. Finally, after a revelation to Joshua from the heavenly “captain of the LORD's host” (5:14), a minutely choreographed ritual encircling of Jericho is enacted, by which the city and all within it are consecrated to the Lord. The utter destruction of the city and its inhabitants (except for Rahab and her kin) inaugurates a ritualized purification of the homeland, with horrific curses uttered against anyone seeking personal gain from objects of value (6:18) or from the site itself (v. 26).

The national circumcision at Gilgal, the *pesah* offering and the eating of new grain, and the revelation of the Lord's angel to Joshua take us beyond external acts to the inner processes of cultural and historical memory. For the narrator, the entrance into the Land is the liberation of a new Exodus, and Joshua is a new Moses. A close look

at the text shows how this teaching about the deeper dimensions of history was conveyed:

1. In a passage just before the *haftarah* begins, the Book of Joshua reports that the Israelites crossed the Jordan River (5:1), whose waters were “cut off” from their normal flow, and stood “in a single heap” (3:13,15–16). This depiction of the miraculous recalls the crossing of the Sea of Reeds in Moses' day (Exod. 15:8). To emphasize the point, the narration continues with Joshua's future-oriented instructions to the people (4:21–24).

2. The narration in Josh. 4 points out that the people “came up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month” (4:19). This recalls the final events of the sojourn in Egypt when, before the final plague and the Exodus, each family was commanded to take a lamb on the 10th day of the first month (Exod. 12:2–3) and sacrifice it as “an offering to the LORD” on “the fourteenth day” of the month “at twilight” (Exod. 12:6). For a whole week thereafter, only “unleavened bread” was to be eaten (Exod. 12:19–20). Similarly, in the days of Joshua, “the Israelites offered the passover sacrifice on the fourteenth day of the [first] month, toward evening” (Josh. 5:10). On the next day, they ate “unleavened bread and parched grain” from “the produce of the country” (5:11).

3. The paschal ceremony at Gilgal (5:10–11) also explains the conjunction of this celebration with the immediately preceding account of the circumcision of the Israelite males (5:2–9). Underlying the narrative is the requirement that only the circumcised may participate in consuming the paschal offering (see Exod. 12:43–50, esp. v. 48). Joshua, performing the rite of circumcision before the *pesah* sacrifice, is thus presented as a righteous observer of the law, a faithful follower of the statutes of Moses.

4. A final scene further links Joshua to Moses and the events of the Exodus to the onset of the conquest. After the *pesah* ceremony, Joshua, near Jericho, was confronted by a “man” with a “drawn sword in hand” who identified himself as the “captain of the LORD’s host” (5:13–14). Joshua perceived an angelic messenger in this individual and prostrated himself (v. 14). At this point, the figure declares: “Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy” (v. 15). This recalls a similar divine command to Moses at the Burning Bush (Exod. 3:5).

In short, the goal of the *haftarah* is not simply to tell the past as it was, but rather to remember the past in a particular way. The events of Joshua’s day are formulated so as to evoke, at every point, the days of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt. The new events are memorable precisely because they conform so closely to the instructive model of the Exodus from Egypt. The Israelite conquest simply repeats the prototype in old-new ways.

RELATION OF THE *HAFTARAH*
TO THE CALENDAR

The first *pesah* offering in the Land (Josh. 5:10–11) marks a recollection and a renewal of the Exodus. The unleavened grain here signals the end of the wilderness trek (and the divine manna). Hence, eating the new grain on the day after the *pesah* offering was something of a rite of passage on entering the Land that had been promised to their ancestors.

The annual renewal of this grain ritual (by eating *matzot*) does not simply celebrate new agricultural beginnings. It also celebrates the earth as a physical and spiritual homeland—physical, because it reflects the natural necessity of eating (and the domestication of the earth through physical labor), and spiritual, because it stresses the relationship between the renewal of agriculture and the re-creation of the earth as a habitat for human settlement and destiny.

3 ⁵And Joshua said to the people, “Purify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will perform wonders in your midst.”

⁶Then Joshua ordered the priests, “Take up the Ark of the Covenant and advance to the head of the people.” And they took up the Ark of the Covenant and marched at the head of the people.

⁷The LORD said to Joshua, “This day, for the first time, I will exalt you in the sight of all Israel, so that they shall know that I will be with you as I was with Moses.”

5 ²At that time the LORD said to Joshua, “Make flint knives and proceed with a second circumcision of the Israelites.” ³So Joshua had flint knives made, and the Israelites were circumcised at Gibeath-haaraloth.

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל-הָעָם הַתְּקַדְּשׁוּ
כִּי מָחָר יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה בְּקִרְבְּכֶם
נִפְלְאוֹת:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל-הַכֹּהֲנִים לֵאמֹר שָׂאוּ
אֶת-אֲרוֹן הַבְּרִית וְעָבְרוּ לִפְנֵי הָעָם וַיִּשְׂאוּ
אֶת-אֲרוֹן הַבְּרִית וַיֵּלְכוּ לִפְנֵי הָעָם: ס
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֶחָל
גְּדַלְךָ בְּעֵינַי כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִדְעוּן כִּי
בְּאִשְׁרֵי הַיְיָתִי עִם-מֹשֶׁה אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ:

בָּעֵת הַהִיא אָמַר יְהוָה אֶל-יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
עֲשֵׂה לְךָ חַרְבוֹת צָרִים וְשׁוּב מִלְּאֶת-
בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנִית: ³וַיַּעַשׂ-לוֹ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
חַרְבוֹת צָרִים וַיִּמַּל אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-
גִּבְעַת הָעֵרְלוֹת:

Joshua 5:2. flint knives Hebrew: *harvot* Exod. 4:25). These ritual objects remained rough-hewn, similar to the stones of the ancient altars. *tzurim*. Their use continues ancient practice (see

⁴This is the reason why Joshua had the circumcision performed: All the people who had come out of Egypt, all the males of military age, had died during the desert wanderings after leaving Egypt. ⁵Now, whereas all the people who came out of Egypt had been circumcised, none of the people born after the exodus, during the desert wanderings, had been circumcised. ⁶For the Israelites had traveled in the wilderness forty years, until the entire nation—the men of military age who had left Egypt—had perished; because they had not obeyed the LORD, and the LORD had sworn never to let them see the land that the LORD had sworn to their fathers to assign to us, a land flowing with milk and honey. ⁷But He had raised up their sons in their stead; and it was these that Joshua circumcised, for they were uncircumcised, not having been circumcised on the way. ⁸After the circumcising of the whole nation was completed, they remained where they were, in the camp, until they recovered.

⁹And the LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” So that place was called Gilgal, as it still is.

¹⁰Encamped at Gilgal, in the steppes of Jericho, the Israelites offered the passover sacrifice on the fourteenth day of the month, toward evening.

¹¹On the day after the passover offering, on

4–7. No reason is given for delaying the ritual until this time. A rabbinic tradition suggests that it was postponed because of the hardships of the trek and the absence of a north wind (BT Yev. 71b–72a). Other opinions speculate on added features of the rite itself.

9. Part of a divine speech that explains the name of the shrine of Gilgal by popular etymology.

I have rolled away Hebrew: *galloti*.

disgrace of Egypt The nature of this disgrace—ended via circumcision—is unclear. Tradition reports that the males were already circumcised in Egypt and that those now circumcised were born after the Exodus (see Josh. 5:5).

⁴ וְזֶה הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר־מַל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כָּל־הָעָם הַיֵּצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם הַזְּכָרִים כֹּל | אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה מָתוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר בַּדֶּרֶךְ בְּצֵאתָם מִמִּצְרַיִם: ⁵ כִּי־מַלִּים הָיוּ כָּל־הָעָם הַיֵּצֵאִים וְכָל־הָעָם הַיְלָדִים בַּמִּדְבָּר בַּדֶּרֶךְ בְּצֵאתָם מִמִּצְרַיִם לֹא־מָלוּ: ⁶ כִּי | אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה הִלְכוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּמִּדְבָּר עַד־תָּם כָּל־הַגּוֹי אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה הַיֵּצֵאִים מִמִּצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לָהֶם לְבַלְתִּי הִרְאוֹתָם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לְאֲבוֹתָם לָתֵת לָנוּ אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבַשׁ: ⁷ וְאֶת־בְּנֵיהֶם הַקִּיָּם תַּחְתָּם אֲתָם מַל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כִּי־עָרְלִים הָיוּ כִּי לֹא־מָלוּ אוֹתָם בַּדֶּרֶךְ: ⁸ וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר־תָּמוּ כָּל־הַגּוֹי לְהַמּוֹל וַיֵּשְׁבוּ תַּחְתָּם בַּמַּחֲנֶה עַד חִיּוֹתָם: **פ**

⁹ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַיּוֹם גִּלְגָּלִי אֶת־חֲרַפַּת מִצְרַיִם מֵעַלֵיכֶם וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא גִלְגָּל עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ¹⁰ וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגִלְגָּל וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת־הַפֶּסַח בְּאַרְבַּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ בְּעָרֵב בְּעָרְבוֹת יְרִיחוֹ: ¹¹ וַיֹּאכְלוּ מֵעֵבֹר הָאָרֶץ מִמַּחֲרַת הַפֶּסַח

Moreover, extensive evidence (paintings, texts, mummified bodies) shows that the ancient Egyptians also performed this operation, although in a different way than the Israelites. Hence, the “disgrace” mentioned here may be the disgrace of the Egyptian bondage.

11. On the day after the passover offering Hebrew: *mi-moḥorat ha-pesah*. In this context, it is clear that the new grain was eaten on the morning after the paschal meal. This verse is linked linguistically and legally to Lev. 23:10–14. Therefore, it would be reasonable to conclude that the idiom in Leviticus “on the day after the sabbath [*mi-moḥorat ha-shabbat*]” also refers to the day after the paschal meal.

that very day, they ate of the produce of the country, unleavened bread and parched grain.
 12On that same day, when they ate of the produce of the land, the manna ceased. The Israelites got no more manna; that year they ate of the yield of the land of Canaan.

13Once, when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing before him, drawn sword in hand. Joshua went up to him and asked him, "Are you one of us or of our enemies?" 14He replied, "No, I am captain of the LORD's host. Now I have come!" Joshua threw himself face down to the ground and, prostrating himself, said to him, "What does my lord command his servant?" 15The captain of the LORD's host answered Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy." And Joshua did so.

6 Now Jericho was shut up tight because of the Israelites; no one could leave or enter.

27The LORD was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land.

מִצֹּת וְקִלְוֵי בַעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: 12 וַיִּשְׁבֹּת
 הַמָּן מִמַּחֲרַת בְּאֲכָלָם מֵעֵבֹר הָאָרֶץ
 וְלֹא־הָיָה עוֹד לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן וַיֹּאכְלוּ
 מִתְּבוֹאֹת אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן בַּשָּׁנָה הַהִיא: ס

13 וַיְהִי בַּהַיּוֹת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בִּירִיחוֹ וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו
 וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה־אִישׁ עֹמֵד לְנֹגְדוֹ וְחֶרֶב
 שְׁלֹפָה בְיָדוֹ וַיִּלֶּף יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר
 לֹו הֲלָנוּ אַתָּה אִם־לְעָרֵינוּ: 14 וַיֹּאמֶר |
 לֹא כִי אֲנִי שֶׁר־צָבָא־יְהוָה עִתָּה בְּאֵתִי
 וַיִּפֹּל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־פָּנָיו אֶרְצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה
 וַיֹּאמֶר לֹו מָה אֲדֹנָי מְדַבֵּר אֶל־עַבְדּוֹ:
 15 וַיֹּאמֶר שֶׁר־צָבָא יְהוָה אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ שֶׁל־
 נַעַלְךָ מֵעַל רַגְלֶךָ* כִּי הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה
 עֹמֵד עָלָיו קֹדֶשׁ הוּא וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כֵּן:

וַיִּרְיַחוֹ סִגְרַת וּמִסְגְּרַת מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵין יוֹצֵא וְאֵין בָּא: ס

27 וַיְהִי יְהוָה אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וַיְהִי שְׁמֹעוֹ
 בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ:

v. 15. חסר ו