

Mishpachah Beit Midrash

An Introduction to the Parashat HaShavuah
(Weekly Torah Portion)

Understanding the Torah From a Thematic Perspective

Tetzaveh
(*You Shall Command*)



By Tony Robinson

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

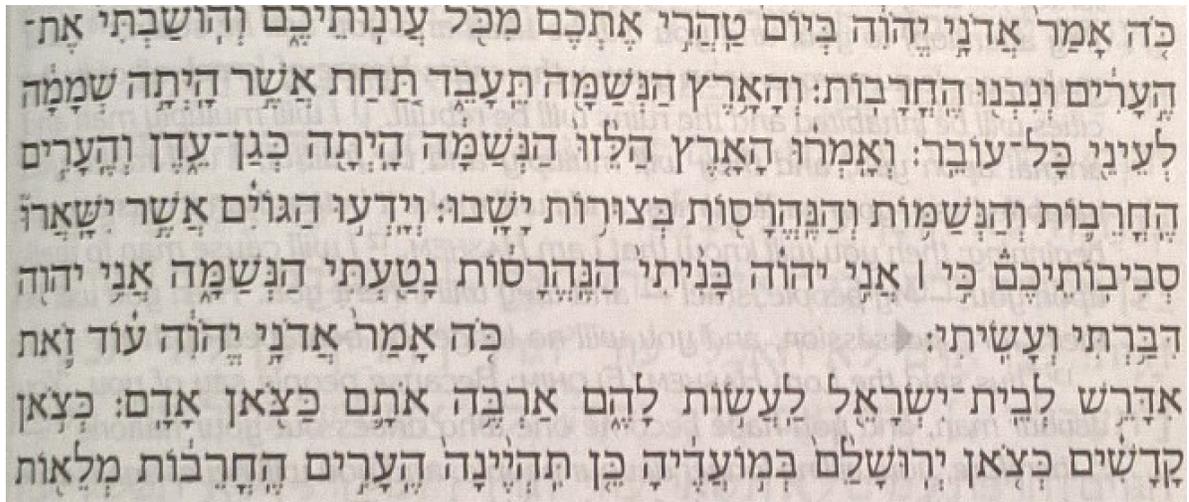
Welcome to Mishpachah Beit Midrash, the Family House of Study. Each Shabbat¹ we gather in our home and study the Scriptures, specifically the Torah.² It's a fun time of receiving revelation from the Ruach HaKodesh³. Everyone joins in—adults and children—as we follow the Parashat HaShavuah⁴ schedule.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

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

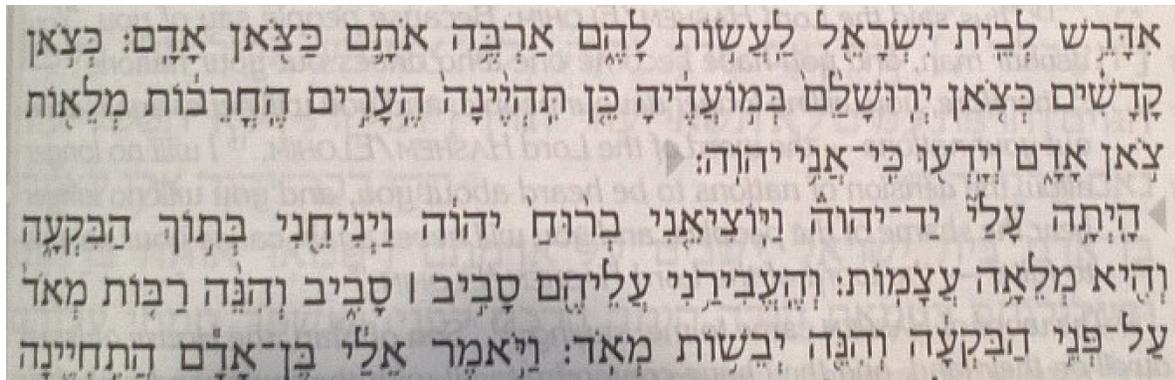
Thematic analysis of Scripture is based on the following premises. 1) Moses wrote the Torah as five *separate* books as the Ruach HaKodesh inspired him. 2) Since Adonai had him separate those words into five separate books, we surmise that each book has a unique message or theme. 3) Within each book,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

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

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



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



—Parashat HaShavuah—

Tetzaveh

(You Shall Command)

Shemot 27:20 - 30:10

(Exodus 27:20 - 30:10)

This Week's Parshiot

- 1 Shemot 27:20-21 □
- 2 Shemot 28:1-5
- 3 Shemot 28:6-12
- 4 Shemot 28:13-14
- 5 Shemot 28:15-30
- 6 Shemot 28:31-35
- 7 Shemot 28:36-43
- 8 Shemot 29:1-37
- 9 Shemot 29:38-46
- 10 Shemot 30:1-10

This lesson is presented in a self-study format with lots of questions. To view my answers to the questions, simply mouse over the word ***Tetzaveh*** at the end of the question. Answers are also provided as footnotes for those who choose to print the article.

Understanding the Parsha ***[Exodus 30:1-10](#)***

Objective—Learn how to 1) interpret the main theme of a Parsha, 2) make thematic connections to other Scriptures to help you interpret the Parsha under consideration and 3) learn how to discover underlying themes and wisdom through thematic connections.

Understanding the Flow

- I. In order to understand this week's Parashat, let's use a couple of thematic analysis tools to get a look at the big picture.

A. Tool number one—charting the flow of Parshiot. First, let’s show how Terumah and Tetzaveh form a distinct unit by outlining these two portions *based on the flow of the Parshiot divisions*.

- Introduction
 - Materials to use in construction of the Mishkan and its purpose, Exodus 25:1-8
- The Holy of Holies
 - The Ark, Exodus 25:10-16
 - The covering for the Ark, Exodus 25:17-22
- The Holy Place
 - The Table of Showbread, Exodus 25:23-30
 - The Menorah, Exodus 25:31-40
- The structure enclosing the Tabernacle, Exodus 26:1-37
- The Courtyard
 - The altar for burnt offerings, Exodus 27:1-8
- The structure enclosing the courtyard, Exodus 27:9-19
- The commandment to light the Menorah, Exodus 27:20-21
- The priestly garments, Exodus 28:1-43
- The seven-day inauguration ceremony, Exodus 29:1-37
- The daily offering on the altar, Exodus 29:38-43
- Summary statements, Exodus 29:44-46
- The Incense Altar, Exodus 30:1-10

B. Tool number two—looking for those bookends. Many times the Torah uses a particular word or phrase to mark the beginning of a particular discourse. In this example, note how Parashat Terumah begins with the phrase, “And YHVH spoke to Moses saying.” Guess where this phrase is used next?⁸ That’s right. It’s used in Exodus 30:11, right after the section outlined above. The method of finding “bookends” has yielded the same division that was obtained by charting the flow of the Parshiot. They both led us to the same conclusion, that Exodus 25:1 – 30:10 comprise a distinct unit of Scripture. The sages of Israel call this unit of Scripture, *The Commandment to Build the Mishkan*.

II. As you study the Torah, you should begin to ask questions about the text. Whenever you see something that doesn’t seem to make sense, you should begin to try to reconcile the text with what you think should have occurred. Many of the deepest lessons and mysteries of the Torah will unfold as you begin to try to understand why the Torah records things in the order it has chosen. The sages of Israel have noticed many passages that seemed “out of place.” When this occurred, they began to search the Scriptures thematically, to find out why the Parshiot were ordered as they were. For example, do you remember that Moses told Pharaoh Israel was supposed to go for a *three-day* journey into the wilderness to worship Adonai? Did that ever occur? No. Was Moses lying? Why is it that Israel worshipped at Mount Sinai almost seven weeks after leaving Egypt instead of after a *three-day journey*? I don’t have time to discuss the reasons; however, let’s look at a big “anomaly” in Parashat Terumah/Tetzaveh.

A. Referring to the outline in IA above, we know that Exodus 25:1-40 concerns furnishings that belong in the Holy of Holies. Read the furnishings listed in that passage. Is anything missing?⁹ When is the first mention of the Altar of Incense?¹⁰ Wouldn’t it have seemed

logical to give instructions concerning the building of the Incense Altar along with the instructions for *all of the other items placed in the Mishkan*? Of course it would have.

- B. Secondly, why is the commandment to light the Menorah not given until Exodus 27:20-21? Wouldn't it have made more sense to record it back in the section describing the Menorah? Logically, of course. You are about to be introduced to one of the main ways the Torah teaches us. By recording events in this "illogical" manner, the Torah is trying to stimulate us to ask questions. There is a reason why the Incense Altar is "misplaced." This "anomaly" is like a neon light telling us that the Altar of Incense is important. Let's use thematic analysis to find some answers.

The Golden Incense Altar

- I. First, let's compare and contrast Parashat Terumah and Tetzaveh.
- A. What was the purpose for building the Mishkan—see [Exodus 25:8](#)?¹¹ In Terumah, did the Torah present the furnishings in any type of order?¹² Intuitively, which part of the Mishkan do you think is most important?¹³ Read [Exodus 25:22](#). What two important things are associated with the ark?¹⁴ This is important because the Ten Commandments represent the covenant at Sinai. Finally, note that there isn't much instruction concerning activities of the priests in Terumah. Therefore, Parashat Terumah seems to emphasize the building of the Mishkan as a dwelling place for Adonai. In other words, it emphasizes the "***Divine element***" of the Mishkan. The order of the listing of the furniture reinforces this priority. This is the place where Adonai, the God of heaven and earth dwells.
- B. Concerning Parashat Tetzaveh, have you noticed how much activity is occurring, as the priests interacting with the vessels of the Mishkan? In other words, in Parashat Terumah, instructions concerning the construction of the vessels are given. However, in Tetzaveh we see the priests interacting with those vessels. This illustrates the primary difference between Terumah and Tetzaveh, although both list the same Mishkan furnishings. Terumah pertains to the Mishkan as the dwelling place of Adonai and does not mention much about the "***human element***." Parashat Tetzaveh pertains to the daily operation of the Mishkan.
- C. We have already seen (from Terumah) that the Ark, Menorah and Table of Showbread (all of which are *IN* the Mishkan) are symbols of the triune nature of Adonai. We have noticed that the Altar of Incense (which is in the Mishkan also) was not mentioned in Terumah, which primarily pertains to the "***Divine element***" of the Mishkan. Therefore, we have noticed that the Altar of Incense is placed within the Parshiot of Tetzaveh, which emphasizes the "***human element***" of the Mishkan. This should be strong thematic evidence to us that *the Altar of Incense is strongly associated with man (specifically the High Priest), and some aspect of his responsibility to serve in the Mishkan!*
- II. Read the tenth Parsha, Shemot 30:1-10 ■
- A. How is this Parsha concerning the Incense Altar similar to the other Parshiot dealing with the furnishings of the Mishkan (hint: Read Exodus 25:23-30, which gives instructions concerning the Table of Showbread, then compare and contrast)?¹⁵
- B. How is this Parsha different from the other Parshiot dealing with furnishings of the Mishkan (hint: Read Exodus 25:23-30, which gives instructions concerning the Table of Showbread, then compare and contrast)?¹⁶ This should be your first hint that there is

something special about the Incense Altar. Which items are thematically linked in Exodus 30:6?¹⁷ Since we know that Adonai dwells above the ark, behind the veil, we should expect that the position of the Incense Altar is directly connected with service to Him.

- C. What thematic connection is being made in Exodus 30:7-8?¹⁸ Read [Exodus 29:38-46](#). How is this Parsha related to the service of the Incense Altar and Menorah?¹⁹
- D. We have stumbled upon something very interesting. Note the time element associated with those duties. Well, thematic analysis demands that we see if the other Mishkan furnishings have "time elements" associated with the activity surrounding them.
1. The altar of burnt offering—The priests are interacting with it at all times during the day, besides the evening and morning olah described in this Parashat.
 2. The Menorah—Twice daily.
 3. The Table of Showbread—Once per week. On Shabbat, new loaves are placed on it and the priests eat the old loaves. As an aside, in Parashat Beshalach we saw how the work of the Messiah was thematically connected to the Shabbat. How does the Table of Showbread connect Shabbat to the work of the Messiah?²⁰
 4. The Altar of Incense—Twice daily. However, there is another service performed on it only once per year (Yom Kippur).
 5. The Ark—Later we will learn that the High Priest goes into the Holy of Holies to interact with the Ark once per year (Yom Kippur).

Do you see the general trend concerning frequency of human interaction and closeness to Adonai's presence?²¹ These thematic connections dovetail with what we concluded in IC above concerning the "human element" vs. the "Divine element." Once again the Torah teaches us that Parashat Tetzaveh emphasizes the "human element" associated with the furnishings. As we approach the Mishkan we seem to be passing from the natural, where man dwells, to the supernatural, where Adonai dwells. Since the Altar of Incense is closely associated with human activity (just like the morning/evening offerings and lighting of the Menorah, etc.) it was placed amongst the Parshiot of Tetzaveh, which emphasize the "human element." Furthermore, the importance of the Altar of Incense is heightened because of its association with the yearly Yom Kippur ceremony.

In summary, we have seen that the Altar of Incense was not listed with the other furnishings of the Holy of Holies in Parashat Terumah, which seemed to stress the Mishkan as a dwelling place for the presence of Adonai. Instead it was placed amongst Parshiot describing the "**human element**" concerned with the service of the Mishkan. Therefore we conclude that the function of the Altar of Incense is thematically associated with man (the priest) and his duty before Adonai. We will uncover the precise function of the priest at the Altar of Incense as we progress through the study.

Searching the Parshiot

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

Making Himself Known as YHVH, יהוה

- I. Read [Exodus 3:1-6](#) and [6:2-3](#). How is Adonai's revelation to Moses different than how He revealed Himself to our Fathers in Genesis?²² Remember, in Parashat Va'eira we discussed how, beginning with Adonai's revelation to Moses, He was about to reveal Himself through His Name YHVH. One aspect of this revelation of Himself as YHVH involves revealing to us His intense Holiness. As in Moses' encounter above, we will soon learn that Adonai's Holiness limits access to Him! We will follow this emerging theme of *limited approachability to Adonai* closely so that we can determine how one draws near to a Holy God. Moses' encounter was one of the first clear instances of this theme and sets the thematic foundation for this area of study.
 - A. How is Adonai's revelation to Moses, [Exodus 3:1-6](#), thematically connected to Ma'amad Har Sinai (The Revelation at Mount Sinai) Exodus 19 – 24?²³ Just as Moses is warned not to approach the bush, Israel is warned not to approach the mountain ([Exodus 19:12-13, 21-25; 24:1-2, 13-15](#)). As you can see, Adonai is not easily approached. Also, remember in Parashat Yitro how Adonai only communicates with Israel via Moses as a mediator. Again, the picture is limited access.
 - B. In Parashat Terumah we learned that a veil/curtain separates the Holy of Holies (where Adonai dwells) from the rest of the Holy Place. This continues to reinforce the theme of limited access to Adonai.
 - C. We saw earlier that the High Priest only has access to the Holy of Holies once per year! Read [Leviticus 16:2](#). What is Aaron warned not to do?²⁴ What's the message? Limited access to Adonai's presence. Notice the reference to the cloud? We'll return to this later.
 - D. How is Section IID of *Understanding the Parsha* thematically related to approachability?²⁵ How is Section IID thematically related to approachability concerning the identity of those who approach Adonai?²⁶ This idea of access to Adonai based on identity is very similar to what happened at Mount Sinai. The people could go to the mountain. Aaron, Nadav, Avihu and the seventy elders were allowed to go onto the mountain. But only Moses was allowed to go to the top of the mountain into the cloud (where the Divine presence was dwelling). We have just uncovered a great thematic connection between the revelation at mount Sinai and the Mishkan. Should we stop here? Can you think of any other similarities between Ma'amad Har Sinai (The Revelation at Mount Sinai) in Exodus 19 – 24, and the Mishkan?
 1. The Mishkan contains the ark with the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments were given to Israel in Exodus 20.
 2. The Mishkan had an altar of burnt offering. In [Exodus 24:4-8](#) an altar is built for sacrifice.

3. People can only enter the courtyard of the Mishkan. At Ma'amad Har Sinai the people could only approach the foot of the mountain.
4. We will later learn that people could only enter the courtyard after purification. At Ma'amad Har Sinai the people must purify themselves before the giving of the Torah by washing their clothes and abstaining from sexual relations.
5. Note the following:

<i>Identity</i>	<i>Mount Sinai</i>	<i>Mishkan</i>
Moses	Top of Mountain	Holy of Holies
Priests & Elders	Middle of Mountain	Holy Place
People	Foot of Mountain	Courtyard

Many Jewish scholars believe the Mishkan was given to perpetuate the experience of Ma'amad Har Sinai. These detailed thematic connections between the Mishkan and Ma'amad Har Sinai (The Revelation at Mount Sinai) are the evidence for this line of reasoning. This brings us back to the discussion of the Altar of Incense. The thematic connections above definitely seem to equate the smoke of the Altar of Incense with the cloud that covered Mount Sinai.

- E. In [Exodus 19:9](#) Adonai stated that He was going to appear to Israel in a cloud. Why was this cloud necessary? Why not just appear where everyone could see Him? Why is Adonai “hiding” behind a cloud? To answer this question, let’s read [Exodus 24:9-11](#). Why did Moses record that Adonai did not lift His hand of judgment against the elders of Israel?²⁷ The possibility that a person would die if they saw or even heard Adonai is clearly a concern to those who have experienced His glory—[Deuteronomy 18:16](#) and [Isaiah 6:1-5](#).
- F. Therefore, we should surmise that the cloud was present to prevent people from actually seeing Adonai. The cloud is protective! Can we find yet another passage that clearly associates the incense of the Altar of Incense with the protective cloud cloaking Adonai? Yes. Read [Leviticus 16:11-14](#). What is the source of the cloud?²⁸ What is the purpose of the cloud created by the incense?²⁹
- G. As a final example of the protective purpose of the incense from the Altar of Incense, read [Numbers 16:41-50](#). Based on their actions concerning the incense of the Altar of Incense, what understanding of the incense did Moses and Aaron have?³⁰ Do you see the connection? Once again the Altar of Incense is thematically connected to protecting people from the wrath of Adonai!

In summary, we have learned that the Altar of Incense is closely associated with the work of the High Priest. Over and over, the Scriptures thematically link the Altar of Incense to the protection of man from the wrath of a Holy God. Thus, the Altar of Incense plays a central role in the continuing manifestation of Adonai as YHVH, the Holy One of Israel! Adonai never revealed this aspect of Himself back in Genesis when He dealt with the Fathers. He is Holy, man is not. We can only approach him on His terms, otherwise we will become consumed by the brightness of His Holiness. The cloud created by the incense from the Altar of Incense is the vehicle through which we are protected from His Holiness!

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 [Ezekiel 43:10-27](#). I will list some verses from the Haftarah reading. Your job will be to relate them thematically to the Parashat HaShavuah reading.

- I. How is Ezekiel 43:13-17 related to the Torah portion?³¹
- II. How is Ezekiel 43:18-27 related to the Torah portion?³²

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 Him³³. 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.*

Messiah, The Priest-King?

- I. In previous lessons we have already seen that the purpose/goal of the Torah is the revelation of Yeshua the Messiah. Therefore we should be able to find clear thematic connections between the Torah and His life. In this section we will thematically connect portions of the Torah portion to the work of the Messiah.
 - A. Read [Exodus 28:1-43](#). What is the general topic of these verses?³⁴ Can you think of a prophet who spoke of the "vestments" of a priest? Read [Zechariah 6:9-15](#). How is Zechariah 6:9-12 related to the Torah portions of Terumah-Tetzaveh?³⁵ What is peculiar about the "vestment" made from the offering for the priest?³⁶ This is unusual because we know that the Kingship and Priesthood were separated. Kings were to come from Judah and priests were to come from Levi.
 - B. Who does Zechariah say will build the Temple?³⁷ We saw last week that Messiah Yeshua will build the Temple, and in fact, He's building one now with living stones. Furthermore, we've already seen that the Messiah will be a prophet, priest and king.

Therefore, we should immediately recognize that this is a prophecy of the Messiah! He is the one who will combine Priesthood and Kingship!

- C. Since the Torah teaches us that priests must come from Levi and kings from Judah, how can their be a legitimate Priest/King according to Torah? Is this "conflict" mentioned anywhere else in the Scriptures—see [Hebrews 7:13-15](#)? The writer of Hebrews noted this "conflict." He tells us the solution is that Messiah's priesthood will be founded after the order of Melchizedek, not the Levitical priesthood—read [Psalm 110:4](#).
- D. Read [Hebrews 5:1-5](#). What is the purpose of the thematic connection the writer makes between the High Priest and Yeshua?³⁸ Does the writer make any other allusions to teach us that the Levitical priesthood was a picture of the priesthood of the Messiah?³⁹
- E. We know that the Messiah came first as a prophet. Currently, He is fulfilling the role of High Priest. Lastly, He will come as a conquering King. This sequence is pictured for us thematically in the Torah through Israel's great leaders. Moses life was a prophecy of Yeshua as a prophet. Now, Aaron and his office of High Priest, teaches us concerning Yeshua the High Priest. Lastly, Joshua, whose name is a derivation of Yeshua, will teach us concerning Yeshua's role as King! The ordering of these themes is irresistible!

In summary, we see that the Torah and the book of Hebrews clearly teaches that the Levitical priesthood, especially the office of High Priest was a picture or shadow of the work of the Messiah, the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek.

The Significance of the Altar of Incense

- I. Earlier we found out that the Altar of Incense was very important. The incense was able to preserve life and protect the Israelites. Furthermore, this ministry of protection was entrusted to the High Priest through his ministry at the Altar of Incense. Let's look at some passages in the New Covenant Scriptures that clearly show us how the incense from the Altar of Incense was able to protect Israel.

“Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and ***golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints*** (Revelation 5:8, emphasis mine).”

³Then another angel, having a ***golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar that was before the throne.*** ⁴And ***the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints,*** ascended before God from the angel's hand (Revelation 8:3-4, emphasis mine).”

- A. Read Revelation 8:3-4. Remembering that Adonai told Moses to carefully build the Mishkan according to the pattern he saw in the mount, what do these verses teach us was the source of that pattern?⁴⁰ Note that the golden altar of incense in heaven is thematically equivalent to the Altar of Incense in Exodus! Note its position in the heavenly sanctuary. It's the same as in the Mishkan, in front of the Ark where Adonai was enthroned! The earthly Mishkan was a picture of the heavenly Mishkan.
- B. What do these verses teach us concerning Aaron's ministry at the Altar of Incense?⁴¹
- C. What is the incense a symbol of?⁴²

In summary, we now see that the incense represented the ministry of intercession. Now let's see how this ministry of intercession, pictured by the incense of the Golden Altar of Incense is fulfilled through Yeshua. In another lesson we will see how the Altar of Incense ministry is also a picture of the work of His body. Furthermore, we'll see that this ministry of intercession by His body was prophesied by the lives of the Fathers in the book of Genesis!

Yeshua Our High Priest/Intercessor

I. One of the main goals of the book of Hebrews was to show how Yeshua is now our High Priest, interceding on our behalf. In order to appreciate Yeshua's intercessory ministry we must remember two things we learned in Sections 1 and II.

- 1) In order for us to approach Adonai and appear before Him we need protection.
- 2) We only have limited access to Him because of His Holiness.

A. Obviously, these two points act against us ever being able to draw near to him! Now, read Hebrews 9:1-9, connecting it to what we've learned thematically.

¹ Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. ²For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; ³and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, ⁴which had the ***golden censer and the ark of the covenant*** [*thematic connection between the Altar of incense and the Ark!*] overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; ⁵and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. ⁶ Now when these things had been thus prepared, ***the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle*** [*limited access!*], performing the services. ⁷But ***into the second part the high priest went alone once a year*** [*limited access!*], not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance; ⁸***the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest*** [*limited access!*] ***while the first tabernacle was still standing.*** ⁹It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience (Hebrews 9:1-9, emphasis mine).

Isn't the emphasis of this passage of Scripture thematically related to what we've learned in Sections I and II? Verse eight states explicitly that the Mishkan service was set up to teach us that access to Adonai's presence had been limited! This is exactly what we learned from the Torah portion through thematic analysis! However, has Yeshua's blood opened the way for man to literally come into the earthly Mishkan? No! Into the very presence of Adonai ***in the heavenly Mishkan***, without Him raising His hand against us! That's the power of Yeshua's blood and intercession! Now you can better understand why the veil of the Temple was rent when Yeshua paid the price. He paid the price for us to be able to have access through the veil into the very presence of Adonai without having to die after coming into the presence of eternal His Holiness.

B. Through the death of Yeshua we have boldness to approach Adonai, in Heaven.

¹⁹ Therefore, brethren, having boldness [*no more fear of death because of His Holiness*] to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil [*opening access and connecting the Altar of Incense to the Ark/Throne*], that is, His flesh, ²¹and having a High Priest [*His intercession is available to us*] over the house of God, ²²let us draw near [*access is available without death*] with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful (Hebrews 10:19-23, emphasis mine).

This verse clearly mentions Yeshua as our High Priest. What is His main role as High Priest?⁴³

²⁴But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. ²⁵Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since ***He always lives to make intercession for them.*** ²⁶For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens (Hebrews 7:24-26).

This passage teaches us that one of Yeshua's main functions as our High Priest is to make intercession for us! This is the ministry of the Altar of Incense! It is His prayers and blood that protect us and preserve our lives!

- C. Lastly, Hebrews emphasizes that this new unfettered access reaches into the very throne of heaven itself.

Seeing then that we have a great *High Priest who has passed through the heavens*, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us ***therefore come boldly to the throne*** of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16, emphasis mine).

In summary, we have seen that one aspect of the ministry of protection rendered by the incense offered at the Altar of Incense was prophetic of the ministry of Yeshua as our High Priest Who intercedes on our behalf⁴⁴. This ministry of intercession by Yeshua is also taught in Hebrews 9:24. Furthermore, the barriers and obstacles associated with this ministry in the earthly Mishkan have been done away with through the death, resurrection and High Priesthood of 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 Exodus 30:11!

⁹ Yes, the Altar of Incense, which belongs in front of the veil between the Menorah and Table of Showbread is missing!

¹⁰ Not until the last Parsha of these two portions, Ex 30:1-10!

¹¹ To build a Sanctuary where Adonai could dwell amongst Israel.

¹² Yes, the Torah introduced the furnishings from the inside out: from the ark (in the Holy of Holies) to the altar of burnt offerings (in the outer court).

¹³ The part where Adonai dwells, above the ark in the Holy of Holies.

¹⁴ The ten commandments and the presence of Adonai!

¹⁵ This Parsha is similar to the other Parshiot concerning the furnishings because Ex 30:1-5 pertains to 1) the command to build the Incense Altar, 2) a statement of the function of the furnishing, 3) the materials to be used to build the altar and 4) the dimensions of the altar.

¹⁶ This Parsha differs as follows. Whereas the other Parshiot concerning the other furnishings simply give instructions for construction and a general statement of purpose, this Parsha 1) informs Israel where to place the altar, 2) spatially relates it to another furnishing, 3) and gives detailed instructions on how to use the altar. This much detail was not given *in the Parsha that described how to build the other furnishings*.

¹⁷ This verse thematically links the Incense Altar to the Holy of Holies because it relates it to the veil and the ark!

¹⁸ The service of the Altar of Incense is being thematically connected to the service of the Menorah.

¹⁹ These verses describe the daily whole burnt offering (olah). The common theme between these three services (offering of incense, lighting the Menorah, offering olah) is that they are performed twice per day, in the morning and in the evening. This unites them thematically.

²⁰ Remember, in Parashat Terumah we saw that the Table of Showbread was a symbol of the Messiah. Now we see that the activity of the priests (eating and replacing the Showbread) associated with the Table of Showbread (Messiah) occurs each Shabbat!

²¹ Yes, as the furnishings get closer to Adonai's dwelling place (the Ark), there is less frequent activity associated with the "human element."

²² In this account there is an element of un-approachability between Adonai and Moses ("do not come closer"). This was not present throughout Genesis.

²³ In both accounts Adonai revealed Himself in flames. On Mount Sinai the mountain was ablaze. With Moses, the bush was ablaze. In both accounts man was warned not to approach Adonai's presence in the flame.

²⁴ He is warned not to come into the Holy of Holies at just any time lest he die!

²⁵ Access is limited as one approaches Adonai's presence above the ark in the Holy of Holies. Anyone can approach the altar of burnt offering, but access to the Holy of Holies is limited to once per year!

²⁶ Anyone may approach the altar of burnt offering. Only priests may enter the Holy Place. Only the High Priest may enter the Holy of Holies.

²⁷ The statement that Adonai didn't raise His hand (of judgment) against the elders is sandwiched between two passages stating that the elders had seen Adonai! Therefore, the implication is that normally, if someone sees Adonai, they would die!

²⁸ The source is the smoke emanating from the burning incense of the Altar of Incense.

²⁹ The cloud is necessary to prevent the High Priest from dying, even though he is approaching the very throne of Adonai!

³⁰ They understood that the incense had the power to deliver Israel from death, death as a result of the wrath of Adonai!

³¹ The Haftarah portion gives the dimensions of the altar of burnt offerings. The end of the Torah portion gives the dimensions of the Altar of Incense.

³² Similarly to Parashat Tetzaveh, these verses describe the inauguration ceremony for the altar.

³³ 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.

³⁴ The vestments for the priests.

³⁵ Just as Moses took an offering from Israel to gather materials to cloth the priests, so does Zechariah take an offering from those arriving from Babylon to make an article for the priest Joshua.

³⁶ It was a crown instead of the priestly turban.

³⁷ A man whose name is the Branch.

³⁸ His purpose is to show that the Levitical priesthood was a picture of the work of the Messiah in His role as High Priest.

³⁹ Yes, in Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-6; 8:1-13; 9:1-28; 10:1, 19-23.

⁴⁰ These verses clearly teach that the pattern of the Mishkan was taken from the pattern of Adonai's dwelling place in heaven!

⁴¹ It was a picture of the ministry of the true Altar of Incense in heaven!

⁴² The prayers of the saints!

⁴³ According to Hebrews 7:24-26 He forever lives to make intercession for us! He offers His own incense on our behalf.

⁴⁴ The other aspect, the ministry of the body of Messiah will be covered in another lesson.