



## Understanding the Parsha

Exodus 10:1 – 13:16

We will Learn how to

- 1) interpret the main theme (subject) of a Parsha (weekly reading from the Torah),
- 2) make thematic connections to that Parsha (study the Scriptures related by a common theme [subject], line upon line and precept upon precept)
- 3) learn how to gain greater understanding of the Parsha we are looking at through its thematic connections to other portions of Scripture.

## Chronological Order Versus Thematic Significance

For the most part, the Torah is written in chronological order (in the order of time). Still, many times you will be come across passages that do not follow chronological order. Whenever the Torah displaces on purpose, an event in time, it is so that it can be related to another passage thematically! This is one of the many ways the Torah teaches through the themes. Let's see this wisdom in action.

**I. Read Exodus 12:1-51** — Make a general outline of this chapter so you can see the flow of events. Write down your outline next to the verse reference below:

12:1-20 — \_\_\_\_\_ tells \_\_\_\_\_ to instruct \_\_\_\_\_ concerning the \_\_\_\_\_ and Feast of \_\_\_\_\_.

Adonai                      Mose                      Israel                      Unleavened Bread                      Passover

12:21-28 — Moses relates the instructions concerning Passover.

12:29-36 — The report of the 10th plague.

12:37-42 — Leaving Egypt.

12:43-51 — More instructions concerning the Passover offering.

**A. The commandments concerning the Passover sacrifice had to be given before the Exodus.** Otherwise, how would the Israelites be able to obey them?

Verses 29-42 describe the event of leaving Egypt.

Verses 43-51 give more instructions on HOW to offer the Passover sacrifice.

We know that the Israelites have already left Egypt, which means that they've already made their Passover sacrifice. Therefore, verses 43-51 must be out of chronological order!

Wouldn't it have made more sense to record this passage somewhere in verses 1-28 where Moses gave them the Passover instructions? This is a good example of how the Torah will on purpose record an event out of chronological order for thematic reasons. Now, we need to look for the thematic reason.

## II. The Twelfth Chapter

**A. What general topic is Moses speaking about in Exodus 12:1-2?** Fill in the blanks

How to keep time; specifically, how to start keeping time.

**What was the purpose for examining the lamb from the 10-14th of Aviv?**

To check it for defects so that only a perfect lamb without defect was offered.

**What important theme do we see mentioned in verses 12-13 (also verse 27) and what is its significance?**

The theme of deliverance from death.

**What is its importance to us?**

The events that are about to happen will teach about the work of Messiah.

**B. Now let's pay particular attention to the 10th parsha (Exodus 12:37-42), which is the parsha right before the parsha that's displaced in chronological order.**



**What is do you think is the most important thing that happened?** They 1 left \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ Egypt.

**What specific information does the Torah give us about that night?** That day was a specific day that occurred 4 \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ years after some event.

Notice that the Torah is very specific in mentioning that 430 years had passed. It even says that it was 430 years to the day that had passed. But it doesn't mention the event or day that began the 430-year count!

**What is the main message of this parsha?**

The Israelites left Egypt after a 430-year period, \_\_\_\_\_.

**C. The eleventh parsha begins in verse 43 with the instructions concerning Passover.**

**Read verses 43-50, what is the main topic of of this Parsha?** Fill in the blanks

The main topic seems to be \_\_\_\_\_ ir \_\_\_\_\_ um \_\_\_\_\_ ision. Anyone who partakes of the Passover lamb must be circumcised.

**Remember the main message of the tenth Parsha, leaving Egypt, and read verse 51 of the twelfth Parsha.**

**What is the thematic connection?** Verse 51 of the twelfth Parsha, which gives Passover instructions, has the same theme and topic of the tenth Parsha, that speaks of when the Israelites \_\_\_\_\_.

**Did you notice the parallel between the tenth Parsha and the twelfth Parsha?**

They both use the phrase, "\_\_\_\_\_".

**Parsha eleven** (whose main topic is circumcision as a requirement to eating the Passover lamb) is sandwiched in between verses whose general theme is how the Israelites left Egypt 430 years from the day of some event in the past. So we can see that the eleventh Parsha was placed out of chronological order to point out the thematic relationship between circumcision and the Abrahamic covenant.

## **D. Making the Connection**

1. The first mention of a four hundred and thirty year time period is in Genesis 15:1-21 at the Covenant Between the Pieces, as it's called. Here's a summary of that passage.

- a. Abram is promised a son.
- b. Abram is imputed righteousness because of his faith.
- c. Adonai cuts the covenant with Abram.

D. Adonai informs Abram that his descendants will be enslaved in a foreign land for four hundred years.

13 Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 And also the nation whom they serve I

will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. 15 Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. 16 But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

17 And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. ON THE SAME DAY the LORD made a covenant with Abram...



Comparing the themes of this passage with Parshiot ten, eleven and twelve of Exodus chapter 12, we immediately see the connection. The words four hundred and on the same day, are present in the Genesis and Exodus passages!

So you can see, Genesis 15 is related to the three Parshiot in Exodus 12. Remember, the Exodus passage did not tell us when the 430-year period began. With a genealogy table, you will be able to calculate that the 430 years were the time period from when Abram made the covenant in Genesis 15 until the liberation of Israel from Egypt. The 400 years is the period of exile which began with the birth of Isaac on Aviv 15! In Exodus, the words on the same day are there to signal to us that Adonai was fulfilling His promise to Abram. This passage in Genesis is our first major thematic connection to Parshiot ten, eleven and twelve in Exodus 12. It is connected to Parsha ten and Parsha twelve. But what is thematically connected to the main subject of Parsha eleven?

### E. Remembering that

1) the main subject of Parsha eleven was circumcision as a requirement to eating the Passover, and  
 2) the Abrahamic covenant has already been thematically linked to the subject of Parsha eleven, we connect **Exodus 12:43-50** with **Genesis 17** where Adonai made circumcision as part of the Abrahamic covenant! Let's review the passage quickly, and fill in the spaces below:

**1. Read Genesis 17:1-8** — Adonai establishes the covenant with \_\_\_\_\_ and his \_\_\_\_\_.

Abram

descendants

We read about a close relationship between Adonai and Israel (see verses 7 and 8).

**2. Genesis 17:9-14** — Institution of \_\_\_\_\_.

circumcision

**3. Genesis 17:15-22** — Promise of \_\_\_\_\_.

Isaac

**4. Genesis 17:23-27** — Abram \_\_\_\_\_ circumcision.

fulfills

Even though the subject of circumcision is enough to connect Genesis 17 with Parsha eleven of Exodus 12, it would be good to think about the following thematic connections between these two passages:

- **The primary subject of both passages is circumcision**
- Both passages deal with **circumcision of those who are not blood born Hebrews!**  
 Compare Exodus 12:43-49 with Genesis 17:12-13, 23, and 27!

As we have seen, the covenant of Genesis 15 related to the promise of Adonai to deliver the Israelites out of bondage at a future date. The covenant sign of circumcision in Genesis 17 was a sign to show the close covenant relationship between Adonai and the Israelites **and those who join themselves to Abram and his**

descendants. Now, we can clearly see that the Torah wants to relate **the Passover offering to the Abrahamic covenant** based on the passages in Genesis 15 and 17. They are related this way.

Genesis 15 the passage is the promise of d \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_.  
deliverance

This was one of Adoni's responsibilities in the covenant.

The focus of Genesis 17 was C \_\_\_\_\_ C \_\_\_\_\_,  
circumcision

which was the responsibility of the Israelites and anyone who joined them. It was only through observance of the Passover sacrifice that the Israelite firstborns received life, yet they couldn't receive life from that sacrifice unless they were circumcised. The Torah taught this by displacing the eleventh passage from its chronological order so that we could see the revelation through the thematic connection it makes to the covenant with Abram.

