Commenting on the Karban Pesach*,* the midrash (Shemos Rabbah 17:3) explains that Hashem chose blood to spread upon the doorframe in order to recall the blood of a Bris Milah. At first glance this midrash is very perplexing, for there seems to be absolutely no connection. What relationship is there between the Karban Pesach and the Bris and the blood of both?

Presumably, Chazal did not arbitrarily draw parallels between the Karban Pesach and Bris Milah. What hidden connections are they alluding to? How can we understand this midrash?

In truth, beyond this midrash, there are other supports to this linkage. Firstly, someone needing a Bris is a disqualified from bringing a Karban Pesach (Shemos 12:48). Moreover, Karban Pesach and Bris Milah are the only two Positive Mitzvos where one can get the punishment of Kares - *spiritually cut off-* for not performing them (Sefer HaChinuch, Mitzvah 2). These two Mitzvos are rooted in Jewish Identity and therefore command a greater necessity to perform them. By not performing them, one disconnects from Judaism and gets Kares as a natural result. The connection between the Bris and Jewish Identity is more easily understood. It is the first Mitzvah performed on a Jewish baby boy. Additionally, it physically distinguishes Jews from other nations (Sefer HaChinuch, Mitzvah 2). Yet understanding why Karbon Pesach is a sign of Jewish Identity is more challenging and requires explanation.

Perhaps the answer lies in an interesting parallel between the Karban Pesach and Lot’s departure from Sdom. Look at the list of striking similarities.

1. Initially each smaller group, Lot and the Bnei Yisrael, are brought into the midst of their surrounding wicked neighbors by leaving a family member(Lot from Avraham and Yosef from his brothers).
2. In both circumstances the smaller group was saved while the oppressors immediately perished. Moreover, Hashem destroyed both larger groups miraculously.
3. In both narratives a smaller group of people were forced to remain inside in order to stay safe (Bereshis 19:6 and Shemos 12:22).
4. Both episodes stress the central feature of a door. For the Karban Pesach, blood is placed around it (Shemos 12:22), and in Sdom, it is the door which is used to keep the local inhabitants of Sdom outside (Bereshis 19:9-11).
5. Both stories ultimately lead to the birth of a new nation. Lot’s family gave birth to Moav and Amon (Bereshis 19:37-38) and the Hebrew slaves were transformed into Am Yisrael.
6. Both stories take place at night, a commonality that is highlighted by the midrash (Shemos Rabbah 18:9), reinforcing our comparison.
7. Each story contains Matzah (Bereshis 19:3, Shemos 12:9, 15 - 20)

Chazal quoted by Rashi (Bereshis 19:3) claim that the Sdom story occurred on Pesach. Presumably it is more than the Matzah connection alone that triggered that comment, rather the entire narrative parallel we have been developing.

Interestingly, the connection between Karban Pesach and Bris Milah penetrates deeper, on a linguistic level as well. The word “Bayis” *house* repeats itself several times in the Karban Pesach passage (Shemos 12:3, 3, 4, 4, 7, 13, 22, 23, 27, 27, 29, 30, 46, and 46) subtly hinting as well as spelling out (ibid 12:27) that the Jews were to separate Jewish houses from Egyptian. Perhaps the goal was even to have the Jews leave “M’bes Avadim” *from a house of bondage* (ibid 13:3 and 13:14) and create Jewish houses.

The story of leaving Egypt is not the only passage that seems to focus on the word “Bayis.” The story of Sdom’s destruction does as well (ibid 19:2, 3, 4, 10, 11) and even has the phrase “Bayis Avadichem” (ibid 19:2).

Beyond that, there are several other textual similarities; “Kum” *arise* (Bereshis 19:15) and “Kumu” *Arise* (Shemos 12:31), “Shofet” *judge* (Bereshis 18:25) and “A-aseh Shefatim” *I will make them judges* (Shemos 12:12), “VaYaChazeku” *they grabbed them* (Bereshis 19:16) and “Vatechazak” *and they grabbed* (Shemos 12:33) and lastly - and uncommon enough to really draw ones attention to the parallel - “V’Yismahmaha” *and they tarried* (Bereshis 19:16) while in Shemos (12:39) it says “V’Lo Yochlu L’Hismahmaha” *they could not tarry.*

Lastly, the Torah records that Lot’s initial reason for choosing to reside in Sdom was because he perceived it to be “K’Eretz Mitzrayim” *like the land of Egypt* (Bereshis 13:10).

However, before explaining the depth behind this connection, let us point to several interesting differences.

1. Although both narratives have the eating of Matzah, in Bereshis the Matzah is eaten in the beginning of the story while in Shemos it is eaten at the end, as the Jews are chased out of Egypt.
2. The focus in Bereshis is on the door, while in Shemos it is on the surrounding areas, the Mezuzos and Mashkof (*door frame)*.
3. Forcefully, the angels pull Lot from Sdom, saving him from the locals in the process, while for the Egyptians, it is the locals who force the Jews to leave.
4. In Shemos, it is angels who Hashem sent to assist Lot’s escape. In Egypt, Hashem goes himself (Shemos 12:12).
5. Hashem is the “Shofet" *judge* in Bereshis (Bereshis 12:25), but in Shemos (12:12), Hashem makes the Egyptians judges.
6. The Jews are leaving a “Bes Avadim” while Lot, by contrast, welcomes the angles into a “Bes Avadim”
7. Lot gives the angels Matzah as they enter, while the Jews eat Matzah as they leave.
8. In Bereshis (19:16) it says “V’Yismahmaha” *and they tarried* and in Shemos (12:39) it says “V’Lo Yochlu L’Hismahmaha” *and they could not tarry*.
9. Lot and his family snuck out of Sdom in the middle of the night whereas Bnei Yisrael left openly in the middle of the day (Shemos 12:41, 51).
10. Sdom was destroyed after Lot and his family had left. In contrast, Egypt was destroyed while Bnei Yisrael were still there.
11. Lot’s family leaving Sdom is followed by a repulsive act of incest, while Bnei Yisrael’s exodus is followed by an incredible change in the world, in the form of Matan Torah, *the giving of the Torah.* But the contrast is stronger because Lot’s family’s incest occurs privately in a cave, whereas the Gemara (Zavachim 116a) claims that Matan Torah was an event that the entire world was aware of.

In order to understand why the Torah hints to the Sdom story in the exodus one, one must understand how Lot left Sdom. Because Lot and his family were so immersed in Sdom’s culture, they left with great hesitation, not disconnecting properly. Upon leaving, Lot was instructed not to look back (Bereshis 19:17). Lot’s wife erroneously looks back and is subsequently punished by turning into a pillar of salt (Bereshis 19:26). Commanding Lot and his family not to look at Sdom was a test designed to determine whether they were ready to ideologically disconnect from Sdom. Lot was, but barely. Additionally, and reflecting Lot’s connection to Sdom, Lot begs to have the city saved (Bereshis 19:21-23).

Sefer Bereshis focuses on the door, the physical object that physically kept the enemies outside. The focus in Shemos is the doorway, more symbolically, as it keeps out foreign ideologies, while Lot and his family let in Sdom’s culture. The only thing not allowed in is the attacking mob. Bnei Yisrael, on the other hand, kept out the foreign ideologies, as highlighted by Chazal, who claim that Bnei Yisrael maintained their names, language (Vayikra Rabbah 32:5) and clothing (Midrash Lekach Tov on Parshat Va'eira).

Bnei Yisrael, in stark contrast to Lot and his family, are completely ready to leave and cut all ideological ties to Egypt. They leave in haste, as the Torah records how they ate (Rashbam Shemos 12:8) and “V’Lo Yochlu L’Hismahmaha” *and they could not tarry.* The angels had time to sit and eat Matzah upon entry, whereas Bnei Yisrael had no time to let their dough rise, and ate Matzah while departing. However, Bnei Yisrael’s hurried departure was partially due to Egyptian pressure. After losing the theological battle to Hashem, the Egyptians force the Jews to leave.

Hashem commanded and facilitated Bnei Yisrael’s departure from Egypt in the way that Lot should have left Sdom, with pride, idealism and a desire to follow Hashem. Precisely for this reason, the midrash (Shemos Rabbah 17:2, 3) explains that Bnei Yisrael were commanded to slaughter the Egyptian God, illustrating Hashem’s supremacy. What greater expression of Jewish Identity and Pride is there than declaration and recognition of Hashem?

Because the Karban Pesach and its juxtaposition to the exodus represents Jewish Identity, it comes as no surprise that when leaving Egypt, Hashem himself goes with (Shemos 12:12), making Egyptians “Shoftim” *judges* to take charge. Bnei Yisrael see the truth of Hashem and identify with him. This is source of and reason for Jewish Identity.