

28 October 1995, Celebration before Breaking of Bread Sus, France

Hoshua Ben Nun

Story by ha-Emeq

Did you notice what Neshef did tonight? She asked one of the most important questions you could ask: *Ma nishtana ... Why is this night ...?*

Did you know that question is right in the Bible? The very same words? It says there, when your children ask this, this is what you should tell them.

Reuben is a very curious child. He asks questions because he wants to know.

So okay, Neshef, do you really want to know?

Why is this night different? We had a minchah just like the others. Well, a curious child will wonder, and then you think about something. There is a chance that the big Reuben never heard this story. The little Reuben probably heard it a few times, but every time you hear it you should hear something new.

This is the story of Hoshua, son of Nun. He was living in slavery. He watched his abba get up every day, going to slave labor. Sometimes his back would be beaten bloody because they said, "Nun, you don't work hard enough." Hoshua would wash it, put oil on it. "That's because we are slaves here," his abba said. "We are not supposed to be here. We should be in another land where our ancestors came from."

"It's not right! Let's go!" his son would say. "Son, someday we will be delivered. Someday all the twelve tribes will go. We could sneak out one night, but all the twelve tribes need to go."

"How long, abba, how long?"

Hoshua's muscles got bigger. The evil slave master came by and got him. Now he knew what his abba was doing: he had to make bricks. The evil king wanted to make big building, big cities.

They had to stamp straw in the mud. "Abba, this is so hard." Then he got beaten right away.

"Quit talking! Work!" He was a slave. Nun hated to see it. He hated to see that his son got the stripes of a slave on his back. "Work harder, boy, make many bricks." When Hoshua went home he said, "Abba, I don't want to be a slave."

That Pharaoh was supposed to be from the sun god. There were idols and statues all around.

"Abba, I hate it here. Let's get out." Hoshua groaned all night, it hurt so much. This was going on in all the houses of Israel. They cried to God. They didn't know Him. They only knew He created the sun and the stars.

Finally the cry got so bad it came to YHWH. He already was preparing somebody. Out in the desert was Moshe. Moshe — our Father hadn't spoken to anybody for a long time: "Go, lead My people out of Egypt." Moshe didn't think he was strong. "You go. There is a Pharaoh there. He is strong and beats the people. Go, I heard My people crying." He heard Hoshua. "Go, tell them I'm sending you to lead them out."

Moshe said, "I can't speak well. How will they listen to me? I don't have eloquent lips. I don't know how to speak well."

"Go."

"But, I can't speak well." Our Father was troubled with him. "Go, your brother will talk for you." So he went. Our people got up one morning, and there was a messenger.

"All the people need to come."

"What's going on, abba?" Hoshua said.

"I don't know. I'll see." He went to the middle of the village. There was Moshe: "YHWH our God sent me, and He wants to set you free."

"Wow, it's true!" They weren't too loud, because all the evil slave masters were around. They got down on their faces and worshipped quietly. Soon after Nun went home.

"We are being delivered."

"Let's go, abba."

"Not yet, son. Something is going to happen. Moshe will go to Pharaoh and tell him to let his people go."

That day work wasn't that hard. "Wow!" the slave master said, "you guys did well today." But Hoshua didn't know what happened when Moshe went to Pharaoh.

"Let my people go."

"What do you mean?"

"The God of heaven says the twelve tribes need to go free."

"Well, they are not going anywhere, lazy guys. You stay here. You are my workers, my forced laborers. I won't let you go. Since you asked, I will make it harder. No more straw to make the bricks with."

Hoshua didn't hear till next morning. He went to work. "Hey, you want to go free, lazy guys? No straw today. You make bricks." It became so much harder.

"I thought we are going free." They got beaten a lot. Nun said, "Trust, son, don't worry."

You could hear grumbling everywhere. People said, "Let's get Moshe."

"No, son. Moshe is our only hope."

Soon things started to happen. Plagues came. It didn't matter — freedom was in sight. Until finally — why is this night different than any other night? We are going to leave. Tonight is the night. You know what, the destroying angel is going to come.

"What's a destroying angel?" Hoshua said.

"He takes the soul of people away. He is going to come to our land. He will take the life of all the first born from Pharaoh to the lowest captive who was in the dungeon."

"Abba, that's me", said Hoshua.

"You won't die if..." — Why is it different this night? This is the secret. "Go, get a lamb, kill him. One of the flock, the best one of your lambs. Kill him right there with a bowl. When you kill him it's going to drip down blood until the little lamb falls down and dies. Then, when he's dead and you have his blood in a bowl, clean it up and cook it. If it's too big, invite our closest neighbor. (Not the one down the road — the first one of your neighbors should always be close to you.) Put the blood over the doors of our house. Moshe said it really clear — over on top and down on both sides. Then when the death angel flies over the land and comes to our house, he sees the blood and passes over and goes to the next house. If there is no blood, the little boy in it will die; his soul will be taken. Don't let anybody go out of the house. Don't put the blood on the ground; don't put it all around — we never want to trample on the blood. When the death angel comes stay inside."

They got the best lamb and killed it. The neighbor came. They had to get it all ready. They roasted Hoshua's best lamb. Then it started, the sound of crying. You could hear it from different places, even from the barns, because all the first-born of the cattle were killed. Death came, the destroying angel came to every house that didn't have the blood on their door posts.

It didn't come to Hoshua's house. Hoshua was still fine, he was protected. You know why.

"We are going out." Pretty soon you heard it: "We are going." The sound of rejoicing was louder than the sound of crying. "Get out!" Pharaoh said. His first-born had died.

"Get things together. Get out." But the bread wasn't ready. It didn't have time to rise. "Doesn't matter. Take it. We'll eat it unleavened. Out, out." The whole village was totally quiet. They

were rushing out to freedom. The blood of the lamb had set them free. Then our Father said, "People, remember this night. Never forget. Every single time you have to remember. Children must say — *Ma nishtana ...*"

Why do we have that flat bread on the table? Why not puffy bread? Why did the death angel not come in? Because of the blood of the lamb. What is that blood? The blood of Yahshua. What is the flat bread, the loaf that's on the table? It's the body of Yahshua.

Tonight is different. We are not getting up eating supper like on other nights. You children go to bed, and your parents will celebrate the Passover.

You know who Hoshua is? He is a real person — Hoshua ben Nun. He was always ahead, right by Moshe, until he changed his name to *Joshua*. He was a type of Yahshua. He brought the people into the land. Someone will come and deliver My people. It was our Master Yahshua who delivered us.

Yoneq: It's wonderful that it's the same with us today. We have to be in that house that the blood is over. We are all together. We are trusting. When I see His blood, I'll pass over you. Our Master's blood makes the death angel pass over us. We have eternal life.