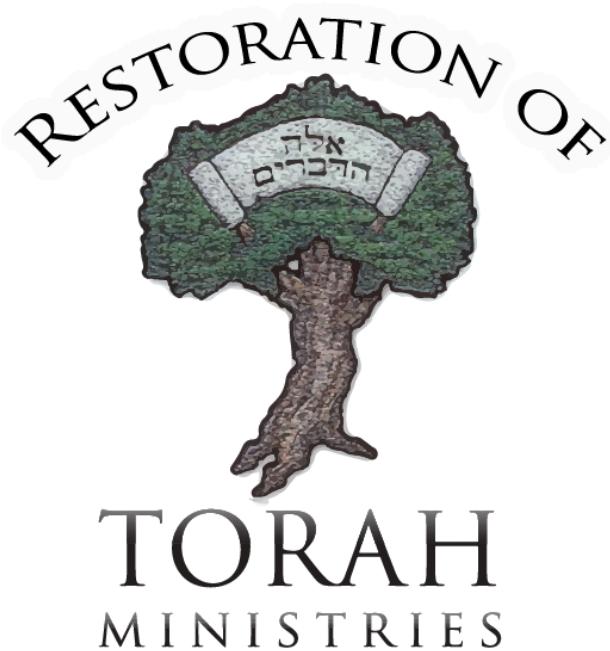


Mishpachah Beit Midrash

An Introduction to the Parashat HaShavuah (Weekly Torah Portion)

Understanding the Torah From a Thematic Perspective

Mishpatim (*Judgments*)



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 ...

—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.

בָּה אָמַר אָדָנִי יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם טָהֹרֵי אֶתְכֶם מִכֶּל עֲוֹנוֹתֵיכֶם וְהוֹשִׁבְתִּי אֶת־
הָעָרִים וְגַבְנֵו הַחֲרֹבוֹת: וְהָאָרֶץ הַנְּשָׁמָה תַּעֲבֹד תְּחִת אֲשֶׁר הִיְתָה שָׁמֶמֶה
לְעִינֵי כָּל־עוֹבֵר: וְאָמַרְוּ הָאָרֶץ הַלֹּזֶן הַנְּשָׁמָה הִיְתָה בְּגַן־עָדָן וְהָעָרִים
הַחֲרֹבוֹת וְהַנְּשָׁמָות וְהַגְּהָרָסּוֹת בְּצֻרוֹת יִשְׁבּוּ: וַיַּדְעֻוּ הַגּוֹלִים אֲשֶׁר יִשְׂאָרוּ
סְבִיבּוֹתֵיכֶם כִּי אָנִי יְהוָה בְּנִיתִי הַגְּהָרָסּוֹת נִטְעָתִי הַנְּשָׁמָה אָנִי יְהוָה
הַבְּרִתִּי וְעִשְׁתִּי: ► בָּה אָמַר אָדָנִי יְהוָה עוֹד וְאֶת
אָדָרֵש לְבֵית־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַשׂוֹת לָהֶם אַרְבָּה אֶתְכֶם בְּצֹאן אָדָם: בְּצֹאן
קָדְשִׁים בְּצֹאן יְרוּשָׁלָם בְּמוֹעֵדֶיךָ בְּן תְּהִילֵּתֶךָ הָעָרִים הַחֲרֹבוֹת מְלָאֹת
צֹאן אָדָם וַיַּדְעַו כִּי־אָנִי יְהוָה: ►

—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)

אָדָרֵש לְבֵית־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַשׂוֹת לָהֶם אַרְבָּה אֶתְכֶם בְּצֹאן אָדָם: בְּצֹאן
קָדְשִׁים בְּצֹאן יְרוּשָׁלָם בְּמוֹעֵדֶיךָ בְּן תְּהִילֵּתֶךָ הָעָרִים הַחֲרֹבוֹת מְלָאֹת
צֹאן אָדָם וַיַּדְעַו כִּי־אָנִי יְהוָה: ► הִיְתָה עַלְיָה יְד־יְהוָה נִיוֹצֵיאָנִי בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה וַיַּנְחַנֵּי בְּתוֹךְ הַבְּקָעָה
וְהִיא מְלָאָה עַצְמוֹת: וְהַעֲבִירֵנִי עַלְيָהֶם סְבִיבָן | סְבִיב וְהַגָּהָה רְבּוֹת מֵאָדָל
עַל־פָּנֵי הַבְּקָעָה וְהַגָּהָה יִבּשֹׁת מֵאָד: נִיְאמֶר אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי־אָדָם הַתְּחִילָה

—Parashat HaShavuah—

מִשְׁפָטִים

Mishpatim

(*Judgments*)

Shemot 21:1 - 24:18

(*Exodus 21:1 - 24:18*)

- 1 Shemot 21:1 - 21:6 ⚭
- 2 Shemot 21:7 - 21:11 ⚭
- 3 Shemot 21:12 - 21:13 ⚭
- 4 Shemot 21:14 ⚭
- 5 Shemot 21:15
- 6 Shemot 21:16 ⚭
- 7 Shemot 21:17 ⚭
- 8 Shemot 21:18 - 21:19 ⚭
- 9 Shemot 21:20 - 21:21 ⚭
- 10 Shemot 21:22 - 21:25 ⚭
- 11 Shemot 21:26-27 ⚭
- 12 Shemot 21:28 - 21:32 ⚭
- 13 Shemot 21:33 - 21:34 ⚭
- 14 Shemot 21:35 - 21:36 ⚭
- 15 Shemot 21:37 - 22:3 ⚭
- 16 Shemot 22:4 ⚭
- 17 Shemot 22:5 ⚭
- 18 Shemot 22:6 - 22:8 ⚭
- 19 Shemot 22:9 - 22:12 ⚭
- 20 Shemot 22:13 - 22:14 ⚭
- 21 Shemot 22:15 - 22:16 ⚭
- 22 Shemot 22:17 ⚭
- 23 Shemot 22:18 ⚭
- 24 Shemot 22:19 - 22:23 ⚭
- 25 Shemot 22:24 - 22:26 ⚭
- 26 Shemot 22:27 - 22:30 ⚭
- 27 Shemot 23:1- 23:3 ⚭
- 28 Shemot 23:4 ⚭
- 29 Shemot 23:5 ⚭
- 30 Shemot 23:6 - 23:19 ⚭
- 31 Shemot 23:20 - 23:25 ⚭
- 32 Shemot 23:26 - 23:33 ⚭
- 33 Shemot 24:1 - 24:11 ⚭
- 34 Shemot 24:12 - 24:18

This Week's Parshiot

Understanding the Parsha

Exodus 21:1 – 24:18

In this section we will analyze one parsha to discover its primary theme and how that theme relates to the rest of the Torah.

Objective—Learn how to interpret the main theme of a Parsha. Learn how to group Parshiot together thematically. Learn how to discover underlying themes and wisdom through grouping of Parshiot. Understand that the Torah is a highly organized document.

Review

- I. In introductory article number one to this series, *Understanding the Parashat HaShavuah*, I discussed the different types of divisions of the Torah. We talked about Parshiot (the God-inspired divisions), the chapter-verse divisions of man and the Parashat HaShavuah divisions of man. As I've stated, Adonai's divisions should be the primary divisions that concern us in our study of the Torah. In the tenth Parsha (Exodus 20:15 - 20:18 **ד**) of the last Parashat, recall that because of fear, the people requested Moses to act as middleman in negotiations with Adonai. In verse 18, Moses entered the cloud to speak to Adonai; therefore, the eleventh Parsha (Exodus 20:19 - 20:23 **ה**) contains the words spoken by Adonai, which Moses will *later* relay to the people. Parashat Mishpatim includes the list of judgments that Adonai gave to Moses to relay to Israel. Although Parashat Mishpatim begins in Exodus 21:1, when we consider the Parsha divisions, the information in Exodus 20:19-23 was also part of the information now given in Parashat Mishpatim. In other words, although this section is called Mishpatim (according to the division of the Parashat HaShavuah), the actual commandments Moses is delivering to the people began in Exodus 20:19 (according to the Parsha divisions). So we begin our analysis in Exodus 20:19.

Outline I

- II. Let's see if we can generate a general outline of the entire Parashat Mishpatim (remember, beginning in Exodus 20:19). This outline will be divided mainly by textual considerations.
 - A. Read [Exodus 20:19 – 20:23](#)—What is the general theme of these verses?⁸
 - B. Read [Exodus 21:1 – 23:9](#)—Remember, the Torah will many times repeat a word or phrase over and over. Whenever this occurs, the section of Scripture where that word or phrase is used over and over is united by a common theme. What word is used over and over in this section?⁹ Almost every instruction is prefaced by the word *if*. What is the topic of these laws?¹⁰
 - C. Read [Exodus 23:10 – 23:19](#)—What is the general theme of these verses?¹¹
 - D. Read [Exodus 23:20 – 23:33](#)—What is the general topic of these verses?¹²

<i>Scripture References</i>	<i>Topic</i>
Exodus 20:19 – 20:23	How man approaches Adonai
Exodus 21:1 – 23:9	How to judge case laws

Exodus 23:10 – 23:19	Festival and Holy Days
Exodus 23:20 – 23:33	Promises upon entering the land

Many people think the Torah is a hodge-podge of laws. As you can see, when you begin to study the Scriptures thematically, you will discover that there is a logical order to the events.

Outline II

- I. Now, let's go a little deeper into each section above.
 - A. In [Exodus 20:19 – 20:23](#), which relationship is being addressed in the commandments, man||man or God||man?¹³
 - B. Browse over [Exodus 21:1 – 22:16](#)—Which relationship is being addressed in the commandments, man||man or God||man?¹⁴ Remember, most of the instructions in this section begin with *if such and such*. This section of the Torah is dealing primarily with civil/case/tort law. Who will enforce punishments for those breaking laws in this section of the judgments?¹⁵ Most of the decisions in this section will need to be made by a Jewish Beit Din (House of Judgment) as stated in Exodus 21:22. These laws are characterized by enforcement by the Beit Din.
 - C. Notice how the flow of *if, then* instructions stops at Exodus 22:16. Adonai now gives three direct commands. Exodus 22:17-19 (which are also enforced by a Beit Din) seems to interrupt the flow. Afterwards, we see a *thou shall not* statement concerning strangers—Exodus 22:20. In fact, we see a similar statement in Exodus 23:9. As you begin to outline the Torah based on its themes, you will see that sometimes the Torah will use similar statements as *bookends* to sandwich other verses that are thematically related. In other words, the two statements about mistreating strangers are the two bookends. The verses in between and including the *bookends* constitute a section of thematically related verses. Here's the proof. We learned in **B** above that the laws in Exodus 21:1 – 22:16 were enforced by the Beit Din. In Exodus 22:20 – 23:9, who will enforce the punishments?¹⁶ Note also, that the laws in this section deal primarily with one's responsibility to society, not necessarily to an individual. This is in contrast to the laws in Exodus 21:1 - 22:16, which dealt primarily with laws governing behavior amongst individuals.
 - D. Lastly, browse over [Exodus 23:10-19](#). What relationship is being addressed in these commandments—God||man or man||man?¹⁷ Once again, these verses seem to address our relationship to Adonai just as the first few instructions (Exodus 20:19 – 23) also dealt with our relationship to Adonai.
- II. Thematically, these verses paint a beautiful picture. There are four main topics.
 - A. Fear of Man—Exodus 21:1 – 22:19 deals with case-laws that are *enforced by the Beit Din*. The *motivation* for compliance is *fear of punishment* from the Beit Din (judges). Thematically, this section is characterized by laws related to the *Fear of Man*.
 - B. Fear of God—Exodus 22:20 – 26 deals with laws involving ethics that are enforced by Adonai Himself. The *motivation* for compliance is *fear of punishment* from Adonai. Thematically, this section is characterized by laws related to the *Fear of Adonai*.
 - C. Love Your Neighbor—Exodus 23:1-9 involves *motivation on a higher plane because there is no mention of any punishment!*

D. Love Adonai—Exodus 23:10 – 17 deals with our relationship with Adonai. The *motivation* for appearing before Him three times a year is our love for Him and His appointed times. This section also involves *motivation on a higher plane because there is no mention of any punishment!*

<i>Scripture References</i>	<i>Topic</i>
Exodus 21:1 – 22:19	Fear of Man
Exodus 22:20 – 22:26	Fear of Adonai
Exodus 23:1 – 23:9	Love Your Neighbor
Exodus 23:10 – 23:19	Love Adonai

E. The last section, Exodus 23:20 – 33 deals primarily with the promise of protection by the angel. This is appropriate since they are about to go inherit the land.

Outline III

- I. This last outline will be the most revealing. Jewish people view their redemption as having occurred in three stages. The first stage is called Yetziat Mitzrayim, the redemption from Egypt (Exodus 1-17). The second stage is called Ma'amad Har Sinai, the revelation at Mount Sinai. The last stage will be the inheritance of the land. We are currently at the second stage, Ma'amad Har Sinai. This stage includes the giving of the Torah, known as Matan Torah, along with the events that immediately precede and follow it. These events occurred from Exodus 19:1 – 24:11. Now let's see what is so special about this unit of Scripture. In other words, why did the sages of Israel view these passages as a unit?
 - A. It turns out that the Ten Commandments are a foundation upon which all of the other commandments rest. Put another way, the Ten Commandments are the root, from which the other commandments sprout. In order to see this, let's first outline the progression of commandments from Exodus 19:1 – 24:11.

A) The Covenant ceremony at Mount Sinai—Exodus 19:1-20:18

B) Commandments governing the relationship between God and man—Exodus 20:19-23

C) Commandments relating to the concept of the Sabbath (Hebrew bondservant)—Exodus 21:1-6

D) Miscellaneous commandments—Exodus 21:7-23:9

C) Commandments relating to the concept of the Sabbath (Jubilee, Shabbat and Pilgrimage Festivals)—Exodus 23:10-19¹⁸

B) Commandments governing the relationship between God and man—Exodus 23:20-33

A) The Covenant ceremony at Mount Sinai—Exodus 24:1-11

B. The structure above is called a chiastic structure. It is found in many portions of Scripture. This structure is obviously inspired for a reason. Thanks to the Jewish sages of Israel, this structure has been elucidated through thematic analysis. But there's more.

Each section of the chiastic structure above relates to the Ten Commandments¹⁹ as follows!

- A) A Covenant ceremony at Mount Sinai—
- B) Commandments governing the relationship between God and man—*Commandments I, II & III*
- C) Commandments relating to the concept of the Sabbath (Hebrew bondservant)—*Commandment IV*
- D) Miscellaneous commandments—*Commandments V - X*
- C) Commandments relating to the concept of the Sabbath (Jubilee, Shabbat and Pilgrimage Festivals)—*Commandment IV*
- B) Commandments governing the relationship between God and man—*Commandments III, II, I*
- A) A Covenant ceremony at Mount Sinai—Exodus 24:1-11
- C. Now that is truly amazing. Only Adonai could do this! So much for Bible critics who think the Torah is just a hodge-podge of commandments. These chiastic structures pop up everywhere in the Torah. But you will only be able to see them when you begin to study the Scriptures thematically. They will help your understanding of the big picture.
- D. Now you know the reason why the Jewish sages view Exodus 19:1 – 24:18 (Ma’amat Har Sinai) as one complete story! It is stage two of the process of Adonai fulfilling His promise to Abraham.

Searching the Parshiot

In this section we'll discuss a few of the many themes/topics we can uncover within each parsha.

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 Covenant Ceremony

- I. Read the Parsha stumah from [Exodus 24:1-11](#). This passage describes the covenant ceremony at Mount Sinai. Exodus 24:5 states that the youths of Israel offered whole burnt offerings and peace offerings to Adonai during the covenant ceremony. Let's first look at the significance of whole burnt offerings. If we understand their relevance, we will more fully understand what actually happened in this Parsha.
 - A. The whole burnt offering is called an olah (עֹלָה), and is one of the primary offerings listed in Leviticus 1-6. I included a section on the significance of whole burnt offerings

in the third introductory article for this web page entitled, *Thematic Analysis*. Here's a summary of what was taught:

- The whole burnt offering was offered by persons in **covenant relationship** with Adonai (Genesis 8:20-21 and Exodus 24:5-8).
 - The whole burnt offering was a symbolic act demonstrating that the worshipper had offered himself in **service and obedience to the commandments** of Adonai (Genesis 22:6-8, Judges 11, Psalm 40:6-8 and Romans 12:1-2).
- B. Exodus 24:5 also tells us that the youth made the olah offerings. Who were these youth? Most Jewish sages agree that these youth were the firstborns! The Levitical priesthood had not been established at the time of the ceremony of Exodus 24. We will later learn that the Levites were made priests *in place of* the firstborns. Therefore, the youths were offering olah and peace offerings as priests on behalf of the nation of Israel. At this point, let's look at another passage of Scripture that is thematically related to the events occurring in Exodus 19 - 24.
- II. The Akeida (Binding of Isaac)—Read Genesis 22 and Exodus 24:1-11. Genesis 22 relates how Abraham was willing to offer Isaac to Adonai. Look for thematic connections between the two passages.
- A. What thematic connection do these two passages share concerning the location of the respective events?²⁰ Compare Genesis 22:5 with Exodus 24:14. How are the passages related?²¹ How are Genesis 22:9, 13 and Exodus 24:4-5 related?²² When did preparations begin for each event?²³ How is Exodus 24:11 related to Genesis 22:12?²⁴ Now, are all of these thematic connections a coincidence? Of course not. We know that the Torah uses thematic connections to relate different passages of Scripture to each other. There is a common thread of wisdom that relates these two passages. Let's look at some of the themes of the Genesis passage to see how they shed light on the account of the covenant ceremony of Exodus 24.
- B. Jewish sources inform us that Isaac was 37 years old at the Akeida. The story of the Akeida teaches us that Abraham (and Isaac) *were both willing to submit to the will of Adonai and His purposes for their lives*. Abraham's faith in Adonai's promise to multiply his descendants through Isaac was so strong that he was willing to sacrifice him as an olah, hoping that Adonai would raise him from the dead to fulfill the promise (Hebrews 11:17-19)! This story is also a testimony to Isaac's faith. Surely he was able to prevent the elderly Abraham from binding him? Yet, he too, was willing to give himself as an olah to Adonai even though obedience seemed to contradict the promises given to Abraham. Thematically, the willingness of Abraham to offer Isaac as an olah and the willingness of Isaac to submit to becoming an olah, are related to the youth offering olah to Adonai. How? Earlier, in section IA, we saw that the olah offering was offered by someone in **covenant relationship** with Adonai as a symbolic act demonstrating that the worshipper had offered himself in **service and obedience to the commandments** of Adonai. In this Parsha, we see that the Israelites were entering into **covenant relationship** with Adonai. The youths, acting as priests on behalf of the entire nation, offered olot (olah offerings) as a testimony that **the nation was willing to obey Adonai** ("Everything that YHVH has said, we will do and we will obey!" Exodus 24:7). Thus, the story of the Akeida is thematically connected to the covenant ceremony of Exodus 24

to help us realize the significance of Israel's response to Adonai's promises and commandments.

III. The Law of the Bondservant

- A. The first law in Parashat Mishpatim is the law of the bondservant ([Exodus 21:1-6](#)). We will now see how these instructions help us to gain even more understanding concerning the significance of the covenant ceremony of Exodus 24:1-11. What is the main duty of a bondservant (slave)?²⁵ Let us now see how the law of the bondservant is thematically linked to obedience and the olah offering.
- B. During the bondservant ceremony, the person's ear is pierced through with an awl onto the doorposts. We know that after the ceremony the bondservant has a hole in his ear. In other words, the servant's ear has been *opened!* Can you think of a Scripture from the Psalms thematically related to the law of the bondservant?²⁶

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

- C. So, what was the significance of piercing the ear through on the doorpost? That question may be answered with another question. What is on the doorpost of any Torah observant Israelite?²⁷ The bondservant had his ear pierced on doorposts that contained the commandments of Adonai. Therefore, his ear was "opened" to hear and be obedient to the commandments of Adonai! In Exodus 21 we also see that *obedience* is connected to *service*.
 1. How are Psalm 40:6-8 and Exodus 21:1-6 thematically connected?²⁸
 2. How is Psalm 40:6-8 thematically related to the olah?²⁹ In the account of the Akeida, we saw that the Scriptures hinted (remez) that a person could be an olah. In Psalm 40:6-8 we see explicitly that a person can "replace" an olah by becoming a bondservant of Adonai, having his ears opened to live in submission to the commandments of Adonai.
 3. How does Psalm 40:6-8 demonstrate the thematic connections between 1) the olah, 2) the bondservant and 3) obedience?³⁰
- D. Now that we've seen the thematic connections between the olah, obedience and the law of the bondservant, we can understand that when the firstborns offered the olah offering during the covenant ceremony on behalf of the nation, they were actually offering themselves as bondservants to Adonai who would live lives of obedience to Him. Numerous times throughout the Tanakh, Israel is referred to as the (bond) servant of Adonai (Isaiah 41 - 66). Israel became the bondservant of Adonai in Exodus 24:1-11 when they said, "Everything that YHVH has said, we will do and we will obey!"

Making the Connection Between the Parashat HaShavuah and the Haftarah

In this section we will examine the themes that connect the Haftarah reading to the Parashat HaShavuah reading.

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 [Jeremiah 34:8-22; 33:25-26](#). I will list some verses from chapter 34 of the Haftarah reading. Your job will be to relate them thematically to the Parashat HaShavuah reading.

- I. What two themes appear in verse 8 that are thematically connected with the Torah reading?³¹
- II. How are verses 9-12 thematically connected to the Torah portion?³²
- III. How are verses 13 and 17-18 related to the Torah portion?³³

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

In this section we will try to mine the parsha for teachings concerning the Messiah and His work of redemption.

Objective—Learn how the Torah teaches about the life and ministry of Yeshua HaMashiach. Yeshua said that Moses wrote about Him³⁴. Since the Torah never even mentions the word Messiah, this section will help you see the Messiah in the Torah. This can only be done using thematic analysis and midrash.

Messiah, The Olah

- I. In Part II, *Searching the Parsha*, we saw that 1) the olah offering, 2) the law of the bondservant and 3) obedience were connected thematically. Our interpretations helped us understand the pashat of this week's Torah portion. Now, we will use the same thematic connections and Scripture references to learn about the Messiah. Let's see how these three concepts, along with the instruction from the Torah portion, teach us about the Messiah, Yeshua!

- A. We have already seen in Parashat Va'eira that the Akeida is a prophetic picture of the work of the Messiah. In that midrash, which role does Abraham take?³⁵ What role does Isaac play?³⁶ What is the Messianic significance of Adonai's statement in Genesis 22:2—Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering [olah] on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."³⁷ Earlier we stated that Isaac was willing to become an olah in order for Adonai's plans and purposes to be fulfilled. What does this teach us about the work of the Messiah?³⁸
- B. What passage in the Tanakh is thematically related to the Akeida and clearly points to Yeshua as an olah offering?³⁹

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

Although we originally applied this Scripture to Israel, at a deeper level it is a Messianic prophecy. The phrase, "***In the scroll of the book it is written of me,***" is referring to the Messiah!

- C. Again, let's see how Yeshua took on the role of a bondservant.

*⁵Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷but made Himself of no reputation, **taking the form of a bondservant**, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and **became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross** (Philippians 2:5-9, emphasis mine).*

- D. Based on Philippians 2:5-8 we see that the law of the bondservant is actually a teaching about the Messiah! This is a general phenomenon that we will see many more times. Many of the laws of the Torah are actually teachings about the Messiah and the Kingdom of God, especially the Holy Days of Leviticus 23.
- E. Did you notice in Philippians 2:5-8 how the law of the bondservant and obedience are (once again) thematically connected? Do you see how Philippians 2:5-8 is thematically connected to the Akeida?⁴⁰
- F. Did you know that most of the New Covenant Scripture writers referred to themselves as bondservants of Yeshua? Now you know that they were speaking of a specific commandment of the Torah. They loved their master (Yeshua) and never wished to be free of His Lordship!
- G. Previously, we mentioned that Israel is referred to as the (bond) servant⁴¹ of Adonai throughout Isaiah 41-66. Actually, that's only partly true. In fact, many of those passages in Isaiah are speaking of the ultimate bondservant, Yeshua. Sometimes when Isaiah mentions the servant, Israel, he has the nation of Israel in mind (e.g., Isaiah 44). However, other times when Isaiah mentions the servant, Israel, he has the Messiah (the ultimate manifestation of all Israel is to be) in mind (e.g., Isaiah 42, 49 and 53)!

Ma'amad Har Sinai and the Mount of Transfiguration

- I. Please read [Matthew 16:13 - 17:13](#)—This is the account of the transfiguration of Yeshua. It is very strongly related to Ma'amad Har Sinai. This is fascinating and it will show you conclusively that Yeshua is the subject of the Torah.
 - A. In general, how is Ma'amad Har Sinai thematically connected to the account in Matthew?⁴²
 - B. What phenomenon of nature is common to Exodus 24:15-18 and Matthew 17:5 when Adonai and Yeshua were revealed, respectively?⁴³
 - C. What thematic connection exists concerning the timing of when Moses was allowed to go into the glory cloud (Exodus 24:15-18) and when the disciples were allowed to enter the cloud (Matt 17:1)?⁴⁴
 - D. How are Exodus 24:9-10 and Matthew 17:1-2 thematically related?⁴⁵

Are these parallels a coincidence? I think not. We have already seen how this week's Torah portion teaches us that the Messiah is the ultimate olah and bondservant. Now, we can see that the events on Mount Sinai were a shadow of the revealing of Messiah at His first advent. The thematic connections are almost irresistible.

- II. We have already seen how the story of the Akeida helped us understand the covenant ceremony at the pashat level of interpretation. Now let's see if the Akeida can help us understand (even more) how Ma'amad Har Sinai teaches us about the Messiah.
 - A. How is Exodus 19:9-19 thematically related to Matthew 17:1-6?⁴⁶
 - B. What message was the voice from heaven emphasizing in Matthew 17:5?⁴⁷ The voice from heaven wants us to focus in on the relationship between Adonai and the Messiah, Father-Son. How does Matthew 16:16 support the last assertion?⁴⁸
 - C. How is this related to the Akeida? The Akeida is a story about a father and son. More specifically, it is the story of how a father was willing to give up his only begotten son, whom he loved, as an olah. How is this theme related to Matthew 16:21-28, which immediately precedes the account of the transfiguration in Matthew 17?⁴⁹
 - D. Matthew 16:24-25 states:

²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it (emphasis mine).

How is this verse thematically related to the Akeida?⁵⁰ As you can see, the thematic connections between the Akeida and the events immediately preceding the transfiguration are very strong. From these connections, we see that Abraham and Isaac were perfect examples of those who had denied themselves and taken up their execution stakes to follow Yeshua.

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 Instructions pertaining to how man should approach Adonai.

⁹ The word "if."

¹⁰ These laws concern case/tort laws.

¹¹ Sabbath and Festivals/Holy Days.

¹² Promises concerning entering the land.

¹³ God||man.

¹⁴ Man||man.

¹⁵ Man. According to Exodus 21:6, 22; 22:8, 9; judges in the Beit Din will make decisions.

¹⁶ Adonai. According to Exodus 22:22-23, 26 Adonai will enforce these laws Himself!

¹⁷ God||man.

¹⁸ At first glance, it may seem that this section is related to C) above only because of reference to the concept of the Sabbath. However, the commandments in this section pertain to giving servants rest and feeding the poor. Giving rest to the servants is thematically related to the bondservant in C) above.

¹⁹ Commandment #1—I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Theme—Know Adonai, Believe in Him, Remember what He has done for us

Commandment #2—You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image--any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

Theme—Idolatry Forbidden

Commandment #3—You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

Theme—Sanctification of Adonai's Name

Commandment #4—Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. 11For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Theme— The number seven and a time for man to rest

Commandment #5—Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you

Theme—Respect for authority

Commandment #6—You shall not murder.

Theme—Sanctification of life

Commandment #7—You shall not commit adultery.

Theme—Sanctification of sexual intimacy

Commandment #8—You shall not steal.

Theme—Sanctification of property

Commandment #9—You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Theme—Sanctification of truth

Commandment #10—You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.

Theme—Contentment

²⁰ Both events occurred at a mountain.

²¹ In both instances a group of people ascend the mountain, while another group remains at the bottom of the mountain. In both instances the group at the bottom of the mountain is commanded to wait until the other group returns.

²² An altar is built in both stories. Olah offerings are made in both stories.

²³ Both passages relate how preparations were begun *early* in the morning.

²⁴ In the Exodus account, it states that Adonai did not raise his hand against the leaders of the Israelites. In the Genesis account, it states that Adonai prevented Abraham from raising his hand against Isaac.

²⁵ To obey the master's commandments.

²⁶ Yes. Psalm 40:6-8.

²⁷ A mezuzah, containing the commandments of Adonai.

²⁸ The Psalmist, as well as the bondservant, has had his ears opened to the commandments of Adonai! Both are ready to live a life of loving obedience to their master.

²⁹ The Psalmist states that the animal olah is not what Adonai really wanted. His truest desire was for a person whose ears were open to His commandments.

³⁰ The Psalmist first states that Adonai's true desire was not for animal olot. Then he states what Adonai truly wanted: 1) A Bondservant—*My ears You have opened*, and 2) Obedience—*I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.*"

³¹ In verse eight a covenant was sealed just as in Exodus 24. In verse eight the phrase "proclaim freedom for them" is related to the seventh year when bondservants go free.

³² Both passages speak of the law of the bondservant.

³³ In both passages a covenant is cut. In Exodus 24 the Israelites said they would obey all of Adonai's words. In the Haftarah passage, He upbraids them because they have failed to meet their obligation.

³⁴ 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.

³⁵ Abraham is the father, representing our heavenly Father.

³⁶ Isaac represents Yeshua.

³⁷ This statement teaches us that Yeshua is our Father's one and only son. It also teaches us of the intense love the Father YHVH has for the Son, Yeshua.

³⁸ Just as Isaac was willing to give up his life as an olah, so likewise, Yeshua literally laid down his life as an olah, in perfect humble submission.

³⁹ Psalm 40:6-8!

⁴⁰ Yes. Just as Isaac laid down his life (as an olah) so did Yeshua!

⁴¹ The Hebrew word translated servant and bondservant is one in the same.

⁴² Ma'amad Har Sinai means the revelation at mount Sinai because that is where Adonai supernaturally revealed Himself to Israel. In Matthew, Yeshua is supernaturally revealed to his disciples. In Matt 16:17, Yeshua tells Peter that Adonai revealed to him the fact that Yeshua was the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. In Matt 17:1-13 Yeshua is revealed again in all of His glory!

⁴³ In both instances a cloud appeared on a mountain.

⁴⁴ Both events occurred after six days!

⁴⁵ In Exodus, the leaders of Israel saw Adonai in his glory. In Matthew, the disciples saw Yeshua in His glory!

⁴⁶ In both instances, there is a supernatural revelation of Adonai/Messiah in a cloud. In both instances, a voice will come from heaven in order that the hearers believe the message from heaven. Finally, in both instances, those who heard the voice from heaven were frightened.

⁴⁷ That Yeshua was the Father's son.

⁴⁸ In Matthew 16:16, Peter not only states that Yeshua is the Messiah, he also states that Yeshua is the Son of the Living God!

⁴⁹ It is related, because in Matthew 16:21-28, Yeshua is stating how He must offer Himself (the Father's only begotten Son) to be executed (olah), just like Isaac was willing to offer himself as an olah.

⁵⁰ This verse is thematically related to the Akeida because in the Akeida, Isaac was willing to give up his life as an olah! Isaac is the perfect example of someone who took up his execution stake (he literally carried the wood) and denied himself. Furthermore, the Akeida teaches us that Abraham also denied himself because he was willing to offer his only begotten son. In other instances, when Yeshua stated, "If any man come after me, he must deny himself," He also stated that they should not love relatives more than Him. Abraham demonstrated his love and trust for Adonai in that he was willing to offer Isaac, his only begotten son, whom he loved, as an olah.