

Mishpachah Beit Midrash

An Introduction to the Parashat HaShavuah
(Weekly Torah Portion)

Understanding the Torah From a Thematic Perspective

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(Go)



By Tony Robinson

—The Family House of Study— Examining the Parashat HaShavuah by Thematic Analysis

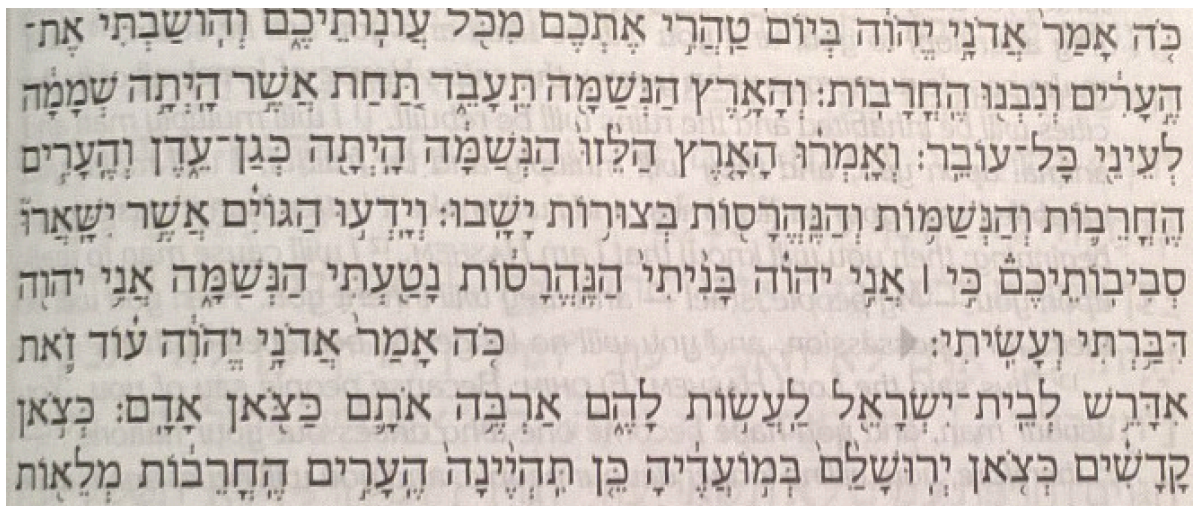
Welcome to Mishpachah Beit Midrash, the Family House of Study. Each Shabbat¹ we gather in our home and study the Scriptures, specifically the Torah.² It's a fun time of receiving revelation from the Ruach HaKodesh³. Everyone joins in—adults and children—as we follow the Parashat HaShavuah⁴ schedule. We devote ourselves to studying the Torah because the Torah is the foundation for all of Scripture. Therefore, a thorough understanding of the Torah will help us more fully understand the rest of the Tanakh⁵ and the Brit Chadasha.⁶ Furthermore, as Yeshua stated Himself, the Torah teaches about Him. So we study the Torah in order to be drawn closer to Yeshua, the goal of the Torah.

As believers in the Messiah we have discovered the richness of the wisdom of the sages of Israel. These men, who devoted themselves to the study of the Torah, have left us a rich heritage. Part of that heritage is a unique method of learning and interpreting the Scriptures. It's called thematic analysis. In thematic analysis we search for the underlying theme/topic of each passage of Scripture. By studying Scriptures related by a common theme, line upon line and precept upon precept, the Scriptures open up to us in a unique manner that is clearly inspired by the Ruach HaKodesh. Passages that seemed obscure begin to make sense, and numerous levels of wisdom and understanding unfold before us.

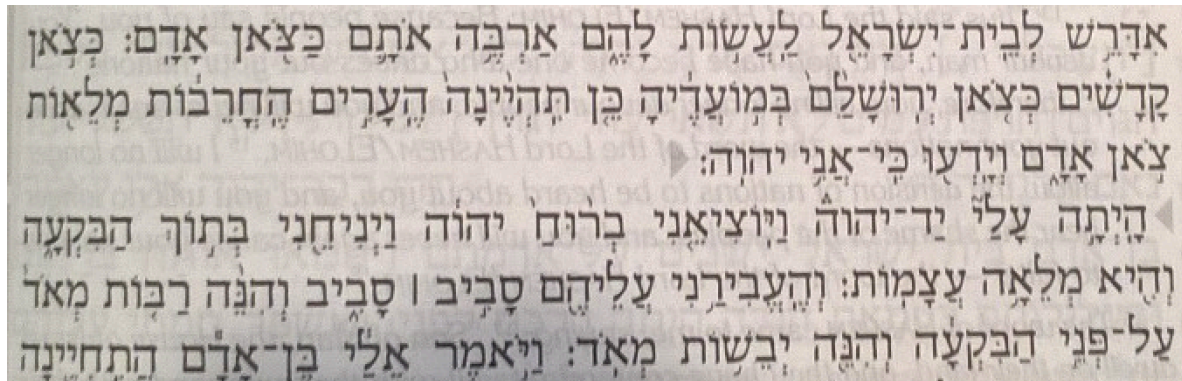
Thematic analysis of Scripture is based on the following premises. 1) Moses wrote the Torah as five *separate* books as the Ruach HaKodesh inspired him. 2) Since Adonai had him separate those words into five separate books, we surmise that each book has a unique message or theme. 3) Within each book, the words are written with two paragraph-like divisions⁷ interrupting the flow of the words. 4) Since Adonai commanded Moshe to separate the individual books into smaller paragraph-like sections or *Parshiot*, we surmise that each Parsha was written as a separate unit because each of those Parshiot is trying to convey a unique thought, theme, concept or understanding. Therefore, since Adonai inspired these divisions, we think they are **VERY** important. We use these God-breathed divisions as the basis of our thematic analysis of Scripture. Once you begin to interpret the Scriptures thematically, you will immediately **SEE** that Adonai wrote His words in a manner consistent with the intent that they be interpreted thematically.

Here is an example of what the Parsha divisions look like ...

ס—Parsha Stumah (plural, stumot)—A paragraph-like break inspired by the Ruach HaKodesh, still preserved on kosher Torah Scrolls, where there are at least nine blank spaces between a word and the next word, all on the same line of text.



פ—Parsha P'tuchah (plural, p'tuchot)—A paragraph-like break inspired by the Ruach HaKodesh, still preserved on kosher Torah Scrolls, where there are blank spaces extending to the end of a line of text and the subsequent text does not begin until the next line. (Hebrew is read from right to left)



—Parashat HaShavuah—

בא

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Shemot 10:1 – 13:16

(Exodus 10:1 – 13:16)

This Week's Parshiot

- Exodus 10:1 – 10:11 ם
- Exodus 10:12 – 10:20 ם
- Exodus 10:21 – 10:29 ם
- Exodus 11:1 – 11:3 ם
- Exodus 11:4 – 11:8 ם
- Exodus 11:9 – 11:10 ם
- Exodus 12:1 – 12:20 ם
- Exodus 12:21 – 12:28 ם
- Exodus 12:29 – 12:36 ם
- Exodus 12:37 – 12:42 ם
- Exodus 12:43 – 12:50 ם
- Exodus 12:51 ם
- Exodus 13:1 – 13:10 ם
- Exodus 13:11 – 13:16 ם

Understanding the Parsha

Exodus 12:1 – 12:51

Objective—Learn how to interpret the main theme of a Parsha. Find other Scriptures thematically connected with the Parsha under examination. Understand how the thematic connections help you to interpret the significance of the Parsha under examination.

Chronological Order Versus Thematic Significance

For the most part, the Torah is written in chronological order. However, many times you will be confronted with passages that do not follow chronological order. Whenever the Torah purposefully displaces an event in time, it is because a thematic consideration has taken precedence over the chronological ordering. In other words, the passage is placed out of sequence chronologically 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](#)—Let's do a general outline of this chapter so we can see the flow of events.
 - 12:1-20—Adonai tells Moses to instruct Israel concerning the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.
 - 12:21-28—Moses relates the instructions concerning Passover.
 - 12:29-36—The narrative of the tenth plague.
 - 12:37-42—Leaving Egypt.
 - 12:43-51—More instructions concerning the Passover offering.
 - A. Obviously, the commandments concerning the Passover sacrifice had to be given before the Exodus. Otherwise, how would the Israelites be able to obey them? Therefore, verses 1-28 appear to be the instructions for the Passover. Clearly, verses 29-42 describe the event of leaving Egypt. Note however that verses 43-51 give more instructions on HOW to offer the Passover sacrifice. Chronologically, 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 sequence! Read verses 43-50. What is the strongest evidence that these events occurred earlier in the narrative and that they are placed out of chronological order?⁸ Wouldn't it have made better sense to record this passage somewhere in verses 1-28 where Moses gave them the Passover instructions? You have just witnessed an example of how the Torah purposefully records an event out of chronological order for thematic reasons. Now, we need to uncover the thematic reason for doing so.
 - B. Note, verses 37-42 belong to the tenth parsha of this reading, a parsha p'tuchah, and verses 43-50 belong to the eleventh parsha, a parsha Stumah. The fact that the eleventh parsha occurs in close proximity to the tenth one suggests a thematic relationship between them. Let's look at the flow of these two Parshiot.
- II. The Twelfth Chapter
 - A. What general topic is Moses speaking about in Exodus 12:1-2?⁹ What was the purpose for examining the lamb from the 10-14th of Aviv?¹⁰ What important theme do we see presented in verses 12-13 (also verse 27) and what is its significance?¹¹
 - 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 sequence. What is emphasized as the most significant action that occurred?¹² What specific information does the Torah give us about that night?¹³ 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?¹⁴

C. The eleventh parsha begins in verse 43 with the instructions concerning Passover. What is the main topic of verses 43-50 of this Parsha?¹⁵ Remembering the main message of the tenth Parsha, read verse 51 of the twelfth Parsha. What is the thematic connection?¹⁶ Especially note the textual parallel between the tenth Parsha and the twelfth Parsha. They both use the phrase, "to the day." To recap, Parsha eleven (whose main topic is circumcision as a prerequisite 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. We should conclude that the eleventh Parsha was placed out of chronological order to emphasize 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.

¹³Then 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**." ¹⁴And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. ¹⁵Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

¹⁷And 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...***

If we compare the themes of this passage with Parshiot ten, eleven and twelve of Exodus chapter 12, we immediately see a textual connection. The words **four hundred** and **on the same day**, are present in the Genesis and Exodus passages! Therefore, we conclude that 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 the help of 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 refers to the period of exile that began with the birth of Isaac on Aviv 15! In Exodus, the references to **on the same day** are intended 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. Obviously, 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 prerequisite to eating the Passover, and 2) the Abrahamic covenant has already been thematically linked to the subject of Parsha eleven, we should immediately connect

Exodus 12:43-50 with [Genesis 17](#) where Adonai instituted circumcision as part of the Abrahamic covenant! Here is a summary of that passage:

1. Genesis 17:1-8—Adonai establishes the covenant with Abram and his descendants. The emphasis is on the close relationship between Adonai and Israel (see verses 7 and 8, which emphasize this relationship).
2. Genesis 17:9-14—Institution of circumcision.
3. Genesis 17:15-22—Promise of Isaac
4. Genesis 17:23-27—Abram fulfills circumcision.

Although the subject of circumcision is enough evidence to connect Genesis 17 with Parsha eleven of Exodus 12, note 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 as follows. The focus of the Genesis 15 passage was the promise of deliverance. This was one of His responsibilities in the covenant. The focus of the Genesis 17 passage was 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. In other words, *the life to be gained from the Passover sacrifice was only available to those firstborns who had demonstrated they had fulfilled their part of the Abrahamic covenant through circumcision*. The Torah taught this by displacing the eleventh passage from its chronological order so that we could catch the revelation through the thematic connection it makes to the covenant with Abram.

Searching the Parshiot

Objective—Learn how to 1) uncover the theme of a passage, 2) relate them to other passages and 3) gain new insight on how to interpret the original passage based on its thematic connection to those other passages.

Significance of the Blood on the Doorposts and Lintels

- I. Read [Exodus 12:21-28](#)—In the book of Deuteronomy we will discover that the message of the Torah is simply this; obey these words and you will have life! Let's see how the Torah gives us a picture of this life.
 - A. In the above passage, the Israelites were commanded to place the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and lintel of their dwellings. By noting the general theme of verses 23 and 27, explain the purpose of the blood of the lamb?¹⁷ As we've seen before, the theme of resurrection and life through deliverance from death is a strong theme used to teach us about the work of the Messiah Yeshua.
 - B. In Hebrew, the word for life is chayim (חַיִּים). Note the shape of the first letter, chet. Many times, especially on jewelry, Jewish people will simply write the letter, chet . . .



. . . as an abbreviation for the word *life*. If you were to trace the shape of the blood smeared on the doorposts and lintel, what would it look like?



Does that shape look familiar? Yes, it's the same as the Hebrew letter chet, which is sometimes used as an abbreviation for life! This is one of the many, many ways the Torah constantly teaches us one important message. When you obey Adonai's commandments (in this case, the Passover ritual) you will have life.

The Theme of New Birth

- II. Let us now look at the theme of new birth. In this series, we've already seen that the theme of life and resurrection are themes of the Messiah. However, another very important teaching is contained within this theme. The story of the Exodus is the story of the birth of a nation. First, let's see if we can intuitively support this assertion.
 - A. In Exodus 12:1-2 we see that the Passover will be celebrated yearly in the spring. What do most people associate with that time of the year?¹⁸
 - B. How does the Passover sacrifice teach the theme of new life and resurrection?¹⁹

- C. We can intuitively view the event of the Exodus as the birth of a nation. On the night of the Passover, the Israelites had smeared their doorposts with blood. Everyone remained in their houses all night. As they went to bed that night, they did so as slaves. Throughout the night there were screams of pain and anguish throughout Egypt, just as in a natural childbirth. Then, early in the morning, the Israelites stepped forward through their blood-stained doors as a free nation, just as the child emerges from the bloody orifice. A new nation has been literally born, redeemed by the blood of a lamb. They are no longer slaves.
- III. Now, let's support this assertion through thematic analysis of Scripture. Remarkably, Scripture supports this intuitive picture. Read the [Ezekiel 16:1-6](#)—Note the following themes:
- He states that the nation had a birth.
 - Adonai states that He “passed upon”²⁰ them.
 - It was through blood that they obtained life.

In this picture, the nation of Israel—in Egyptian bondage—is like a newborn, abandoned and forsaken. Those years of slavery marked a time when Israel was being born and left without its umbilical cord being cut. But because of Adonai's compassion, and through the blood of the Passover lamb, He passed “upon” them, saving them and giving them new life.

- IV. The Sages of Israel have noticed this theme of *rebirth* in many of the stories of the Torah. Furthermore, the rabbis of modern Jewry also understand this theme. For example, an article by Rabbi Elchanan Samet of Har Etzion Yeshiva states:

“The story of Moshe's birth belongs to the series of biblical narratives whose subject is the “rebirth” of the main character (see my shiur on parashat Vayera in 5760, <http://www.vbm-torah.org/hparsha-5/rtf/04vayera.rtf>). *In a story of “rebirth” we find a baby, young child or youth whose life is endangered to the point where he nearly dies. He is miraculously saved from that danger, and his life is returned to him as a gift.* The Torah relates to this miracle as a sort of rebirth of the child. The first child whose “rebirth” is recounted in the Torah is Yishma'el. While he wanders about with his mother Hagar in the wilderness of Be'er Sheva, their supply of water runs out. Hagar casts the child under one of the bushes and distances herself, “for she said, Let me not witness the death of the child.” An angel reveals himself to her, opening her eyes to see a well of water, and thus Yishma'el's life is saved. *Yitzchak, too, is “born again”* after being bound to the altar on Mt. Moriah. At the last moment, after Avraham has stretched out his hand to seize the knife, the angel intervenes and prevents it. Yosef, too – after being thrown into the pit with the intention that he will die there – is *“brought back to life,”* as it were, when Midianite traders pull him out of the pit and sell him as a slave. After the story of Moshe and his *“rebirth,”* we find this motif reappearing in the Prophets, in the episode of the resuscitation of the Shumanite woman's son by Elisha (II Melakhim 4) and in the salvation of Yoash from the hands of Atalia by Yehosheva, his sister (II Melakhim 11:1-3). *In each of these stories, the “rebirth” signifies the beginning of the child's existence on a different level: his existence is imbued with a new destiny.*”²¹

Hopefully, this example has shown you how the Torah teaches about the “new birth,” or “born again” experience. The rabbi quoted above is not a Messianic rabbi, yet, because

of the usage of thematic analysis, he can clearly see how the Torah teaches about resurrection and rebirth.

Lastly, note how the birthing experience of Israel was intimately associated with two events, The Passover celebration and circumcision. The birth was a result of the Passover celebration. However, circumcision was the prerequisite for participating in the Passover. We will continue this discussion in *Messiah in the Parsha*.

Making the Connection Between the Parashat HaShavuah and the Haftarah

Objective—Learn how to relate Scriptures thematically, thereby learning how to think Hebraically. Become rooted in the importance of thematic analysis by seeing it in action as you relate the Torah portion to the Haftarah portion.

Read [Jeremiah 46:13-28](#)

- I. What theme in verse 23 is thematically connected with a theme of the Torah reading?²²
- II. What theme in verse 25 is thematically connected with a theme of the Torah reading?²³
- III. What theme in verse 22-28 is thematically connected with a theme of the Torah reading?²⁴

If you would like to explore more information about connections between the Torah portion and the Haftarah reading, then go to the *Haftarah Connections* link on our website under *The Weekly Torah Portion*. You will be able to download a document that will show you numerous Scriptures from the Haftarah reading so that you can determine how they are thematically connected to the Torah portion. The answers are provided as endnotes. This is an excellent exercise to help you begin thinking thematically.

Messiah in the Parsha

Objective—Learn how the Torah teaches about the life and ministry of Yeshua HaMashiach. Yeshua said that Moses wrote about Him²⁵. Therefore, although the Torah never even mentions

the word Messiah, we know that He is its primary topic. Hopefully, through thematic analysis and Midrash you will be able to see Yeshua HaMashiach with clear vision.

The Messianic Significance of the Connection Between the Passover Lamb and The Abrahamic Covenant With its Sign of Circumcision

The main subject of this week's Torah reading seems to be the events surrounding Israel's departure from Egypt. The Israelites were commanded to place the blood of a lamb on the doorposts and lintel of their dwellings. In *Searching the Parshiot* we saw that the sacrifice of the Passover lamb painted a picture of deliverance from death unto life. As we've seen before, the theme of resurrection and deliverance from death unto life is a theme intended to teach us about the work of the Messiah Yeshua. In *Understanding the Parsha*, we used thematic analysis to understand why Parsha eleven was recorded out of chronological sequence. We saw that Passover has a strong thematic connection to the Abrahamic covenant. This was done at the level of pashat—literal interpretation. Let's look at the Messianic significance of the connection between Passover and the Abrahamic covenant using the Midrash. Let's first look at the Messianic significance of the Passover lamb. Then we'll look at the significance of the Abrahamic covenant and its sign, circumcision. Then we'll see how they are thematically related in a Messianic context.

The Messianic Significance of the Passover Lamb

- I. How do we know that the Passover lamb is a shadow of the work of the Messiah? Because, the Torah teaches this through the thematic connections between Yeshua and the Passover ritual. Let's use Exodus chapter 12 in our attempt to show this.
 - A. Why was the lamb examined from Aviv 10-14?²⁶ What is the Messianic significance of a physically perfect lamb ([1 Peter 1:18-19](#))?²⁷
 - B. Why do we associate Yeshua with a lamb (see John 1:29)?²⁸ Knowing that the lamb needed to be declared without blemish, and based on what we know about the genealogy of John the Baptist, what was the significance of John the Baptist's testimony in John 1:29?²⁹
 - C. What is the significance of the blood of the lamb?³⁰ What is the Messianic significance of this?³¹
 - D. What is the significance of the fact that no bones of the Passover lamb were to be broken?³²
 - E. Revelation 13:8 states that Yeshua is the Lamb of God ***slain from the foundation of the world***. It's always been Adonai's intent to send Yeshua as the perfect Lamb of God. The Passover ritual was a picture of the true Lamb of God. This picture is also seen in the Akeida (the Binding of Isaac). Isaac asked, "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abram prophesied that Adonai would supply the lamb and Yeshua is the fulfillment of that statement.

A very important message needs to be understood here. Remember, it is the Passover sacrifice that redeemed Israel! The Passover sacrifice was the price of redemption. The Passover sacrifice paid for their ***salvation, redemption and deliverance from Egypt—a picture of salvation and deliverance from bondage to sin!*** And guess what? The Passover sacrifice occurred before the giving of the Torah! This is further evidence that no one receives salvation through the Torah (Law), whether by obedience to commandments or the sacrifices of the Torah. ***It is the Lamb of God sacrifice of the Passover that secures redemption, salvation and deliverance.*** In this Torah Picture, Israel was saved by putting their faith in the blood of the Lamb. Everyone is saved by putting his faith in the blood of the Lamb. It is the Passover sacrifice that secures and teaches us about salvation, redemption and deliverance.

Messianic Significance of the Abrahamic Covenant and the Sign of Circumcision

- II. The Torah teaches us about how one gets saved. The most important verse is [Genesis 15:6](#). In this account, Abram is imputed righteousness because of his faith in the promise of Adonai to give him a son. In fact, the entire chapter of [Romans 4](#) uses the account of Genesis 15 to teach salvation by faith. In other words, it is the Abrahamic covenant that teaches us how to get saved. In Romans 4 Paul clearly teaches that the events of Genesis 15 are a Torah Picture of how to get saved and be declared righteous before Adonai. How did Abram get saved? He believed in the promise of a son. How do we get saved? We believe in the promise of THE SON. Note that the Abrahamic covenant was also before the giving of the Torah! Again, the placement of the Abrahamic covenant before the giving of the Torah was meant to teach us that righteousness comes through faith, not works.

Let's review what the Torah has taught us. One is declared righteous by having faith in the promise of Adonai. It is the blood of the Lamb that redeems you from your sin so that you can be declared righteous. Therefore, to be declared righteous before Adonai *you must have faith in the shed blood of the promised Son, who is the Passover Lamb!* That is how we get saved, as taught by the Torah. This all happened before the giving of the Torah. So what is the significance of circumcision?

- III. As we have seen, circumcision is the sign of the Abrahamic covenant. In other words, circumcision was an act performed with human hands, giving testimony to the fact that a person had believed the promise of Adonai and had been declared righteous. Paul teaches us in Romans 4 that it was a sign of the righteousness obtained by faith. But what is the deeper meaning of circumcision?
- A. The Torah clearly teaches that the true essence of circumcision was not circumcision of the flesh, but circumcision of the heart (Leviticus 26:41; Deut. 10:16; and Deut. 30:6)!
 - B. In *Searching the Parsha*, we discovered that the Torah teaches about the *new birth* or *born again* experience through the story of the Exodus, especially the Passover ritual. We saw in *Understanding the Parsha* that circumcision was a prerequisite to

partaking of the Passover lamb, which secured the *rebirth* of the nation. Therefore, we see an obvious thematic connection between *new birth* and circumcision! Furthermore, the circumcision of Israel and those multitudes of non-Hebrews who came out of Egypt with Israel was performed in Aviv, the spring, a time of new birth. Before the Exodus, Israel was a nation of slaves. After the Exodus, Israel was born again as a nation of free men. Now we know that new birth is related to circumcision because of the story of the Exodus. But, can we find another thematic connection linking new birth with circumcision? Yes! The Torah states that circumcision is to be performed eight days after the BIRTH of a child! This is totally consistent with the pictures the Torah has painted so far.

- C. Still, where does the true circumcision occur—[Romans 2:29](#)?³³ Although the Genesis 17 account states that Abraham was circumcised in his flesh, since he is the father of all who believe, where else do we know he was circumcised?³⁴ What was the significance of Abraham's circumcision in his flesh—[Romans 4:11](#)?³⁵ In the New Covenant is there the equivalent of a seal of righteousness—[Ephesians 1:13](#)?³⁶ So we see that the Spirit is the seal upon all who through circumcision of their hearts have been BORN AGAIN or REBORN!
- D. What are some of the profound things that happen when we are born again?
1. According to Romans 6-8, we are delivered from the bondage of sin.
 2. According to Romans 4, we are imputed righteousness and our sins are forgiven.
 3. According to II Corinthians 5, we become new creations.
 4. According to Ephesians 1, we are sealed with the Spirit.

The Thematic Connection Between Passover and the Abrahamic Covenant/Circumcision From a Messianic Perspective

Now let's look at Colossians 2:11-13:

¹¹ In Him you were also *circumcised with the circumcision made without hands*, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, *by the circumcision of Christ*,
¹² *buried with Him in baptism*, in which *you also were raised with Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the un-circumcision of your flesh, He has *made alive* together with Him, *having forgiven you all trespasses*,

Compare the highlighted portions of Col. 2:11-13 with the list of things that happen when you are born again. Do you see all of the connections? When you are born again...

- You are circumcised with a circumcision without hands.
- You are buried with Yeshua in baptism (remember Romans 6-8).
- You are raised to life with the Messiah.
- You are forgiven your trespasses.
- You are made alive (rebirth).
- You are a new creation.

Now do you see that circumcision of the heart is simply the Old Testament way of saying, “get born again”? Many think that being born again is a New Covenant phenomenon. It isn’t. The examples of the Abrahamic covenant and its seal, circumcision, teach us that when one is born again his heart has been circumcised! Now we can appreciate the deeper significance of the reason why no one could partake of the Passover lamb unless they had been circumcised. Now we can understand why life (for the firstborns) could only be obtained by those who had been circumcised. In the Tanakh, *circumcision is a picture of the new birth or born again experience*. Therefore, just as circumcision was a prerequisite for receiving life and deliverance during the death of the firstborn, so likewise being born again is a prerequisite to obtaining eternal life from the Lamb of God at the second death!

Hopefully, you will now understand why Yeshua chastened Nicodemus in [John 3:1-21](#). The profound truth of new birth is taught through the Exodus story and the circumcision ritual (as well as many other passages in the Tanakh). Yeshua was surprised that Nicodemus, a teacher of the Torah, didn’t understand the picture. I’ve already shown you that non-Messianic Rabbis of today understand this truth (from the Torah)! They even use the words “born again.”

Summary

In the Tanakh, circumcision in the flesh was a Torah Picture that one’s heart had been circumcised and that one was a partaker of the Abrahamic covenant (i.e., one was born again and had righteousness imputed to him). Circumcision was a prerequisite for receiving life from a Passover lamb. In the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit is proof that one’s heart has been circumcised and that one is a partaker of the Abrahamic covenant (remember Abraham is the father of **ALL** who believe). Being born again with the seal of the Holy Spirit is a prerequisite for receiving life from The Passover Lamb.

Fun For the Whole Family

Okay, time to show what you’ve learned. Word searches and crossword puzzles are available for you to test your understanding. The word search for adults (and older children) consists of 20-30 words taken from this week’s sidra (portion). Some of the words may be common Hebrew words or English phrases. The crossword puzzle for adults (and older children) may also contain common Hebrew words or English phrases. There is also a **word search for the little guys!** And of course, the answer key is provided for the crossword puzzle.

Adult and children’s crossword puzzles and word searches are available on Restoration of Torah’s website: www.restorationoftorah.org. Click on the link entitled, *The Weekly Torah Portion Crossword Puzzles and Word Searches*.

Shabbat Shalom!

¹ Shabbat is Hebrew for Sabbath.

² In its most limited form, the Torah comprises the first five books of Moses.

³ Holy Spirit.

⁴ The Parashat HaShavuah, or weekly Parashat, are the weekly readings from the Torah. Each week, beginning on the Shabbat, we read specific selections from the Torah, such that we complete the entire Torah each year.

⁵ Tanakh is the entirety of what is commonly called the Old Testament. It is a Hebrew acronym taken from the three major divisions of the Tanakh: the Torah, Prophets (Neviim) and Writings (Khetuvim).

⁶ Brit Chadasha is commonly known as the New Testament Scriptures.

⁷ This paragraph-like division is called a Parsha (Parshiot, plural).

⁸ Since verses 43-49 give instructions on how to offer the Passover sacrifice and since verse 50 states that they obeyed (past tense) Moses, this event had to have occurred earlier than this point.

⁹ By designating Aviv as the first month, he was talking about how to keep time; specifically, how to start keeping time.

¹⁰ To check it for defects to ensure that only a perfect lamb without defect was offered.

¹¹ The theme of deliverance from death. This tells us that the events that are about to transpire have Messianic significance.

¹² They left Egypt.

¹³ That day was a specific day that occurred 430 years after some event.

¹⁴ The Israelites left Egypt after a 430-year period, to the DAY.

¹⁵ The main topic seems to be circumcision. Anyone who partakes of the Passover lamb must be circumcised.

¹⁶ 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 left Egypt.

¹⁷ The blood was a sign to Adonai, who passed through Egypt to kill the firstborn. Whenever He saw the blood, He spared the lives of those in the house. Thematically, those who trusted in Him were delivered from death to life!

¹⁸ Springtime is often associated with rebirth of the earth, as plants and animals that have been dormant during the winter months burst forth with new life. It is a time of intense growth and reproduction in all domains of life.

¹⁹ It is through the death of the Passover lamb that the Israelites received life. Life from death equals resurrection!

²⁰ Note similarity to passed over.

²¹ Samet, Rav Elchanan, "The Double Birth of Moshe," Har Etzion Yeshiva, The Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash, <http://www.etzion.org.il/en/double-birth-moshe>.

²² The Babylonians attacking Egypt are thematically connected to the plague of locusts that destroyed Egypt.

²³ Adonai is judging the gods of Egypt just as He did in the Torah portion.

²⁴ The salvation of Israel and their return to the land.

²⁵ Yeshua said in John 5:46 that Moses spoke about him. Psalm 40:6-8, speaking of the Messiah, said that the book is written about Him. Paul said that all of the feasts were prophetic shadows of Messiah Yeshua.

²⁶ To ensure that it was physically perfect, without defect.

²⁷ The physically perfect lamb was a shadow of the sinless Lamb of God, Yeshua the Messiah.

²⁸ Because John the Baptist identified Him as the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

²⁹ John the Baptist was a priest of the lineage of Levi. It is the priest who declares an animal fit for sacrifice.

³⁰ When Adonai saw the blood he passed over the houses of the Israelites, thereby allowing the firstborn to pass from death to life.

³¹ It is the blood of Yeshua that gives us life, saving us from the second death.

³² This is a prophecy that the Messiah's bones wouldn't be broken on the stake, even though it was customary to break a person's bones to hasten their death.

³³ In the heart.

³⁴ In His heart.

³⁵ Circumcision was a sign of the righteousness he had obtained by faith.

³⁶ Yes, the Holy Spirit is the seal of our righteousness.