

Understanding the Parsha

Devarim Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17

We will Learn how to

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

The Fundamental Function/Purpose of the Torah

These are the Signs of Life

Let's continue with our study of the main function and purpose of the Torah. Remember we have learned that: the fundamental function and purpose of the Torah (at the Pashat level) is to secure, ensure and give physical LIFE to those who keep it. Read these verses Devarim 4:1, 4 and 10, Devarim 5:33, Devarim 6:24, Devarim 8:1 and 3, Devarim 30:19, Leviticus 26:3-13, Ezekiel 20:11, 13, 21 and 25! It is obvious that the Holy One gave Am Yisrael the Torah for a purpose. It only makes sense that we would be able to get a tiny look see of that purpose by examining those verses that describe the ideal state where Am Yisrael are fully obeying the commandments (mitzvot).

See how many times the Torah uses the phrase consume/ eat blood in Leviticus 17:10-16! In other words, when the Torah says don't eat blood, it means don't eat meat that has not had the blood properly removed from the body.

Now here is a key phrase in this portion of Scripture. Look at Leviticus 17:13.

And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth ANY BEAST OR FOWL THAT MAY BE EATEN; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust (Leviticus 17:13, emphasis mine).

What does the Torah mean by the phrase, “any beast or fowl that may be eaten?” Are there some beasts and fowl that may not be eaten? Also, which beasts and fowl may be eaten? The answer is given in Leviticus 11:1-47 where the Torah lists the clean/ tahor/ pure animals that may be eaten! That's right. We're talking about the kosher requirements that make food fit and proper to eat. There are basically two requirements. First, the animal must be a kosher animal; second, the blood must be properly removed. The Torah is very plain in its definition of not eating blood. It means that you must only eat a kosher animal whose blood has been properly drained. Remember, the Torah says “any beast or fowl THAT MAY BE EATEN.”

Can you think of another prohibition that teaches about kosher meat?

Read Leviticus 3:17 it says that we are to eat neither f fat nor b blood.

Animal fat is also not allowed. Now pay close attention to Devarim 12:24-25. We know that not eating blood is connected to eating only eat a kosher animal whose blood has been properly drained. We also know that the phrase, “so that it will go well with you,” is simply another way of saying, “so that you will be blessed and experience an abundance of physical LIFE.” So we know that, Devarim 12:24-25 is saying that by obeying the kosher dietary requirements, you will ensure LIFE for yourself. Once again, Moses is saying that obeying the commandments (mitzvot) will lead to life. This time, though, he singled out the dietary commandments (mitzvot) as a practical example of how following them will lead to life.

Just something to think about: do you see the health benefits of the dietary commandments (mitzvot)? Most believers reject these commandments (mitzvot) today, saying that they aren't a matter of salvation. No, they aren't a matter of salvation; BUT, they are a matter of LIFE and DEATH. It's not a coincidence that many of today's sicknesses and diseases are medically related to eating Biblically unclean foods like pork and shellfish. It's also not a coincidence that most of the leading illnesses in America (diabetes, heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure, etc.) are medically proven to be related to too much saturated fat and cholesterol (obtained from animal fat).

To sum it up, Moses continues to show Am Yisrael that obedience to the Torah produces LIFE, whereas disobedience produces death. The Holy One has a grand purpose for Am Yisrael, His chosen people whom He loves. So, we know that it is His intent that the main function and purpose of the Torah is to be a source of blessing and LIFE to those who obey its precepts. It's question time again.

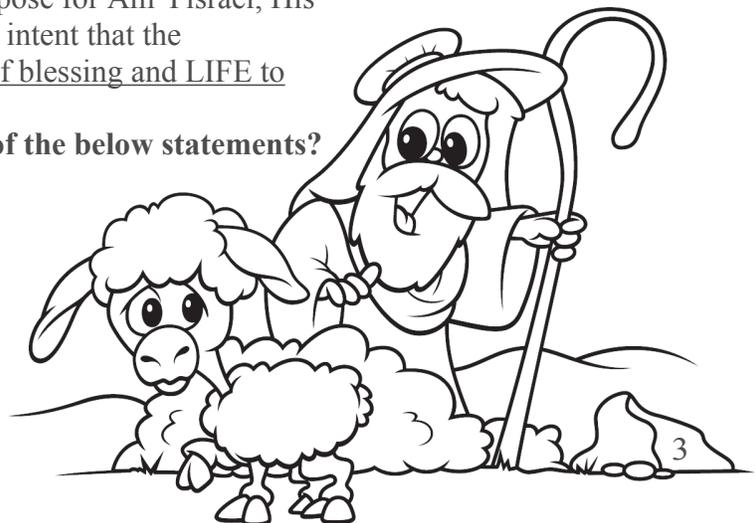
Did any of the passages in this week's sidra teach any of the below statements?

Circle YES or NO to each one...

YES or **NO** The Torah is bondage.

YES or **NO** The Torah would one day be done away with.

YES or **NO** The Torah was only for the “Jews.”



YES or **NO** The “Jews” were saved by keeping the Torah.

YES or **NO** The Torah is temporary.

YES or **NO** The Torah was given to the “Jews” to curse them

YES or **NO** The Torah was abolished.

YES or **NO** The Torah is a curse.

YES or **NO** The Torah was nailed to the “cross.”

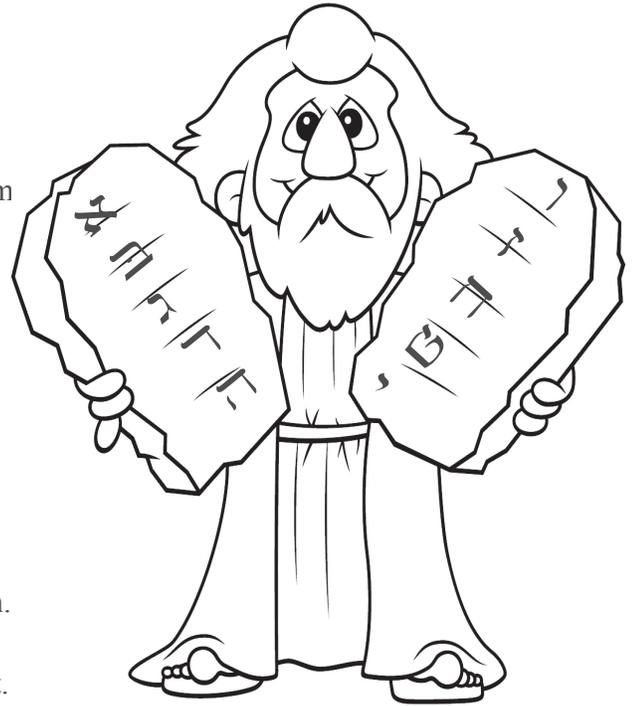
YES or **NO** We only need to obey the spirit of the Torah.

YES or **NO** The letter of the Torah has been done away with.

YES or **NO** The Torah brought death to those who obeyed it.

YES or **NO** We are 1) free from, 2) dead to and 3) delivered from the Torah as a standard of right behavior.

YES or **NO** Obeying the Torah today is legalism.



If your answers were **NO**, then we shouldn't accept any of these errors above as reality. After all, they are only the doctrines of men. Yeshua said in Mark 7:13, Thus, with your tradition which you had handed down to you, you nullify the Word of God!”

Read Devarim 11:26-13:2. Pay close attention to the Parsha breaks (listed at the beginning of this lesson) and where there are subject changes. Look for the following thematic flow:

Devarim 11:26-32— Introduction and header for the beginning of the second subject of the main speech.

Devarim 12:1-19— Worshipping the Holy One in the manner and in the place He chooses.

Devarim 12:20-31— Concluding warning against worshipping the Holy One the way the nations worship their gods.

Devarim 13:1-2— Devarim 13:1 is a header/introduction to the next topic that begins in Devarim 13:2. The new subject is all about false prophets.

Please see that although there are two Parsha Stumot between Devarim 12:26-12:28, the subject/ theme/ topic is the same throughout the divisions, i.e., worshipping the Holy One in the manner and in the place He chooses. Then, the subject drastically changes after the Parsha P'tuchah since it no longer is about the negative influences from outside the nation and begins teaching about the negative influences within the nation (false prophets).

Read Devarim 12:1-19. Remembering that one of the primary ways the Torah teaches us its lessons and themes is through repeating things over and over, what words seem to be repeated many times in this Parsha?

done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods (Deuteronomy 12:29-31).

We can get a whole lot of knowledge, understanding and wisdom when we study thematically by comparing and contrasting themes. For example, if we compare and contrast how the nations worship their gods with worship of the Holy One in Devarim 12:1-7, we will immediately see that the nations have many different places of worship (on hills, mountains and under every leafy tree), and the Holy One has **one** unique place in mind.

Do you see a thematic connection between the places where the nations worshiped and their idea of “god”?

Most of the nations were polytheistic (belief in more than one god). This is thematically linked to worship in more than O place.

In fact, the single location, of the place where YHVH your Elohim (God) will choose to cause His Name to dwell, becomes a dominant theme throughout the remainder of this Parsha.

Read Devarim 12:8-14. Although this passage is about private altars, how is it thematically linked to the first seven verses?

It is linked thematically to the first seven verses in at least two different ways.

1) Both passages warns Am Yisrael to worship only at the p the Holy One will choose for His Name to d. 2) Both passages warns Am Yisrael to reject W practices that Turn aside from the commandments (mitzvot) Moses delivered at that time. In Devarim 12:1-7, they were warned not to adopt the h practices. In Devarim 12:8-14, they were warned not to adopt practices of their O own imaginations. (In other words they were told not to worship God any way they thought was good).

Read Devarim 12:15-19. Although this passage is about eating meat that was consecrated (set apart as holy), how is it thematically linked to the first seven verses?

P and C.

Read Devarim 12:20-28. Although this passage is about eating unconsecrated meat and other general commandments (mitzvot), how is it thematically linked to the first seven verses?

Both passages warns Am Yisrael to worship only at the p the Holy One will C for His Name to dwell.

We have already seen how Devarim 12:21-31 relates to Devarim 12:1-7. All of these verses emphasize worship according to the commandments (mitzvot) at the place where YHVH chooses to cause His Name to dwell.



How would you summarize the theme of these Parshiot — remember to be brief?

How about, Proper worship at the Place?



Can you find the words from this Parsha?

T	N	L	T	N	E	D	E	S	R	U	C	REEH
A	O	M	I	T	Z	V	O	T	R	E	E	TORAH
M	B	R	R	F	A	T	B	L	O	O	D	MITZVOT
W	E	L	A	A	E	E	M	E	T	P	R	OBEY
O	Y	A	E	H	T	U	T	M	L	C	A	BLESSED
R	R	G	T	S	O	N	S	A	R	H	U	CURSED
S	C	H	O	O	S	E	C	N	J	H	G	SAFEGUARD
H	E	P	N	D	I	E	A	R	T	H	E	LIFE
I	Y	O	R	T	S	E	D	E	E	A	F	MEAT
P	A	D	A	U	G	H	T	E	R	S	A	BLOOD
M	O	S	E	T	R	A	P	A	T	E	S	EARTH
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												DESTROY
												NAME
												SONS
												DAUGHTERS
												SET APART