

“But you shall surely redeem the Bechor of man”

HKB”H Bequeathed the Kedushah of the Firstborn to Adam HaRishon to Yaakov Avinu and to All of Yisrael

In this week’s parsha, parshas Korach, we learn about the mitzvah of “Pidyon HaBen” (Bamidbar 18, 15): **“אך פדה תפדה את בכור האדם... ופדויו מכן חודש תפדה בערך כסף חמשת שקלים בשקל הקודש—but you shall surely redeem the firstborn of man . . . and those that are to be redeemed—from one month shall you redeem according to the valuation, five silver shekels by the sacred shekel; it is twenty geirah.** Regarding the mitzvah of “Pidyon HaBen,” it is already addressed by the following passuk at the end of parshas Bo (Shemos 13, 13): **“וּכְל בְּכוֹר אָדָם בְּבִנְיָךְ תַּפְדֶּה—**and all firstborn humans among your sons you shall redeem. The passuk there, however, does not specify the method of redemption. Here, on the other hand, the Torah specifies that the firstborn male is to be redeemed with five shekels.

In honor of the simchah of the “Pidyon HaBen” of my great-grandchildren, with gratitude to Hashem, I would like to examine this sacred mitzvah. Why is it necessary to redeem every “bechor”—firstborn? Additionally, why did HKB”H command us to redeem him with five shekels specifically, which equal five selaim. Now, the Zohar hakadosh (Bo 42a) explains that the five selaim correspond to the letter “hei”—which has a numerical value of five—that HKB”H added to Avraham’s name. Still, we should endeavor to explain the connection between the mitzvah of “Pidyon HaBen” and the letter “hei” that was added to Avraham’s name.

The Angel of Life and the Angel of Death Fight over the Bechor

We will begin to shed some light on the matter by introducing a tremendous chiddush from the Zohar hakadosh

(Introduction 14a). It explains that when a Jewish firstborn son is born, two malachim appear over him immediately, confronting one another. The Angel of Life rallies all of its powers to give him life; while the Malach HaMaves rallies all of its powers to kill him, G-d save us. By performing the mitzvah of “Pidyon HaBen,” the bechor is redeemed from the hands of the Malach HaMaves, denying it any power over the child. Here is an excerpt from the Zohar hakadosh:

It is a mitzvah to perform a “pidyon” for one’s son to bind him to life. For, there are two angels appointed to stand over the newborn bechor--one for life and one for death. When a person redeems his son, he redeems him from the hands of the one for death; thus, it will not be able to control him. This is the message concealed in the passuk: “Elokim saw all that He had made”—in general—“and behold it was good”—this refers to the Angel of Life—“very good”—this refers to the Malach HaMaves. Therefore, with that “pidyon,” the one for life persists, while the one for death is weakened. With this “pidyon,” he acquires life for him, as we have learned; while the aspect of evil abandons him and does not have a hold on him.

According to the author of the Bnei Yissaschar, this passage from the Zohar hakadosh is the source for that which we find in Sefer Chassidim (334): **There was an incident involving a young man, who was dying. He said, “Redeem me”; this is what he screamed. They asked a wise man, “What is he saying?” He answered, “Is he perhaps a bechor?” They answered, “Yes.” He instructed them to redeem him so**

that he would live. They immediately gave the kohen five selaim, and he lived for twenty-five years after that.

This is also the source for what the Gaon Chida writes in Midbar Kedemos:

We have a tradition . . . that if a person performs the mitzvah of redeeming his firstborn son as prescribed, and he gives the kohen five selaim gladly . . . he will be assured that the child will survive and will be spared from the devastation of childhood illnesses, and he will grow and become a man.

The Letter “Hei” with which This World Was Created Is the Source of Life

Now, we can begin to comprehend why HKB”H commanded us to redeem the bechor with five selaim, based on an elucidation in the Gemara (Menachos 29a) regarding the passuk (Yeshayah 26, 4): “כי ביה ה' צור עולמים”—**for in “Yud-kei,” Hashem, is the strength of the worlds.** We learn that Olam HaBa was created with the letter “yud”; while Olam HaZeh was created with the letter “hei”; together they form the divine name “יה”. Furthermore, the Zohar hakadosh (Nasso 123a) explains that the letter “hei,” with which HKB”H created Olam HaZeh, is the source of life for all living creatures. Therefore, one who damages the letter “hei,” chas v’shalom, causes the loss and forfeiture of life. This, in fact, is the Malach HaMaves’s power. By confiscating man’s “hei”—his source of life—he causes man’s death, chas v’shalom. Here is the passage from the Zohar:

With it the entire world was created; and the heavens and earth and oceans and all creatures are sustained by it; as it is written: “These are the products of the heavens and the earth when they were created (בהבראם)”—He created them with the letter “hei.” If she removes herself from the world for even a moment, everything would be destroyed and eliminated; the world would cease to exist. This “hei” should not leave the body; it is sustained by it. When it leaves it, the death potion will prevail over it; it is called “tumah” . . . “Malach HaMaves,” darkness . . . it reigns over a person’s body; at that moment, a person is considered dead.

Furthermore, the Zohar hakadosh (Pinchas 216b) explains that the letter “hei” that HKB”H added to Avraham is the very same “hei” with which He created the world. It is written (Bereishis 2, 4): “אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהבראם”—**these are the products of the heavens and the earth when they were created (בהבראם).** Elucidating the word בהבראם, the Midrash states (B.R. 12, 10): בה' בראם—they, the heavens and the earth, were created with the letter “hei.” Accordingly, HKB”H established a connection with Avraham Avinu and his descendants via the letter “hei,” with which He created the world. This connected all of Yisrael with the source of life.

It was for this reason that HKB”H commanded us to redeem a bechor with five selaim, corresponding to the letter “hei” that was added to Avraham’s name. For, in that merit, the bechor is released from the control of the Malach HaMaves, who kills a human being by disconnecting him from the source of life—the letter “hei.” Thus, he draws life from Avraham’s “hei,” in whose merit the world was created.

The Continued Struggle between Eisav’s Ministering Angel and Yaakov Avinu

Clearly, this passage in the Zohar hakadosh deserves further explanation. What sin or wrong did the firstborn son commit that would prompt the Malach HaMaves to seek his death? Why does he need to be redeemed with five selaim in order to be released from the clutches of the Malach HaMaves and handed over to the Angel of Life?

As it is the nature of Torah to be elucidated from seventy different aspects, I would like to present upon the royal table a wonderful and novel idea concerning the mitzvah of “Pidyon HaBen.” This epic battle between the Malach HaMaves and the Angel of Life over the life of every firstborn Jewish male has its roots in previous battles waged by the “samech-mem” over the kedushah of the birthright. We shall begin our journey by examining the struggle that ensued between Eisav’s ministering angel and Yaakov Avinu. We read in parshas Vayishlach (Bereishis 32, 25):

“ויותר יעקב לבדו ויאבק איש עמו עד עלות השחר, וירא כי לא יכול לו ויגע בכף ירכו ותקע כף ירך יעקב בהאבקו עמו, ויאמר שלחני כי עלה השחר, ויאמר לא אשלחך כי אם ברכתני, ויאמר אליו מזה שמך, ויאמר יעקב, ויאמר לא יעקב יאמר עוד שמך כי אם ישראל, כי שרית עם אלהים ועם אנשים ותוכל, וישאל יעקב ויאמר הגידה נא שמך, ויאמר למה זה תשאל לשמי, ויברך אותו שם.”

“And Yaakov was left alone and a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn. When he perceived that he could not overcome him, he struck the ball of his thighbone; and the ball of Yaakov’s thighbone became dislocated as he wrestled with him. Then he said, ‘Let me go, for dawn has broken.’ And he said, ‘I will not let you go unless you have blessed me.’ He said to him, ‘What is your name?’ He said, ‘Yaakov.’ He said, ‘No longer will it be said that your name is Yaakov, but Yisrael, for you have striven with the Divine and with men and you have overcome.’ Then Yaakov inquired, and he said, ‘Please tell me your name.’ And he said, ‘Why is it that you ask my name?’ And he blessed him there.

Who was this mysterious adversary that wrestled with Yaakov? Rashi teaches us that it was Eisav’s ministering angel. This fact is derived from the Midrash Tanchuma (Vayishlach 8), where the adversary’s name is also revealed: “וַיֵּאבֶק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ, זֶה סַמְאֵל לְ שָׂרוֹ שֶׁל עֵשָׂו”—it was Samael, Eisav’s ministering angel that wrestled with Yaakov. A similar teaching appears in the Zohar hakadosh (Vayishlach 170a): “וְהָיָה מַלְאָךְ שָׂרוֹ שֶׁל עֵשָׂו הָיָה וְאִיהוּ סַמְאֵל ל’.”

Now, we know that Eisav’s ministering angel contested the berachos that Yaakov took from Eisav. This is evident from the pesukim cited above. Upon seeing that he could not defeat Yaakov, he implored him: “Let me go, for dawn has broken.” Yaakov responded: “I will not let you go unless you have blessed me.” According to Rashi, Yaakov insisted that he concede the berachos to him that his father had bestowed upon him and which Eisav contested.

Now, upon further consideration, we find that the source of the dispute over the berachos was in essence a dispute related to the kedushah of the birthright—that Yaakov had acquired from Eisav in exchange for some lentil stew. This fact is corroborated by Eisav’s remark to his father Yitzchak (Bereishis 27, 36): “וַיֹּאמֶר הַכִּי קָרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹבֵנִי זֶה פַעַמַּיִם, אֵת” “וַיֹּאמֶר הַכִּי קָרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹבֵנִי זֶה פַעַמַּיִם, אֵת—he said, “Is he not rightly called Yaakov? He has outwitted me these two times! He took away my birthright and see, now he has taken away my blessing!”

Rashi comments in the name of the Midrash Tanchuma: **Why did Yitzchak tremble? He said, “Perhaps I am guilty of a sin, that caused me to bless the younger ahead of**

the elder, and I deviated from the order of the lineage?” Eisav began to protest out loud, “He outwitted me these two times!” His father said to him, “What other thing did he do to you?” He said to him, “He took my birthright.” He said, “Over this I was distressed and trembling, lest I transgressed the line of the law. Now I see that I did in fact bless the firstborn. ‘He shall also be blessed.’”

Thus, we have explicit proof that Yaakov received the berachos in the merit of the birthright that he acquired from Eisav. It is apparent, therefore, that when Eisav’s ministering angel came to battle Yaakov over the berachos, he was in reality contesting the sale of the birthright to Yaakov. It is precisely for this reason that whenever a firstborn Jewish male is born, the Malach HaMaves—Eisav’s ministering angel—comes to kill the bechor, opposing and combatting the Angel of Life. For, every bechor is endowed with the kedushah of a firstborn, because Yaakov Avinu acquired this kedushah. So, just as Eisav’s ministering angel—the Malach HaMaves—fought with Yaakov, attempting to kill him for acquiring the birthright from him, in similar fashion, he renews the battle with the birth of every firstborn Jewish male.

The Primeval Serpent’s Battle with Adam HaRishon

Following this line of reasoning, let us proceed to demonstrate that this struggle waged by Eisav’s ministering angel against Yaakov Avinu actually stemmed from the earlier struggle waged by the “nachash hakadmoni” against Adam HaRishon. Recall that the primeval serpent was the embodiment of the “samech-mem.” Now, clearly, Adam HaRishon was the first bechor in the world. Due to his kedushah as a bechor, he was entitled to perform the avodah of the korbanos. Here is a passage from the Midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah 4, 8) related to the passuk (Bamidbar 3, 45):

“מתחילת ברייתו של עולם, אדם הראשון היה בכורו של עולם, וכיון שקירב קרבנו שנאמר (תהלים סט-לב) ותיטב לה' משרו פד מקרין מפריס, לבש בגדי כהונה גדולה, שנאמר (בראשית ג-כא) ויעש ה' אלקים לאדם ולאשתו כתנות עור וילבישם, בגדי שבח היו, והיו הבכורות משתמשין בהם.

כיון שמת אדם מסרן לשת, שת מסרן למתושלח, כיון שמת מתושלח מסרן לנח, עמד נח והקריב קרבן... מת נח ומסרן לשם... מת שם ומסרה לאברהם... מת אברהם ומסרה ליצחק, עמד יצחק ומסרה ליעקב. וכי יעקב בכור היה, אלא

שאת מוצא שנטלה יעקב מן עשו בערמה, אמר לו (שם כה-לא) מכרה כיום את בכורתך לי... אמר עשו מזה אני מבקש מן הבכורה הזאת, שנאמר (שם לב) הנה אנכי הולך למות וגו'.

From the beginning of the creation of the world, Adam HaRishon was the bechor (firstborn) of the world. Because he offered his korban . . . he donned the garments of the Kohen Gadol, as it states: "And Hashem G-d made for Adam and his wife garments of skin, and he clothed them." They were elegant garments; and the firstborns used them.

When Adam died, he passed them on to Sheis; Sheis passed them on to Metushelach. When Metushelach died, he passed them on to Noach. Noach rose and offered a korban . . . Noach died and passed them on to Shem . . . Shem died and passed them on to Avraham . . . Avraham died and passed them on to Yitzchak; Yitzchak proceeded to pass them on to Yaakov. Now, was Yaakov a bechor? Well, you find that Yaakov took it from Eisav with deception. He said to him, "Sell me your birthright, today" . . . Eisav said, "What good is this birthright to me?"—as it states: "Behold, I am going to die . . ."

Thus, we find that the Midrash states explicitly that Adam HaRishon was the bechor of the world. Furthermore, we learn from this Midrash that even in the aftermath of the "cheit Eitz HaDa'at," HKB"H did not make Adam HaRishon relinquish the kedushah of the firstborn. On the contrary, HKB"H made him priestly garments after the sin, so that he would be able to offer korbanos.

It appears that the reason he maintained this status and honor was because he performed teshuvah immediately after the historic sin. The Gemara explains (Eiruvin 18b): "היה רבי מאיר אומר, אדם הראשון חסיד גדול היה, כיון שראה שנקנסה מיתה על ידו, מאיר אומר, אדם הראשון חסיד גדול היה, כיון שראה שנקנסה מיתה על ידו, Rabbi Meir used to say: Adam HaRishon was a great chassid; upon realizing that the punishment of death resulted from his actions, he sat fasting for one hundred and thirty years. The korban that he offered after the sin, was also intended to provide atonement for his sin. Hence, HKB"H made him priestly garments, indicating that he had not forfeited the kedushah of the birthright in the process.

The Nachash Wanted to Corrupt the Kedushah of Adam HaRishon's Birthright

The wisest of all men said (Koheles 7, 14): **גם את זה לעומת: G-d has made the one in accordance with the other.** Therefore, just as Adam HaRishon was the bechor of creation from the side of kedushah; correspondingly, the "nachash hakadmoni" represented the bechor from the side of the klipah. The Torah attests to this fact as follows (Bereishis 3, 1): **--והנחש היה ערום מכל חית השדה אשר עשה ה' אלקים: --the nachash was more cunning than any beast of the field that Hashem Elokim had made.** Targum Onkelos provides the following interpretation: **והנחש היה חכם מכל חיות ברא די עבד ה' אלקים.** The nachash was wiser than any of the other creatures; however, it used its wisdom for evil purposes rather than for good. The Targum Yonatan ben Uziel emphasizes this point: **והנחש היה חכם מכל חיות ברא.**

Now, the Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer (13) explains that Samael rode on the nachash and adopted its form in order to cause Adam and Chava to sin. Based on what we have learned, it intended to corrupt the kedushah of Adam HaRishon's birthright. He wanted to remain the only bechor in creation; the bechor of the klipah. Nevertheless, even though he succeeded in getting Adam to sin, he was not able to take the birthright away from him; because of the teshuvah Adam HaRishon performed.

So, now let us see how this conflict evolved over the generations. It began with the primeval serpent, aided and guided by the "samech-mem," Eisav's ministering angel. Their goal was to cause Adam HaRishon to sin, in order to relieve him of the kedushah of the birthright. This conflict resurfaced a second time; this time the combatants were Yaakov Avinu and the wicked Eisav. This can be understood based on what our master, the Arizal, writes in Sha'ar HaPesukim (Vayigash): Yaakov Avinu was a reincarnation of Adam HaRishon and represented his tikun. Along these lines, the Zohar hakadosh (Bereishis 35b) explains: **דהא יעקב דוגמא דאדם הראשון הוה דיעקב: דהא יעקב דוגמא דאדם הראשון הוה—Yaakov was the semblance of Adam HaRishon; Yaakov's magnificence was the magnificence of Adam HaRishon.** We find a similar statement from Chazal in the Gemara (B.M. 84a): **שופריה דיעקב אבינו מעין שופריה דאדם הראשון—the magnificence of Yaakov Avinu was a semblance of the magnificence of Adam HaRishon.**

Correspondingly, the wicked Eisav was a reincarnation of the “nachash hakadmoni”—the primeval serpent. It states in parshas Toldos (Bereishis 25, 27): “ויהי עשו איש יודע” — **and Eisav became a man who knows trapping.** The Targum Onkelos and the Targum Yonatan make the following comment: “והוה עשו גבר נחשירכן”. The Peirush Yonatan explains in the name of the Tziyoni that the word “נחשירכן” is a contraction of two words: “נחש ירכן”—indicating that Eisav had the image of a nachash on his thigh, signifying that he was related to the nachash.

The Zohar hakadosh (Toldos 138b) similarly explains that the wicked Eisav was the embodiment of the original nachash that trapped Adam and Chava with its treachery. Therefore, when Yaakov was born, HKB”H named him Yaakov. For, the name Yaakov suggests an aspect of deception, as indicated by the passuk (Bereishis 27, 36): “ויעקבני זה פעמיים”—**he has now deceived me twice.** Thus, the name Yaakov alludes to the fact that one must deal cleverly with dishonest, cheating people (Shmuel II 22, 27): “עם עיקש תתפתל”—**with the corrupt you act perversely.** So, just as the nachash trapped Adam with deception, Yaakov was forced to employ deception in his dealings with Eisav.

Accordingly, just as the nachash—the most cunning of all the animals—attempted to take the kedushah of the birthright away from Adam; in similar fashion, the wicked Eisav, who was born first, attempted to take the birthright away from Yaakov—a gilgul of Adam HaRishon. HKB”H, however, the grand orchestrator, thwarted his plans. He arranged for Eisav to return from the field exhausted and famished (Bereishis 25, 30): “ויאמר עשו אל יעקב הלעיטני נא מן האדום הזה כי עייף”—**Eisav said to Yaakov, “Give me to taste, now, some of that very red stuff; for I am exhausted.”** Yaakov understood immediately that this was part of the divine plan to return the birthright to the domain of kedushah. Therefore, he responded without hesitation (ibid. 31): “מכרה כיום את בכורתך לי—**sell me your birthright, today.** Succumbing to his ravenous desire, Eisav agreed; he sold Yaakov the birthright in exchange for some lentil stew.

Now, in the merit of acquiring the birthright, Yaakov also received his father’s berachos, as indicated by Yitzchak’s declaration: “גם ברוך יהיה”—**he shall also be blessed.** This infuriated Eisav’s ministering angel—the “samech-mem,”

who rode the “nachash hakadmoni” in an attempt to take the birthright away from Adam HaRishon. So, now, seeing that Yaakov—the gilgul and tikun of Adam HaRishon—acquired the birthright from Eisav, he engaged him in mortal combat: “ויאבק איש עמו”. This time, however, he was unable to defeat Yaakov. Moreover, he was compelled to concede the berachos and the birthright to Yaakov.

Seen in this light, is easy to comprehend the anger felt by the Malach HaMaves—Eisav’s ministering angel—every time it sees the birth of a Jewish bechor. For, it knows that that bechor inherits the kedushah of the birthright from Yaakov Avinu. In the past, it rode upon the nachash in an attempt to take the birthright away from Adam HaRishon; subsequently, it wrestled with Yaakov Avinu, the semblance of Adam HaRishon, in an effort to once again confiscate the birthright. Similarly, it now directs its rage against the newborn bechor, in an effort to kill it and take away the kedushah of the birthright. Nevertheless, here, too, HKB”H intervenes; He thwarts its efforts in the merit of the mitzvah of “Pidyon HaBen.”

Five Selaim to Connect with HKB”H the Source of the Kedushah of the Bechor

Continuing onward and upward with this line of reasoning, let us explain the rationale for giving the kohen five selaim in order to redeem the bechor. These five selaim release the bechor from the grasps of the Malach HaMaves into the hands of the Angel of Life. Let us present a marvelous principle that will illuminate for us the subject of the kedushah of a bechor. In essence, the true source of the kedushah of a bechor is HKB”H Himself. For, He is the first and foremost element of creation; thus, He is inherently endowed with the kedushah of the birthright. We learn this principle from the commentary of Rabeinu Bachayei on parshas Shemos (Shemos 4, 22):

“זאם תחפש בכתובים תמצא, כי כשם שקרא הקב”ה לישראל בכור במכת בכורות, כך קרא את עצמו בכור, הוא שכתוב (שמות יג-ב) קדש לי כל בכור, ופירוש קדש אותי בכלל הבכורות... וכך מצאתי בספר הבהיר (אות קד) שאלו תלמידיו לרבי אליעזר, רבי מאי דכתיב קדש לי כל בכור, וכי הוי הקב”ה בכור, אמר להם אין, קדש לי כל בכור, אלא שנתקדש ונקדש על שם ישראל, דכתיב בני בכורי ישראל.”

If you search the Scriptures, you will find that just as HKB”H refers to Yisrael as a bechor in Makkat Bechorot, so, too, He refers to Himself as a bechor. This is implied

by the passuk (Shemos 13, 2): “Sanctify for Me every bechor.” This means that HKB”H is being sanctified via every firstborn . . . This is the explanation I found in Sefer HaBahir (104). Rabbi Eliezer’s students questioned the implication of the passuk: “Sanctify for Me every bechor.” Is HKB”H a bechor? He replied affirmatively . . .

Thus, we have an explicit source stating that the kedushah of the firstborn emanates from HKB”H Himself, the foremost element of creation. Now, Yisrael are the children of the one true Living G-d, and they are intimately attached to HKB”H, Who imbued them with a divine neshamah, a portion of G-d from above. Therefore, they were also sanctified with the kedushah of HKB”H’s birthright.

From all that has been said, it is apparent that the “samech-mem” wants to uproot the kedushah of the bechor by creating a disconnect with HKB”H. Accordingly, the “nachash hakadmoni” attempted to corrupt the kedushah of Adam HaRishon’s birthright by introducing heretical thoughts against HKB”H. The serpent insinuated that HKB”H did not actually create the world, as Rashi explains (Bereishis 3, 5): “מן העץ אכל וברא את העולם”—**He (G-d) ate from the tree and created the world.**

It is for this reason that HKB”H commanded that the bechor be redeemed by giving HKB”H’s messenger, the kohen, five selaim. As we learned from the Zohar hakadosh, the five selaim correspond to the letter “hei” that HKB”H added to Avraham’s name—which in turn corresponds to the letter “hei” with which the world was created. With this money,

we connect the bechor with HKB”H, from whom the bechor draws his kedushah. In the process, we redeem and free the bechor from the clutches of the Malach HaMaves. Thus, the bechor enters the domain of the Angel of Life, who derives its power from HKB”H—the source of all life, Who imparts life to the world via the letter “hei.”

We will conclude with the words of Rabeinu Bachaye in parshas Ki Tisa (Shemos 34, 20). He states that even after the avodah of the korbanos was taken away from the bechorim, they still possess and maintain an added level of kedushah:

“כל בכור בניך תפדה ולא יראו פני ריקם. מי שזוכה שהוא בכור מעלה גדולה היא, והוא רמז להקב”ה שהוא בכורו של עולם, ועבודת הקרבנות מימות עולם בבכורות היתה, ולכך קנאה יעקב אבינו ומכרה עשו הרשע שביזה עבודת ה' יתברך, ואחרי כן נפסלו הבכורות במעשה העגל, והופרשו הלויים במקומם שתהיה העבודה בהם ולא בבכורות, ואף על פי שאין העבודה בהם, יש להם מעלה ויתרון על שאר בני אדם מצד שהם בכורות.”

Whoever is privileged to be a bechor maintains a tremendous advantage. He is associated with HKB”H, the bechor of the world. The avodah of the korbanos always belonged to the firstborn. Therefore, Yaakov Avinu purchased it, and the wicked Eisav sold it; for he belittled the service of Hashem. Subsequently, due to the incident with the “eigel,” the firstborn were disqualified; the leviim were set apart in their place; they would perform the avodah instead of the firstborn. Even though they no longer perform the avodah, they still possess a level of superiority and advantage over all other human beings, because they are firstborn.



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