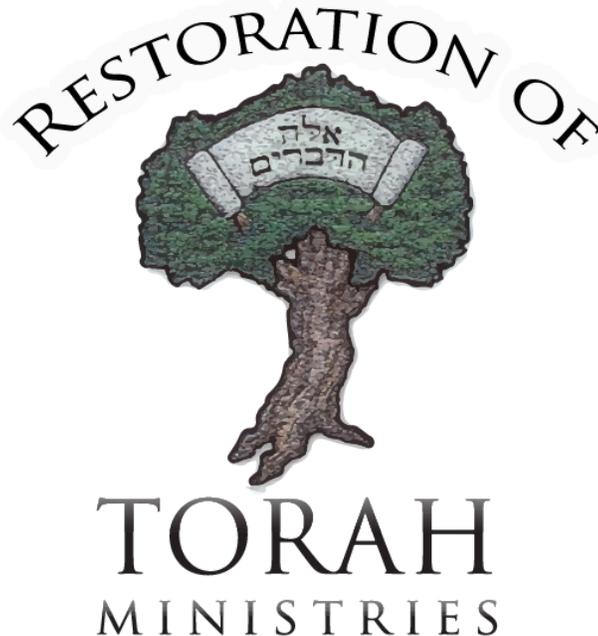


# Mishpachah Beit Midrash

## An Introduction to the Parashat HaShavuah (Weekly Torah Portion)

Understanding the Torah From a Thematic Perspective

*Emor*  
(Say)



BY TONY ROBINSON

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

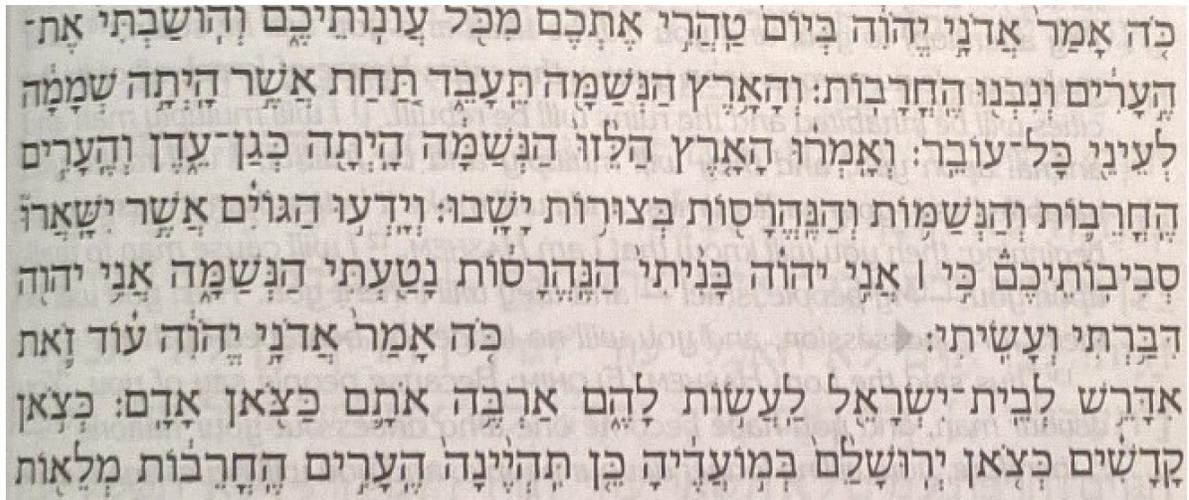
Welcome to Mishpachah Beit Midrash, the Family House of Study. Each Shabbat<sup>1</sup> we gather in our home and study the Scriptures, specifically the Torah.<sup>2</sup> It's a fun time of receiving revelation from the Ruach HaKodesh<sup>3</sup>. Everyone joins in—adults and children—as we follow the Parashat HaShavuah<sup>4</sup> 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 Tanakh<sup>5</sup> and the Brit Chadasha.<sup>6</sup> 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.

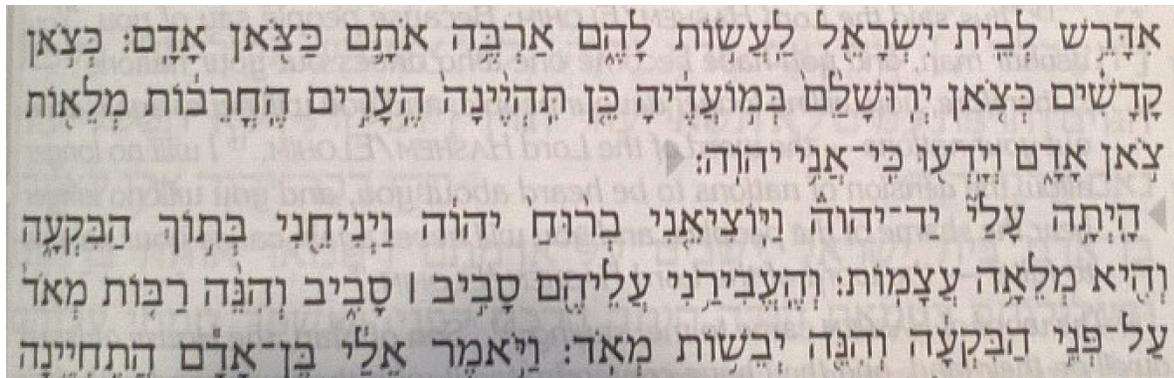
Thematic analysis of Scripture is based on the following premises. 1) Moses wrote the Torah as five *separate* books as the Ruach HaKodesh inspired him. 2) Since Adonai had him separate those words into five separate books, we surmise that each book has a unique message or theme. 3) Within each book, the words are written with two paragraph-like divisions<sup>7</sup> 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—

אֵמֹר

## Emor

(Say)

*Vayikra 21:1 - 24:23*

*(Leviticus 21:1 - 24:23)*

### **This Week's Parshiot**

- 1 Leviticus 21:1-9 ט
- 2 Leviticus 21:10-15 ט
- 3 Leviticus 21:16-24 פ
- 4 Leviticus 22:1-16 פ
- 5 Leviticus 22:17-25 ט
- 6 Leviticus 22:26-33 פ
- 7 Leviticus 23:1-3 פ
- 8 Leviticus 23:4-8 פ
- 9 Leviticus 23:9-14 ט
- 10 Leviticus 23:15-22 פ
- 11 Leviticus 23:23-25 ט
- 12 Leviticus 23:26-32 פ
- 13 Leviticus 23:33-44 פ
- 14 Leviticus 24:1-4 פ
- 15 Leviticus 24:5-9 ט
- 16 Leviticus 24:10-12 פ
- 17 Leviticus 24:13-23 פ

### *Understanding the Parsha*

[\*Leviticus 24:10-23\*](#)

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**Objective**—Learn how to 1) interpret the main theme of a Parsha, 2) make thematic connections to that Parsha and 3) learn how to gain greater understanding of the Parsha under consideration through its thematic connections to other portions of Scripture.

## *Instructions Seemingly Out of Place?*

I. In this week's lesson we will study the last two Parshiot, (Leviticus 24:10-23). Let's briefly determine their topical flow.

- Leviticus 24:10-12—During an altercation between two men, one of them blasphemed Adonai's Name, YHVH.
- Leviticus 24:13-16—The man is sentenced to death for blaspheming the Name.
- Leviticus 24:17-22—Instructions concerning a person who 1) kills another person, 2) injures another person or 3) kills an animal.
- Leviticus 24:23—Stoning of the blasphemer.

This brief outline shows us the general flow and topics of these Parshiot. As I read Parashat Emor this week, these Parshiot initially puzzled me for two reasons. First, how do they fit within the overall flow of the sidra (Torah portion)? For example, Leviticus 21-22 discusses various instructions concerning the priests and High Priest. Leviticus 23 discusses the instructions concerning the Holy Days. Leviticus 24:1-9 discusses elements of the Mishkan. Finally, the sidra ends on a story about people fighting within the camp and taking Adonai's Name in vain. So, the question is this. How does this last story relate to all of the previous portions of the sidra? The second question involves the flow of topics within this Parsha itself. The instructions concerning injury and death inflicted upon a person or animal seem somewhat out of place since the last Parsha is mainly dealing with the story of the blasphemer. Let's closely look at these Parshiot.

A. Read [Leviticus 24:10-16](#). In general, what/who is the main topic of those verses?<sup>8</sup> Now read [Leviticus 24:17-22](#). Notice the topic change? We are no longer talking about the blasphemer. In other words, it seems as if the instructions in Leviticus 24:17-22 are out of context. I can see one way that they aren't completely out of context, though. For instance, on the surface, what is the most obvious way these instructions *thematically* relate to the story of the blasphemer?<sup>9</sup> Although this thematic connection is strong, I think we can all agree that the *MAIN* topic of this Parsha is the incident concerning the blasphemy, not the fight. The fight is an ancillary subject used to introduce the circumstances by which the blasphemer blasphemed.

B. Thus far, we have seen the thematic topic shift from the blasphemer to instructions concerning personal injury. Now, read [Leviticus 24:23](#). What/Who is the thematic topic?<sup>10</sup> Okay, now it seems as if we are back to the story of the blasphemer! Look at the flow of topics here:

<i>Scripture Reference</i>	<i>Main Topic</i>
Leviticus 24:10-16	The blasphemer
Leviticus 24:17-22	Instructions concerning Personal Injury
Leviticus 24:23	The blasphemer

The table helps us see an important picture. It looks as if the instructions concerning personal injury were inserted into the story of the blasphemer! The topic change from blasphemer—personal injury instructions—blasphemer is obvious, and begs to be explained. The remainder of this section will discuss the reasons why this is so.

- II. According to Jewish law, the instructions concerning personal injury come under the category of judgments (mishpatim) between man and his fellow man. Now think for a moment. Have you seen instructions concerning personal injury earlier in the Torah; if so where?<sup>11</sup> Read Exodus 21:12-27. Most of Leviticus 24:17-24 is taken verbatim from Exodus 21:12-27! Now we have two important pieces of information. First, we know that Exodus 21- 23 discusses many judgments between man and his fellow man. Therefore, we know that it is the proper thematic context to discuss issues of personal injury. Secondly, Leviticus 24:17-22 is a repeat of some of the instructions in Parashat Mishpatim. Therefore, if we are studying the Scriptures thematically (as we should), the two points above should immediately cause us to wonder/question why these commandments are listed again within the context of Parashat Emor! The answer to this question is quite easy if we are studying Parashat Emor thematically. Let's discover the primary theme of this sidra. Once found, it will help us see how the instructions concerning personal injury are thematically related.
- A. As you've seen before, one of the main tools we use in thematic analysis is to take notice of repeated words or phrases. In the first Parsha of Parashat Emor ([Leviticus 21:1-9](#)), what is the overall general topic?<sup>12</sup> According to Leviticus 21:6 what will occur as a result of a lack of holiness on the part of the priests?<sup>13</sup> What phrase in the second Parsha ([Leviticus 21:10-15](#)) is almost repeated verbatim regarding the effect of a lack of holiness on the part of the priests?<sup>14</sup> In the third Parsha ([Leviticus 21:16-24](#)), what phrase occurs that is almost a repeat of the two previous phrases we've encountered?<sup>15</sup> A variation of this phrase also occurs in the Parsha P'tuchah of Leviticus 22:26-33. Obviously, these Parshiot are all thematically related because of that phrase. Adonai is very concerned that His Name not be desecrated/profaned.
- B. With this understanding, how is the story in Leviticus 24:10-23 thematically related to all of the Parshiot of Leviticus 21-22?<sup>16</sup> This is important. Now we know that this story at the end of Parashat Emor is thematically related to Leviticus 21-22 through the theme of actions that desecrate Adonai's Name!
- C. Remember, this story of the blasphemer begins in Leviticus 24:10 and doesn't end until Leviticus 24:23! Therefore, everything in Leviticus 24:10-23 is thematically related to desecrating Adonai's Name, including the instructions of personal injury! Now, can you determine why the instructions concerning personal injury were repeated in this story of the blasphemer?<sup>17</sup> This teaching—that one who injures or kills another man has desecrated Adonai's Name—would be completely lost apart from thematic analysis. Let's take this a step further. We now see a clear connection that our treatment of other human beings can actually determine how we treat Adonai! Remember, if we injure or kill a person we have desecrated Adonai's Name. See the correlation. We will come back to this issue in *Messiah in the Parsha*.
- D. We learned this lesson in last week's study (Parashat K'doshim) through a similar thematic analysis. We noted that Leviticus 19:1-11 primarily dealt with **commandments between Adonai and man**. However, Leviticus 19:9-10 pertained to the relationship between man and his fellow man (feeding the poor and the proselyte). Through thematic analysis, we came to the conclusion that Adonai inspired Moses to put Leviticus 19:9-10 within the thematic context of verses **CLEARLY** describing the relationship between Adonai and man to teach us when we serve the poor and the convert, it is as if we were serving Adonai himself!

In summary, we can now see why the instructions concerning personal injury (which were already given in Parashat Mishpatim) were repeated within the story of the blasphemer. The story of the blasphemer was clearly thematically related to Leviticus 21-22 because it was an example of how a person could desecrate/profane Adonai's Name. By imbedding<sup>18</sup> the instructions pertaining to personal injury within the story of the blasphemer, the Torah teaches us that we desecrate Adonai's Name when we assault or kill another human being. This message is especially strengthened when you consider that man is created in the image of Adonai. Therefore, by attacking another human, you attack Adonai!

## *Searching the Parshiot*

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

### *The Holy Days of Leviticus 23*

- I. Leviticus 23 is the main portion of Scripture dealing with the seven Scriptural Holy Days. Only one other Torah portion (Phinchas) deals with all of them at one time. The Holy Days are a fascinating subject. Let's begin by learning some basics.
  - A. Within this sidra we actually find two types of Holy Days.
    1. The Three Pilgrimage Feasts—On Chag HaMatzot (The Feast of Unleavened Bread), Shavuot (The Feast of Weeks, Later First Fruits or Pentecost [fifty]), and Succoth (Feast of Tabernacles/Booths or Feast of Ingatherings) all males in Israel were to go to the Mishkan/Temple to present themselves before Adonai.
    2. The Yomim Noraim (Days of Awe)—Yom Teruah (Day of the Trumpet Blast, also called Rosh Hashanah), Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), and Sh'mini Atzeret (the Eighth Day Holding Back).
  - B. The Torah explicitly (Pashat) gives two rationales for celebrating the Holy Days. Read [Exodus 23:14-17](#). Note that the rationale given for celebrating Chag HaMatzot pertains to its *historical* significance. The rationale given for celebrating Shavuot and Sukkot pertains to their *agricultural* significance. Now read [Leviticus 23:39-43](#). Note how these verses give an *agricultural* rationale (Leviticus 23:39) and a *historical* rationale (Leviticus 23:42-43) for celebrating Sukkot. In general, the Holy Days have an agricultural and historical rationale. The Torah emphasizes each one in various passages.
  - C. The agricultural season in Eretz Yisrael (the land of Israel) is composed of two harvest seasons—spring and fall. The following Holy Days are celebrated during the spring—Pesach (Passover), Day of the Omer Wave Offering (or Early First Fruits), Chag HaMatzot and Shavuot. During the fall, the following Holy Days are observed—Yom Teruah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot.
  - D. Read [Leviticus 23:1-4](#). According to these verses, is it really proper to call the Holy days Jewish Holidays?<sup>19</sup> This is important because many don't realize that the Mo'edim

(appointed times) belong to YHVH. They are His to share with all who call upon His Name.

- II. Read [Leviticus 23:1-4](#) again. The phrase, “feasts of the LORD,” in most translations should properly be translated the *appointed/fixed times*. The Hebrew word for *appointed times* is מוֹעֲדִים, pronounced Mo’edim. Mo’edim comes from the Hebrew root וָעַד, meaning to meet. We’ve seen this term before in the words, *Tent of Meeting*, which in Hebrew is ‘ohel Mo’ed, אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד. Note the letters מוֹעַד, which are the same letters used in the word for appointed times. In other words, just as the Tent of Meeting was a place where one could draw nigh to Adonai to *meet* with Him, so likewise, the Holy days are set apart times when one can *meet* with Him.
- A. We have already seen that the Holy Days, or Mo’edim have agricultural significance. Leviticus 23 also lists the dates for celebration of the Mo’edim. These dates are based on a lunar calendar. Since the agricultural year is primarily based on the cycle of the sun’s movement, we can see that the Mo’edim are actually based on a solar (cycle of the sun) and lunar (lunar-based calendar) system. Now, read [Genesis 1:14-19](#). How is this verse thematically related to the discussion at hand?<sup>20</sup> In case you aren’t convinced, let me share some more information with you. The Hebrew word translated as *seasons* is the word מוֹעֲדִים! A better translation would be “. . . and let them be for signs and appointed/fixed times, and for days and years . . .” By properly translating the Hebrew word *Mo’edim*, we see that they will be related to the solar calendar (agricultural seasons) and the lunar calendar (lunar-based dating).
- B. According to the first two Parshiot of Leviticus 23— Leviticus 23:1-3 פ and Leviticus 23:4-8 פ—how is the Sabbath thematically related to the other seven Holy days?<sup>21</sup> It just so happens that the weekly Shabbat is a foundation for observance of the Mo’edim. Although one would think that the phrase *holy convocation* primarily means to have a set apart gathering, let’s see what concept is most often associated with those words. Read [Leviticus 23:3, 7, 8, 21, 24-25, and 36](#). After mentioning the fact that the Mo’ed is a *holy convocation*, what phrase is most often thematically connected to the term *holy convocation*?<sup>22</sup> So we see that the term holy convocation has much to do with the concept of the Sabbath. In fact, we know that the primary instruction for obeying the Sabbath concerns rest, and yet the Sabbath is also identified as a holy convocation! This concept that the Mo’edim are associated with rest is developed throughout all of the Mo’edim. In Parashat K’doshim, we saw numerous ways that Leviticus 19:1-17 teaches the **Holiness of Adonai**. We also discussed the huge thematic shift in the book of Leviticus, beginning in Leviticus 18. The topic of the holiness of the Mishkan dominated the first seventeen chapters; however, beginning in Leviticus 18, the Torah shifted its emphasis to **holiness among Am Yisrael** (the people of Israel)! In other words, the Torah has taught us about *holiness in the Mishkan and in Adonai’s people*. Remember, to be holy is to be set apart. Leviticus 23 shows us how we sanctify time! That’s right. Adonai is concerned about holiness in every sphere of our lives. The Mo’edim teach us that certain times are set apart and infused with special holiness.

## *Counting the Omer to Shavuot*

- I. Those of us who have returned to celebrating the Mo'edim are constantly faced with decisions concerning the proper manner of observance for those set apart times. For instance, let's look at Shavuot. Read [Leviticus 23:15-22](#). Did you notice that no specific date is mentioned for Shavuot, which happens to be approaching soon? How do you determine its date? According to Leviticus 23:15-16, you are supposed to make a fifty-day count beginning on the "day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the Omer Wave Offering." There is no little controversy concerning the proper interpretation of this verse. What does the Torah mean by "from the day after the Sabbath"? What Sabbath? Traditionally, two opinions prevailed. The Sadducees taught that the Sabbath referenced is the actual weekly Sabbath that occurs during the week of Chag HaMatzot (Unleavened Bread), whereas the Pharisees (and modern Judaism) teach that the Sabbath refers to the first day of Chag HaMatzot, Nissan 15, which is a rest day according to Leviticus 23:7. Which is correct?
- A. When I originally wrote the Torah lessons I counted the Omer according to the Sadducean (and now Karaite) method based on the following argument: "The key to understanding this debate is to understand [Leviticus 23:16](#). This verse states that not only do you need to count fifty days; ***the fiftieth day MUST be a day after the Shabbat!*** This can only occur if you begin counting on the day ***AFTER A REGULAR WEEKLY SHABBAT***, i.e., the Shabbat that occurs during the week of Chag HaMatzot. If you begin counting on any day other than a Sunday, the fiftieth day will never be a day "after the Shabbat" (or so I used to think) as required in Leviticus 23:16.
- B. However, I have since changed my mind and counted the Omer by beginning the count the day after the High Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened bread, ***NOT*** the weekly Sabbath. Why? Well, I read an article by Tim Hegg that changed my mind<sup>23</sup>. ***Tim's article presents a well-reasoned, basis for beginning the count from the day after the Sabbath of Unleavened bread and therefore we follow the traditional Jewish reckoning of counting the Omer. His article does in fact show how beginning the count from the day after the Shabbat of the feast is totally consistent with Lev 23.*** I believe he does a good job substantiating his point so I will not comment further other than to say that if you have traditionally counted the omer from the day after the weekly Shabbat, then I would challenge you to read his article with an open mind as I did. If you do, you will be delightfully surprised.
- C. I have also done my own teaching on counting the omer and it can be found on the Hebraic Roots Network (HRN)<sup>24</sup>.

## ***Making the Connection Between the Parashat HaShavuah and the Haftarah***

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**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.

The Haftarah reading is found in [Ezekiel 44:15-31](#).

- I. This week's Haftarah study will be very brief. How is Ezekiel 44:15-31 thematically connected to this week's Torah portion?<sup>25</sup>

### ***Messiah in the Parsha***

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**Objective**—Learn how the Torah teaches about the life and ministry of Yeshua HaMashiach. Yeshua said that Moses wrote about Him<sup>26</sup>. Since the Torah never even mentions the word Messiah, this section will help you see the Messiah in the Torah. This is primarily done using thematic analysis and midrash.

#### ***The Torah's Presentation of the Kingdom of God***

- I. Contrary to the conventional wisdom found within Christianity, the Torah (Law) was not done away with. People think it was abolished for various reasons, but the main two reasons are because 1) they don't know what the Torah actually says since they don't seriously study it [after all, it was done away with when Yeshua died—they say], and 2) they don't understand how to study the Scriptures thematically. Thematic analysis is a must, otherwise you will think the New Covenant Scriptures are different from the Torah. I'd like to continue to show you how the commandments in the Torah are actually the basis/foundation for all of the teachings in the New Covenant Scriptures concerning the *Kingdom of God*.
  - A. Yeshua's teachings were rooted in the Torah. He did not teach anything against the Torah. This should be self-evident; however, many today do not understand that it was impossible for Yeshua to do away with the Torah. For example, based on [Mark 7:1-23](#), many would say that Yeshua revoked the kosher dietary requirements of [Leviticus 11](#). According to Yeshua (see [Matthew 3:15](#)), *He had to fulfill all of the requirements of the Torah*. If Yeshua taught that the dietary commandments of Leviticus 11 were abolished, then He would have been breaking the Torah Himself! Yeshua always upheld the Torah.
  - B. Many today state that Yeshua abolished the Torah and gave us a new commandment—to love one another. Well, the only problem with that line of reasoning is that it doesn't line up with Scripture. *Love your neighbor as yourself* is not a New Covenant concept introduced by Yeshua. It was first taught in the Torah ([Leviticus 19:18](#))! The "new commandment" Yeshua gave was a Torah commandment. Now that we understand thematic analysis, let's see how another of Yeshua's teachings was taken directly from the Torah.

- II. In section one, *Understanding the Parsha*, we learned why the instructions concerning personal injury (which were already given in Parashat Mishpatim) were repeated and imbedded within the story of the blasphemer. The Torah teaches us that we desecrate Adonai's Name when we assault or kill another human being who was made in the image of Adonai. Thematically related to that revelation, Leviticus 19:1-11 taught us that when we serve the poor and the convert, it is as if we were serving Adonai! In other words, the manner in which we treat other humans is a reflection of how we treat Adonai.
- A. Can you think of any statements Yeshua made that are thematically related to the thematic revelations listed in section II above?<sup>27</sup> Read [Matthew 25:31-46](#). How many ways is this passage thematically related to Leviticus 19:1-11 and Leviticus 24:10-23?<sup>28</sup> As you can see, Yeshua's teaching concerning the fact that when we care for the hungry/poor we are actually caring for Him, does not have its basis as a "New Testament" doctrine! This is a Torah doctrine! But unless we study the Scriptures thematically, we'll miss it! Yeshua's statements in Matthew 25:31-46 were not a new revelation. To prove to you that I am not just reading the New Covenant Scriptures and then trying to force an interpretation from the Torah, note how Leviticus 24:10-23 was interpreted by this non-Messianic Rabbi:

"However, the transition, or rather the continuity, in the Chumash from God's verdict regarding the megadef [blasphemer] to the systematic exposition of the laws of physical assault is extremely difficult, since *blasphemy and bodily harm would seem to be unrelated issues*. . . In order to resolve these questions, which mutually reinforce each other, *we must adopt an entirely different perspective regarding the issue of violent assault. Though it is true that physical injury is an issue concerning the relationships between human beings* and a crime committed against the injured party for which compensation is due, this is not the only element involved in murder or assault, nor is this the aspect which the Torah is relating to in Sefer Vayikra. *The point which the Torah is making in Emor is that assaulting a human being is an assault upon God himself. . .* Thus, Man, created by God in His image, endowed with the faculties of reason and spirit, is the supreme expression of the Divine presence in the material world, so that he who strikes a blow against fellow man is also striking a blow against his creator. Therefore, the Torah deals with this issue in Sefer Vayikra, in addition to its previous treatment in parashat Mishpatim. There the emphasis was upon the civil element and the injury inflicted upon the assaulted person is treated from the perspective of an injured party seeking compensation and remuneration; here, though, *the focus is upon the sinner who has mutilated the divine image and sinned against God*. The attack upon a human being is considered an act of chilul hakodesh, which is a prime topic which concerns parashat Emor (emphasis and brackets mine)."<sup>29</sup>

As you can see, my interpretation was not unique. As I read the sidra, the phrase "shall not desecrate" thematically linked the story of Leviticus 24:10-23 to Leviticus 21-22 (where the subject was clearly teaching how not to desecrate/profane Adonai's Name), thus allowing my thematic interpretation to concur with Rav Lichtenstein's. This is one of many examples of how Yeshua's teachings on the Kingdom of God were taken directly from the Torah's *thematic* teachings. It is a shame that many New Covenant believers don't understand how to do thematic analysis. It is the key to unlocking the unity between the Tanakh and the New Covenant Scriptures.

## ***The Mo'edim and the Messiah***

- I. In *Understanding the Parsha*, we stated that the Mo'edim had a double rationale—agricultural and historical. In this section we will see that there is also a third rationale—Messianic. In previous lessons, we learned that the Torah was given to teach us about our Messiah, Yeshua. Note Luke's account of Yeshua's words to the two disciples traveling on the road to Emmaus:

*<sup>27</sup>And beginning at **Moses and all the Prophets**, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures **the things concerning Himself**...<sup>44</sup> Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that **all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me**."<sup>45</sup> And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures (Luke 24:27, 44-45).*

We are told that Yeshua taught them concerning **Himself** from Moses (the Law of Moses), the prophets and the Psalms (writings). The fact that He used the Torah to teach about Himself is amazing when you consider that *the Torah of Moses (first five books) never even mentions the word Messiah!* Yeshua made similar statements in John 5:39 and 46.

*<sup>46</sup>For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for **he wrote about Me** (John 5:46).*

*<sup>39</sup>You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; **and these are they which testify of Me** (John 5:39).*

In these statements, Yeshua boldly states that the Torah of Moses was written **to inform us about Him!** His statement is consistent with Psalm 40, which states that the Scriptures are written about the Messiah.

*<sup>6</sup>Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened. Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require. <sup>7</sup>Then I said, "Behold, I come; **In the scroll of the book it is written of me**.<sup>8</sup>I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart (Psalm 40:6-8)."*

Therefore, we should expect to see teachings concerning the Messiah, His work and mission in all of the Torah. The Mo'edim are foundational for understanding the person and work of Yeshua the Messiah.

- A. Read [Colossians 2:3](#). According to Paul, we will find the answers to life's mysteries in Yeshua. The greatest mysteries are found in the Torah! According to Yeshua, we know the Torah speaks of Him, but how. It seems to be such a mystery. Well, Colossians 2:3 provides us with a good interpretive tool. We should seek to learn how the Messiah will unlock the mysteries of the Torah.
- B. Read [Colossians 2:16-17](#). This verse clearly states that the Mo'edim are a *shadow of the person and work of the Messiah*. By way of example, you can determine a few things about me from my shadow. You can tell I'm tall, thin, that I have short hair and long arms. However, there are *many* important details you cannot see from my shadow. You

can't tell the color of my eyes, skin or hair. You don't know the sound of my voice or the fact that I have a short beard. The Torah (specifically, the Mo'edim) is like a shadow. However, when you actually see my body, you will see many details my shadow couldn't reveal. So likewise, once Yeshua is revealed to you through the New Covenant Scriptures, you will understand much more than you could from the Torah shadows pertaining to Him. Non-Jewish believers tend to view the Torah's shadow of the Messiah as something different from the fullness of the New Covenant Scriptures' truth of Messiah. They don't understand that the Torah is trying to paint a black and white (and often cryptic) picture of the Messiah and His work of redemption. This was done so that Adonai could reveal the fullness of His plan at His appointed time (Ephesians 3:1-13). If you view the fullness of the Messiah in color—through the New Covenant Scriptures—it will be very easy for you to not understand and even reject the Messiah in His black and white shadow from the Torah. This will be especially true ***if you don't have the black and white shadow of the Messiah as the foundation***. Furthermore, if you don't have this shadow of the Messiah as presented in the Torah as your foundation, you will not truly understand the fullness of the Messiah as presented in the New Covenant Scriptures. Adonai gave us the Torah first, enabling us to learn about the person and work of the Messiah, so that when He was revealed we would know Him. So let's uncover the Torah's presentation of the Messiah through the Mo'edim.

II. Earlier we stated that the Mo'edim were related to the agricultural seasons in the land of Israel. How many harvest seasons are there in Israel?<sup>30</sup> Can you think of how that fact may be thematically related to the work of the Messiah? If you don't know, here's a clue. Which Mo'edim did Yeshua fulfill at His first coming?<sup>31</sup> Now, how is the fact that Israel has two harvest seasons thematically related to the work of the Messiah?<sup>32</sup> It is no coincidence that Yeshua fulfilled the spring Mo'edim to the exact moment. Furthermore, it is no coincidence that 1) none of the fall Mo'edim have had their Messianic fulfillment and 2) we are awaiting Yeshua's second coming. In a nutshell, the spring and fall agricultural seasons and their associated Mo'edim are pictures of the first and second coming of the Messiah! Let's look into this further.

A. In Parashat Metzora we learned that anytime you see 1) pictures of *resurrection*, 2) pictures of renewed *life* as a result of deliverance from impending *death* and 3) pictures of victory and *renewed life* as a result of *death*, the Torah is about to give us a teaching concerning the Messiah. I call these themes of ***The Resurrection and the Life***, and they are especially strengthened when coupled in some manner with the number *three*. Here are just a couple of examples.<sup>33</sup>

1. The first ***LIVING*** things (plants, grass, etc.) were created on day ***THREE!*** This is not strictly life from the dead; however, the principle of life coming from a state where there is no life is clear.
2. Jonah, who was in the belly of a great fish, should have been ***dead***. But on the ***THIRD*** day he came forth ***ALIVE!*** Truly, *death* was swallowed in up victory!
3. The Akeida (binding of Isaac) found in Genesis 22—Abraham was supposed to offer Isaac as an olah (whole burnt offering). Although Adonai prevented him from actually sacrificing Isaac on the ***THIRD*** day, the manner in which the Torah relates the story hints that Isaac ***died*** and was ***RESURRECTED***. That's why Hebrews 11:17-19 records that Abraham ***received Isaac from the dead through RESURRECTION figuratively!***

B. Read [Hosea 6:1-3](#). How is this passage thematically related to the Mo'edim?<sup>34</sup> Knowing that the two agricultural harvesting seasons are pictures of the first and second coming of the Messiah, how is this passage thematically related to Yeshua's first and second coming?<sup>35</sup> You see? This is a Messianic prophecy of the first and second coming of the Messiah! The verse actually states "He will *come* to us like the latter (second coming) and former (first coming) rain upon the earth." How else do we know this verse is speaking of the Messiah—hint, read Hosea 6:2?<sup>36</sup> Note that Hosea 6:2 associates resurrection (He will raise us up...) with the number three (...on the third day...). When dealing with Sod level (hidden) interpretations, numbers are used prophetically in multiples of 10. Therefore, the numbers 3, 30, 300 and 3,000 are all hints of the theme of The Resurrection and the Life! Now, remembering that a thousand years are as one day to Adonai, what does Hosea 6:2 teach us concerning the Messiah's first and second coming? The nation of Israel was dispersed in the first century or during the first day (0 – 1000 CE). Hosea states that on the second day (1000 – 2000 CE) He will revive us. This happened in 1948 when Israel became a nation or in 1967 when they regained Jerusalem. The nation which did not exist for almost 2,000 years was given life again. Hosea goes on to say that on the third day (2,000 – 3,000 CE) He will raise us up. This speaks of the resurrection of all saints when Yeshua returns.

III. Torah pictures are analogies/metaphors used in the Torah where a physical/natural object/phenomenon is used to describe or teach concerning a spiritual/supernatural thing/phenomenon. The Torah often will present a spiritual truth by using the language of common physical/natural objects and phenomenon. When the writers of Scripture do this, they are not just trying to be poetic! These pictures represent Adonai's wisdom and His manner for helping us to understand deeper truths. Isaiah uses Torah Pictures to teach us about pride.

<sup>33</sup> *Behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, shall **lop the bough** with terror: and the **high ones of stature shall be hewn down**, and the haughty shall be humbled. <sup>34</sup> And he shall **cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one** (Isaiah 10:33-34).*

*For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that **is proud and lofty**, and upon every one that is **lifted up**; and he **shall be brought low**: **13 And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, 14 And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up** (Isaiah 2:12-14).*

In these examples, Isaiah paints a picture of spiritual pride in man using elements of nature—green boughs, thickets of the forest, cedars of Lebanon, oaks of Bashan and high mountains. The analogy is fitting. Just as one can cut down the high lofty cedars of Lebanon, so too can Adonai humble (bring low) the proud. Now, let's apply this to the Mo'edim.

A. Hopefully, you now understand that the Mo'edim teach us about the work of the Messiah at His first and second coming. We have already learned that Pesach (Passover) is a picture of the Messiah's death on our behalf. Read [John 1:29](#). What Torah Picture does John use to teach us about the Messiah?<sup>37</sup> John knew that a lamb was a perfect picture of the Messiah because the Messiah was our Pesach lamb! Just as the firstborn Israelites were saved from death through the blood of the lamb, so likewise, we are saved from the

second death through the blood of **THE Lamb!** This Torah picture also helps us know that Isaiah 53 is a prophecy of the death of the Messiah as our Passover lamb.

Throughout that chapter there are numerous references to the Servant of YHVH as a lamb. We have also seen how Yeshua is the bread of life pictured in Chag HaMatzot.

- B. What is the third Mo'ed?<sup>38</sup> As soon as you see the number three in association with the Mo'edim, you should immediately begin to think about Messiah Yeshua. In Parashat K'doshim we saw that the children of Adonai's Kingdom are often likened unto wheat (remember the parable of the wheat and the tares). Read [John 12:24](#). Note how Yeshua likens his disciples unto wheat. Since we know that wheat can be a metaphor/Torah Picture for the redeemed, shouldn't we expect the Messiah to be pictured by some type of grain? The Day of the Omer Wave Offering occurs on the day after the first Shabbat of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. During this Mo'ed the Priest takes an omer of **barley** grain and waves it before Adonai so that we may be accepted before the Lord (Lev 23:11). Well, the Torah's picture of the **RESURRECTION** of the Messiah is found in the Holy Days. The Holy Day that is a shadow of Yeshua's **RESURRECTION** is the **THIRD** Mo'ed, the Day of the Omer Wave Offering! The offering of the barley sheaves is a prophetic picture of the resurrection of the Messiah! When we see Torah Pictures involving wheat, we know it pertains to us saints. However, when we see Torah Pictures involving barley grain it is a sign that the passage is teaching us something about the Messiah. It is truly Messiah's resurrection that makes us acceptable to Adonai!
- C. We know that Shavuot concerns the first coming of the Messiah. Since 1) Shavuot is associated with the wheat harvest and 2) wheat is a Torah Picture of believers, we know that Shavuot has something to do with a harvest of souls at Yeshua's first coming. Read [Acts 2:40-47](#). How is this verse thematically related to the Torah's ritual of bringing two loaves of wheat bread as a first fruits harvest?<sup>39</sup> Is there any thematic significance to the fact that 3,000 souls were saved?<sup>40</sup> Now we can fully understand that the wheat offering on Shavuot was a picture of the 3,000 souls who would be saved as a result of the preaching of the Gospel of Yeshua's death, burial and resurrection.

### *In Summary*

The Mo'edim are pictures of the redemptive work of the Messiah at His first and second comings. Each one is full of Messianic meaning. It saddens me that so few New Covenant believers enter into the richness of the Mo'edim. Join with me in prayer that Adonai will continue to restore His appointed times to more and more people! May Father YHVH bless your Torah study!

### *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](http://www.restorationoftorah.org). Click on the link entitled, *The Weekly Torah Portion Crossword Puzzles and Word Searches*.

## ***Shabbat Shalom!***

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<sup>1</sup> Shabbat is Hebrew for Sabbath.

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

<sup>3</sup> Holy Spirit.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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).

<sup>6</sup> Brit Chadasha is commonly known as the New Testament Scriptures.

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

<sup>8</sup> The blasphemer.

<sup>9</sup> These instructions concerning injury are related to Leviticus 24:10-16, because in Leviticus 24:10, it states that two men fought. Therefore, one of them may have been injured.

<sup>10</sup> The blasphemer.

<sup>11</sup> Yes, the Torah covered the issue of personal injury back in Parashat Mishpatim, specifically Exodus 21-23!

<sup>12</sup> Holiness of the priests! See Leviticus 21:6.

<sup>13</sup> Adonai's name will be desecrated.

<sup>14</sup> "... shall not desecrate the Sanctuary of his God ..."

<sup>15</sup> "... shall not desecrate my sacred offerings. ..."

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<sup>16</sup> The story of the blasphemer is thematically related to Leviticus 21-22 because it states that he *blasphemed the NAME of YHVH!* The common theme of Leviticus 21-22 pertains to actions of holiness that will keep one from *desecrating Adonai's NAME*. Surely *blaspheming the NAME* is a form of *desecrating the NAME*.

<sup>17</sup> Yes, Adonai wants us to see that when a man either injures another man or kills him, *he has desecrated Adonai's Name!*

<sup>18</sup> That's some **Iraqi Freedom** lingo.

<sup>19</sup> No. The Mo'edim are not culturally Jewish. They are YHVH's appointed times. They belong to Him.

<sup>20</sup> Genesis 1:14 states that the *sun and moon* would serve as signs for the *seasons* (NKJV). The Mo'edim have an agricultural basis; since the sun *AND* moon are signs for the agricultural seasons, we should expect the Mo'edim to relate to both the cycle of the sun and moon, as we have just discussed.

<sup>21</sup> The Mo'edim are thematically related to the Sabbath in two ways. First, the phrase *holy convocation* appears in both Parshiot and serves to thematically link Shabbat with the Mo'edim! Both are considered holy convocations. Secondly, each Mo'edim has a day of rest associated with it. This is a clear thematic link to the weekly Shabbat!

<sup>22</sup> You shall not do any laborious work.

<sup>23</sup> Hegg, Tim. "Counting the Omer: An Inquiry into Divergent Methods." *Torah Resource.com*, 2002. (<http://www.torahresource.com/pdf-articles/counting-the-omer-an-inquiry-into-the-divergent-menthods.pdf>).

<sup>24</sup> Robinson, Tony. "Counting the Omer." *Hebraic Roots Network*. 2016. (<http://www.hebraicrootsnetwork.com/video/counting-the-omer-part-1-by-tony-robinson/>).

<sup>25</sup> Most of the verses in the Haftarah are related to commandments in Leviticus 21-22.

<sup>26</sup> 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.

<sup>27</sup> Yes. Matthew 25:31-46.

<sup>28</sup> 1) Leviticus 19:1-11 (especially verses 9-10), pertain to feeding the poor and the stranger/proselyte. Yeshua's words related to feeding the poor and the stranger. 2) Both Leviticus 19:1-10 and Leviticus 24:10-23 teach that the manner in which we relate to other men is a reflection of how we relate to Adonai. Yeshua's teachings also reflect this same understanding.

<sup>29</sup> Lichtenstein, Rav Mosheh. "Parashat Emor." *The Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash*. Yeshivat Har Etzion, 1997. (<http://etzion.org.il/en/emor>).

<sup>30</sup> Two.

<sup>31</sup> He fulfilled the first four Mo'edim at His first coming, which was in the spring!

<sup>32</sup> Since we know that 1) Israel has two harvest seasons; one in the spring and one in the fall, and 2) Yeshua fulfilled the first four Mo'edim, which are in the spring, then it seems that the Mo'edim are a picture of the first and second comings of the Messiah!

<sup>33</sup> For a more extensive listing of types of the Messiah, read Parashat Metzora.

<sup>34</sup> It is related to the Mo'edim as follows: Hosea 6:3 uses the imagery of the former and latter rain, which is related to the agricultural cycle. This, in turn, is related to the Mo'edim!

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<sup>35</sup> Hosea 6:3 states that YHVH will come to us like the former and latter rain. In other words, He will come to us in the spring and in the fall, which are when the former and latter rains occur!

<sup>36</sup> Hosea 6:2 uses the theme of The Resurrection and the Life, which is a dead giveaway that this passage is Messianic in significance.

<sup>37</sup> He likens the Messiah to a lamb.

<sup>38</sup> The Day of the Omer Wave Offering.

<sup>39</sup> Wheat is a Torah Picture of believers. Those who were saved were the first fruits of believers to hear the Gospel after Yeshua's first advent.

<sup>40</sup> I think so. The sign of the Messiah is life from the dead. It is especially strengthened when coupled with the number three (30, 300 or 3000). On Shavuot 3,000 *sinner*s were saved. Remember, from Parashat Metzora, the metzora ("leper") was a picture of the walking, living dead. In New Covenant terms, the metzora was a picture of the unsaved, who although they are alive physically, are dead spiritually. Well, 3,000 spiritually dead people were given life through believing in the substitutionary death of the Messiah. There we have it again—life from the dead and the number 3 (3,000)! The sign of the Messiah.