

# Mishpachah Beit Midrash

An Introduction to the Parashat HaShavuah  
(Weekly Torah Portion)

Understanding the Torah From a Thematic Perspective

*Vayigash*  
(*And He Approached*)



By Tony Robinson

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

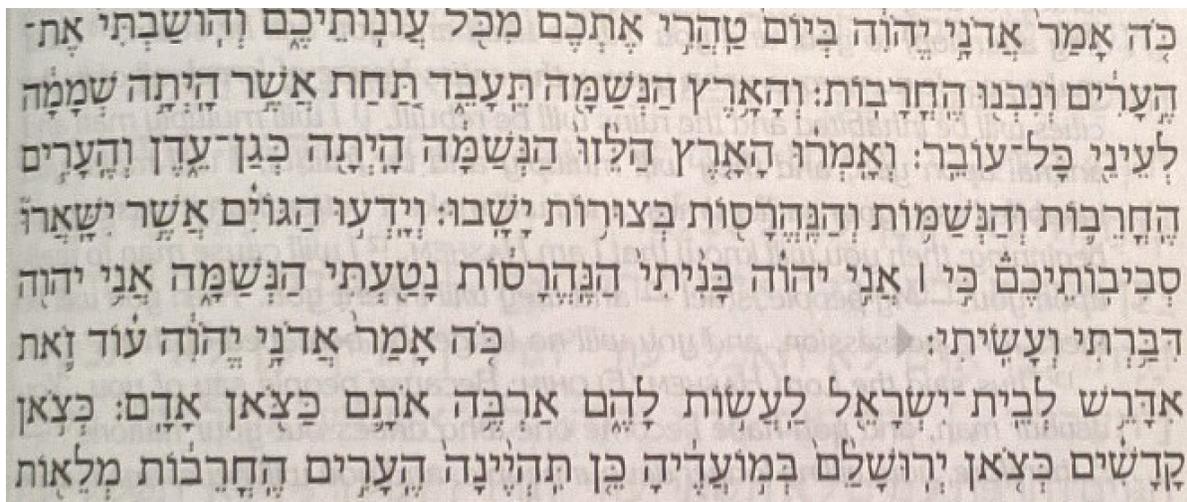
Welcome to Mishpachah Beit Midrash, the Family House of Study. Each Shabbat<sup>1</sup> we gather in our home and study the Scriptures, specifically the Torah.<sup>2</sup> It's a fun time of receiving revelation from the Ruach HaKodesh<sup>3</sup>. Everyone joins in—adults and children—as we follow the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

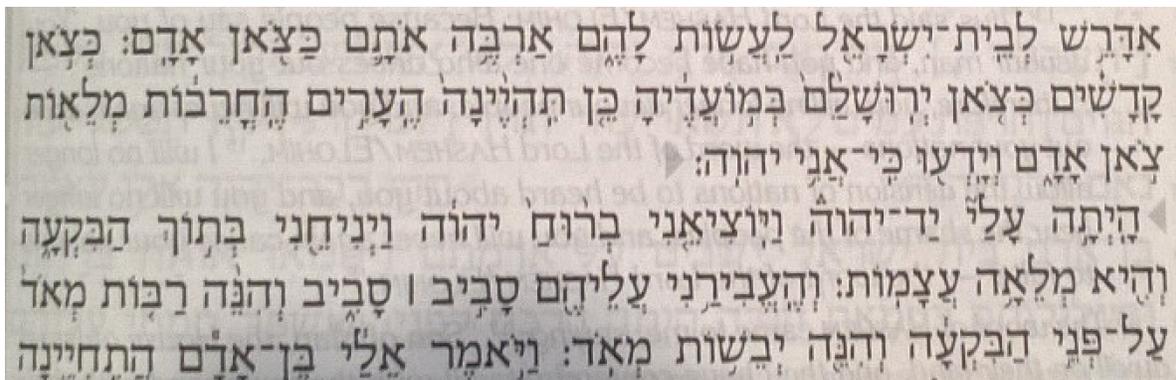
Thematic analysis of Scripture is based on the following premises. 1) Moses wrote the Torah as five *separate* books as the Ruach HaKodesh inspired him. 2) Since Adonai had him separate those words into five separate books, we surmise that each book has a unique message or theme. 3) Within each book, 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—

וַיִּגַּשׁ

## Vayigash

*(And He Approached)*

*Bereishit 44:18-47:27*

*(Genesis 44:18-47:27)*

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

- Genesis 44:18-46:7 ם
- Genesis 46:8-27 ם
- Genesis 46:28-47:27 ם

### *Understanding the Last Four Torah Portions of Bereishit (Genesis) at the Pashat Level*

[\*Genesis 44:18-47:27\*](#)

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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.*

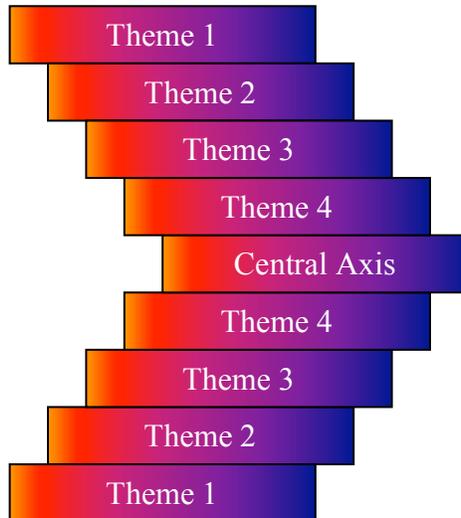
#### *Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers*

- I. Last week, we saw that Joseph had masterfully orchestrated a plan whereby his brothers would be faced with a particular dilemma. And what was that dilemma? In Parashat Vayeishev, we saw that the brothers conspired to sell Joseph into slavery, thereby acting with cruelty towards Joseph and Jacob. Now, Joseph has so arranged events that the brothers are once again faced with the same option. Will they leave Benjamin—who has obviously replaced Joseph as Jacob's most beloved son—as a slave in Egypt, turning their backs on him as they had Joseph? Or, will they act in a more noble manner?

- A. Read [Genesis 44:18-34](#). What seemed to be Judah’s primary concern about leaving Benjamin in Egypt?<sup>8</sup> Note how many times Judah stated that Benjamin’s absence would cause Jacob to die—Genesis 44:22, 29, 31a and b, and 34b!
- B. How do we know Benjamin has “taken Joseph’s place” as the favored son? Consider the following thematic connections concerning the relationship between Joseph/Jacob and Benjamin/Jacob.
- In Genesis 37:12-14, Joseph remained home with his father while the brothers went off to tend the sheep. In this week’s sidra (Torah portion), Benjamin remained with the father while the brothers went to Egypt.
  - In Genesis 37:3, it states that Jacob loved Joseph more than all of his other sons. In this week’s sidra, Judah said that Jacob “loves him [Benjamin].” Furthermore, Judah stated that Jacob’s “soul is so bound up with his [Benjamin’s] soul.”
  - In Genesis 37:3, Joseph is referred to as the “child of his old age.” In this week’s sidra, Judah stated that Benjamin was the “child of his old age.”
  - Lastly, in Genesis 37:34-36, Jacob refused to be comforted and claimed that he would die because of Joseph. In this week’s sidra, Judah stated no less than *five* times that Jacob would die if Benjamin did not return with him!
- C. As you can see, the great love Jacob had for his son Joseph is now directed towards Benjamin, both of who were sons Rachel bore Jacob in his old age. Until this point, the primary purpose of Judah’s speech has been to convince Joseph that Benjamin’s absence would cause his father’s death.
1. Read [Genesis 44:32-34](#). How has Judah’s focus suddenly changed in Genesis 44:32-34?<sup>9</sup> Based on the ill effects Benjamin’s absence would have on his father, Judah then focused his efforts on securing Benjamin’s release. What is the thematic essence of his plan?<sup>10</sup> That’s right! Judah is offering himself in Benjamin’s place, and we see that Judah is no longer thinking only of himself as he did in Genesis 37, where he suggested to sell Joseph for profit. He is totally concerned with his father. Note, he didn’t make the argument that he wanted to become Benjamin’s substitute because of his great love for Benjamin. His point was that he didn’t want his father to die. Again, Judah has obviously repented of his previous attitudes of jealousy and hatred. Unlike the case with Joseph, Judah is willing to lay down his life for the life of the son his father loves!

### *The Chiasmic Structure of Genesis 45:1-17*

- I. We have seen chiasmic structures before. Do you remember how to identify a chiasmic structure? A chiasmic structure is a pattern organized as follows. Generally, a story is divided into two halves. The themes of the first half of the literary unit are repeated in the second half of the unit in reverse order. Furthermore, the first and second halves of the story usually point us to the most important part of the story, the central axis.



### *Pattern For Chiastic Structures*

There are probably hundreds of chiastic structures in the Tanakh! It is a literary device the Holy One developed to help us understand the themes of His Eternal Word. The central axis is always very, very important. Furthermore, each theme on either side of the central axis is thematically complementary, each shedding insight on the other. Let's learn a quick way of spotting them.

A. Read [Genesis 45:4-8](#). Did it seem as if you read certain facts twice? If you didn't notice the repetition of certain facts, then read it again. See them this time? It looks like this:

Gen 45:4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I *am* Joseph your brother, **whom ye sold into Egypt.**

Gen 45:5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: **for God did send me before you to preserve life.**

Gen 45:6 For these two years *hath* the famine *been* in the land: and yet *there are* five years, in the which *there shall* neither *be* plowing nor harvest.

Gen 45:7 **And God sent me before you to preserve you** a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

Gen 45:8 **So now it was not you that sent me hither**, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

Gen 45:9 Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

Note the fact that 1) Joseph's descent into Egypt and 2) Joseph's purpose—to preserve life—are both mentioned twice working inward as in a chiastic structure. Whenever you see this pattern, there is probably a chiastic structure *lurking* under the text. The chiastic structure can be developed as follows:

- A) Genesis 45:1a—Joseph told Egyptians to leave the room
- B) Genesis 45:1b—Joseph was revealed to his brothers
- C) Genesis 45:2—Joseph wept
- D) Genesis 45:3a—Joseph asked about his father
- E) Genesis 45:3b—Brothers couldn't believe it was Joseph
- F) Genesis 45:4a—Joseph asked brothers to come close
- G) Genesis 45:4b—"I am Joseph your brother"**
- H) Genesis 45:4c-5a—Joseph said his brothers sold him to Egypt
- I) Genesis 45:5b—Joseph was sent ahead to be a provider for them
- J) Genesis 45:6—Two years of hunger have past; Five more to go.**
- I1) Genesis 45:7—Joseph was sent ahead for a great deliverance of his family
- H1) Genesis 45:8a—Joseph said the Holy One sent him there
- G1) Genesis 45:8b—Joseph was master over Pharaoh's household**
- F1) Genesis 45:9-11—Joseph requested that his father be brought close
- E1) Genesis 45:12—Joseph tried to convince them that he was Joseph
- D1) Genesis 45:13—Joseph sent a message to his father
- C1) Genesis 45:14-15—Joseph wept
- B1) Genesis 45:16—Joseph's brothers were revealed to Pharaoh
- A1) Genesis 45:17—Pharaoh told Joseph's brothers to leave Egypt (simply to return with their belongings)

B. Notice how each element of the chiasmic structure is thematically equivalent to its matching element. Level G may seem thematically unbalanced. However, the significance of equating, Joseph (your brother), with Joseph (master over Pharaoh's household) is straightforward when you remember the dreams he had. This is Joseph, the brother who had dreams that one day his brothers would bow to him because he would be master over them. The thematic connection with Joseph (master over Pharaoh's household) establishes that Joseph's dreams were right on!

C. What are we to make of the central axis? Seems rather strange that the most important lesson of this chiasmic structure is that two years of famine have past and five remain. What seems to be the most important point concerning the central axis?<sup>11</sup> In other words, the Torah seems to be emphasizing the fact that although two years of the famine have past, five more years remain. Does this chiasmic structure address any of the main elements of the central axis?<sup>12</sup> Thus, the preservation of life by providing food for five years is the important theme.

II. Speaking of the number five, have you noticed how often it has been used in the story of Joseph's reconciliation with his brothers? Consider the following:

- Genesis 43:34—And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was *five* times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him.
- Genesis 45:6—For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are *five years*, in the which there shall neither be plowing nor harvest.

- Genesis 45:11—And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are *five* years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.
- Genesis 45:22—To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and *five* changes of raiment.
- Genesis 47:2—And he took some of his brethren, even *five* men, and presented them unto Pharaoh.
- Genesis 41:34—Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the *fifth* part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years.
- Genesis 47:24—And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the *fifth* part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.
- Genesis 47:26—And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the *fifth* part; except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's.

The number five is the most important number in Joseph's plan. Remember Joseph's Egyptian name, Zaphenath-paneah, which means the Bread/Food-Man of Life. His name was prophetic of the role he fulfilled. He provided bread for the entire world, not just Egypt. Let's see how prominently the number five figures in Joseph's life.

- A. In Genesis 41:34, we learn that one-*fifth* of the produce of the seven years of plenty will be stored to provide *food* for the seven years of famine.
- B. In Genesis 43:34, Joseph provided *five* times more *food* for Benjamin than he did for his other brothers. Although this passage doesn't directly pertain to Joseph providing food to the world during the seven years of famine, note the thematic connection between *food* and the number *five*! Also note, in Genesis 43:29, Joseph blessed Benjamin by stating, may "God be *gracious* to you my son."
- C. Read [Genesis 45:11](#). Once again, we see the number five associated with Joseph providing food for his loved ones.
- D. In Genesis 45:22, Joseph gave Benjamin five changes of clothing. Hmm, interesting. Here we see Joseph giving to Benjamin and the number five.
- E. In Genesis 47:2, Joseph presented his brothers to Pharaoh. But guess what. He only presented five of them.
- F. Later, Joseph puts a one-fifth tax on the Egyptians. Wow! Here a five, there a five, everywhere a five, five.
- G. So what is the significance of the number five? Let's read a few more passages before we answer that question. Read [Genesis 42:25-28, 35; 43:18-23; 44:1 and 8](#). Last week we commented that Joseph seemed to be playing a cruel game with his brothers. But how do we explain the returned money? If his intent is revenge, why didn't he make them pay for their grain? This is yet another proof that Joseph was not trying to be cruel to his brothers because of revenge. He had one goal—to determine if his brothers had changed/repented or not. As he orchestrated events to enable himself to discern whether or not they had repented, he showered them with graciousness—he returned the money—giving them the food they needed, without cost. Considering how they treated Joseph, did they deserve to be given their food for free? Of course not. Therefore, Joseph was being very *gracious* to them. You see, grace is when you receive something good that you don't deserve. Mercy is when you don't receive the bad that you do deserve.

Chaverim, the Holy One uses the number **FIVE** to teach us about **GRACE**! If you re-read A-G above, you will notice that the number **five** is associated with acts of grace. This is why it figures so prominently in this story.

III. **Why Joseph was sent to Egypt**—Read [Genesis 45:6](#), the central axis of our chiastic structure. Note the verses immediately before and after Genesis 45:6. According to Genesis 45:5-7, what is the real reason why Adonai made Joseph viceroy over Egypt?<sup>13</sup>

- A. According to Genesis 42:2, Jacob must send his sons to Egypt to buy food so that they can **live** and not **die**. According to Genesis 43:8, Judah must take Benjamin to Egypt so they can **live** and not **die**. According to Genesis 45:7, “God sent me before you to **preserve a posterity** for you in the earth, and to save your **lives** by a great **deliverance**.”
- B. According to Genesis 43:7 and 27, what does Joseph want to know about Jacob?<sup>14</sup> According to Genesis 45:26 and 28, what does Jacob want to know about Joseph?<sup>15</sup> According to Genesis 47:25, why is Egypt so thankful to Joseph?<sup>16</sup> You see Chaverim, this is a story about **LIFE** and **DEATH**! If Joseph had not interpreted Pharaoh’s dreams and stored food during the seven years of plenty, Egypt and the rest of the world would have perished. Remember, this was a famine in the **EARTH**, not just Egypt. Therefore, we can easily conclude that the Holy One’s purpose for sending Joseph to Egypt was so that he could secure life for his family and the entire world.

IV. **Mathematics 101**—Let’s review Joseph’s course of action. During the seven years of plenty, Egypt stored one-fifth of their grain so they would have enough to survive during the seven years of famine. If you saved one fifth of your income over the next seven years, do you think your savings would be enough to sustain you during seven years without a regular income? I seriously doubt it. Yet read what the Torah states about the grain Joseph stored during those seven years—Genesis 41:48-49! I don’t know about you, but something isn’t adding up. If I saved twenty percent of my income for seven years, at the end of seven years I’d have 1 and 2/5<sup>th</sup> of my salary saved, not money like the sand of the sea in great abundance. How could the grain he stored have become so large that “he ceased counting?” Now read [Genesis 41:53-57](#). Not only did Egypt have enough bread for themselves, they were able to sell bread to the entire then known world!!! Surely, this is not simple math we’re dealing with here. In fact, as you continue to read the account of the famine, you will realize that Egypt never ran out of grain. They only ran out of means to buy the grain a few times.

- A. How can we explain this odd occurrence?<sup>17</sup> That’s right. In fact, I’d have to say that any other explanation other than one which relies upon the supernatural power of Adonai would have to be incorrect. The numbers would never work out.

IV. Read [Genesis 47:13-27](#). Please note the following consequences of the seven years of famine:

- All the money from the land of Egypt and Canaan was given to Joseph. Joseph then gave the money to Pharaoh.
- All the livestock of Egypt was sold to Joseph for food. Joseph then gave the livestock to Pharaoh.
- All the land in Egypt was sold to Joseph for food. Joseph then gave the land to Pharaoh. The land of the priests was exempt.
- Joseph resettled the entire nation of Egypt.
- Joseph obtained the people of Egypt as serfs for Pharaoh.

- The people of Egypt are thankful to Joseph for saving their lives and they willingly give their lives in service to Pharaoh.
- A. Do you see any theme that is constant throughout Joseph's actions?<sup>18</sup> That's right. At each step, Joseph takes what the people bring, and gives it to Pharaoh. He is Pharaoh's faithful servant. Furthermore, the people of Egypt happily serve Pharaoh as serfs of the state. This seems almost too good to be true. Yet, it was.

## ***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 37:15-28](#). I will list some verses from the Haftarah reading. Your job will be to relate them thematically to the Parashat HaShavuah reading.

- I. So far, we have focused on the Messianic significance of the story of Joseph's descent to Egypt. However, there is another teaching to be found within this story. Remember our axiom: The events in the lives of the Patriarchs are prophetic shadows of future events in the lives of their descendants, the greatest of which, is the Messiah. Therefore, let's see what the sidra (Torah portion) has to teach us about the nation of Israel's future.
- A. Joseph's exile into Egypt is also a picture of the exile of the Northern Kingdom of Israel into the nations of the earth. The picture is straightforward and clear. There was enmity between the Northern Kingdom or House of Israel and the Southern Kingdom or House of Judah, just as there was enmity between Joseph (a picture of the House of Israel/Joseph) and his brothers. We know that Am Yisrael eventually split into two houses—the House of **Judah** and the House of **Joseph/Ephraim**. This is an historical fact (I Kings 11-12). Now we can understand why the Torah focuses on Judah and Joseph! These two figures are pictures of the future of the nation. This is also why Judah is the one who repents to Joseph in our sidra (Torah portion). It is a picture of the eventual reunion of the House of Israel with the House of Judah.
- B. The Haftarah teaches us that it is the Messiah who will eventually reconcile the Two Houses. Furthermore, we should expect the fullness of this reunification to occur at His second advent.
- C. Isn't it amazing that Ezekiel 37 is the Haftarah reading for this week's sidra? It's obvious that the sages of Israel also saw the connection between the reconciliation of Joseph and Judah as a picture of the reconciliation of the House of Judah and the House of Joseph/Israel.

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.

## ***Understanding the Last Four Torah Portions of Bereishit (Genesis) at the Messianic Level***

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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>19</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.*

### ***Messianic Review***

- I. In Parashats Vayeishev and Miqetz, we clearly saw a prophetic picture of Yeshua's first advent. Thematically, we saw allusions to each of the following facts concerning Messiah's first advent:
- A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who would have a miraculous birth.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua as the second Adam through whom we would receive LIFE.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the Good Shepherd.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was hated by his brothers.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the Son of the King.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the only begotten Son of the Father, whom the Father loves with an infinite love.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One rejected by his brothers and hated without a cause.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was prophesied to be the future leader of His brothers.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was sent to check on the welfare of His brothers.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who sought after the Father's lost sheep.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was conspired against.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was handed over to Gentiles because his brothers didn't want to be the actual agents of his death.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was thrown into a pit/grave.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was not found in the pit/grave.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was stripped of His garments.

- A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was sold for silver.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who has a garment dipped in blood.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was a descendant of Perez, the son of Judah through Tamar.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was falsely accused of a crime he didn't commit.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who, although Divine, emptied Himself of all Divine prerogative and humbled Himself to become a human servant.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who would use the emblems of bread and wine as symbols of his death.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was incarcerated along with two other prisoners.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who would grant eternal life to one of the prisoners executed with Him.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was handed over to the Gentiles to be executed.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who would be executed by being hanged on a tree.
  - A prophecy of Messiah Yeshua, the One who was exalted to the right hand of the Father.
- A. We also saw that Joseph's separation from his brothers teaches us that Messiah Yeshua would be separated from His brothers for a long period of time. During the time of his separation from his brothers—and after his exaltation to viceroy of Egypt—the Gentiles knew Joseph as their savior! This brings us to our current sidra (Torah portion).

### *The Pit/Well/Prison as a Picture of the Grave*

- I. Last week, I presented thematic evidence to you that the Torah's picture of Joseph's descent into a pit was a picture of the death of the Messiah, whereas his ascent from a pit was a picture of the resurrection of the Messiah. Genesis 37:22-30 states that Joseph's brothers placed him into a *pit* (KJV). Later, he ascended from that pit. In Genesis 39:19-23, Joseph descended into an Egyptian dungeon, jail, or prison, depending on the translation you are reading. Genesis 41:14 states that Pharaoh's servants caused Joseph to ascend from that dungeon, jail, or prison. The Hebrew word in both stories of Joseph's descent and ascent from a pit is one and the same! It is the word *bōr*, בּוֹר, which means *pit*! In both passages, Joseph was taken out of a pit. I also thematically related these two events to the sign of the Messiah (Life, Death and the Number Three), thereby establishing the Messianic significance of Joseph's descent and ascent from those two different pits. I'd like to present more evidence that Joseph's descent and ascent from a pit, *bōr* (בּוֹר), is a picture of death, then life, i.e., resurrection!
- A. Read [Genesis 44:1-10](#). Pay particular attention to the brothers' proposal in Genesis 44:9 and Joseph's servant's restatement of the proposal in Genesis 44:10. What looks strange about these two verses?<sup>20</sup> That's right. These two verses are totally different in application. Joseph's brothers stated that the thief should die. Joseph's servant said that it should be, "according to your words, the man with whom it is found will be my slave."

Note, the brothers didn't say anything about the thief becoming a slave. They said the thief should die!

- B. Now it's tempting to just overlook this apparent error, flaw or misunderstanding. But there is a gem of Messianic wisdom here. These two verses establish the fact that in the Biblical worldview from which this story comes to us, slavery was equivalent to death! This is the reason why the Torah equates the two. It wants us to see slavery as a picture of death! Therefore, when Joseph made his descent by being cast into the prison, warden, dungeon, or pit, bōr (בֹּר) of slavery in Genesis 39:19-23, he was symbolically thrown into death! Similarly, when Joseph made his ascent by being taken from the prison, warden, dungeon, or pit, bōr (בֹּר) of slavery in Genesis 41:14, he was symbolically raised from death! This worldview is confirmed for us in Proverbs 1:12

We'll swallow them alive like the grave [the place of death], like those in good health who go into the pit [bōr (בֹּר)].

Note how Sheol, the place of *death*, is equated with the pit, the same word translated as prison, dungeon, ward, etc.!

This thematic connection helps us see the Messianic significance of Joseph's descent and ascent from the pit. It is definitely a picture of the Messiah's descent and ascent from the grave! Baruch HaShem YHVH!!!

- C. Whenever we see stories where someone should die, but they are given back their life, we know this is of Messianic significance because of the Sign of the Messiah. Based on the proposal of the brothers, what should have happened to Benjamin?<sup>21</sup> This is the sign of the Messiah and a strong reason why we know this story has Messianic significance.
- II. Read [Genesis 45:25-28](#). Notice, twice it is stated, "Joseph is alive!" In Jacob's eyes, Joseph was dead. In other words, we have yet another thematic connection between Joseph's prison experience and death. During Joseph's long stay in prison, he was dead for all intents and purposes in his father's eyes, and therefore, he was truly "resurrected" in Jacob's eyes.

### ***The Messianic Significance of the Chiastic Structure in Genesis 45:1-45:17***

- I. Earlier, we discovered a chiastic structure in Genesis 45:1-17. The central axis was Genesis 45:6—two years of famine had past and there were five more to come. Isn't this a rather peculiar central axis. It surely doesn't seem that profound. Well, let's couple that information with two other important teachings—1) Joseph as the Bread-Man of Life and 2) the number five and grace. These three teachings will present a picture of the Messiah that even the hardest skeptic would have trouble not accepting. But first, let's cover some foundational information.
- II. Genesis 37-43 teaches us about Messiah's first advent. This was the time when 1) Joseph experienced a descent in stature, 2) his brothers rejected him, 3) he figuratively died and was resurrected, and 4) he was exalted to the right hand of Pharaoh. These are pictures of 1) Yeshua's descent to the earth in the form of man, 2) His rejection by Israel, 3) His death and resurrection and 4) His exaltation to the Father's right hand. We already know that when

Messiah returns, all of Israel will accept Him. Therefore, it's not difficult to understand that Genesis 44-50 pertains to the second advent of the Messiah! That's right. The events of this week's sidra (Torah portion) are a prophetic picture of future events when Yeshua will return and be reconciled to His brothers, Israel.

A. Chronologically, when did Joseph finally reveal himself to his brothers?<sup>22</sup> Do you see any thematic correlation of the timing of Joseph's revelation to his brothers and Yeshua's future revelation to Israel?<sup>23</sup> That's right. This is no coincidence. *Furthermore, this is the prophetic significance of the **two years** of the central axis of our chiastic structure.* Messiah will reveal Himself to Israel at His second advent, after 2,000 years, just as Joseph revealed himself to his brothers after two years of famine. How do we know that the two years of famine thematically correspond to 2,000 years? Because, the Scripture uses a famine of physical bread as a picture of a famine of spiritual bread, the true, unadulterated, **Torah-based** Word of Elohim (God). Amos 8:11 states that a famine of "hearing the Words of YHVH" would one day come to the earth. It is only in this century (2,000 years after Yeshua's first advent) that the Torah has been restored to the body of Messiah as the true foundation for faith and practice. Please note the following thematic parallels:

- Just as Joseph's brothers rejected him when he was a youth, but later accepted his leadership after a long period of separation, so likewise, Israel rejected Yeshua at His first advent, but will accept His leadership after a long period of separation at His second advent.
- During the period of separation, Joseph was known to the Gentiles as a savior, but he was unknown to his brothers. He spoke the Egyptian language, had an Egyptian name, dressed like an Egyptian and looked like an Egyptian. His brothers didn't even recognize him when they were brought before him after twenty years of separation. So likewise, for the past 2,000 years, Yeshua has been known to the Gentile world as the Savior, but not known as the Savior to the Jewish world. His transformation into a Gentile has been so complete that most non-Jewish believers do not even see Him as a Torah-observant Rabbi any more. Furthermore, His Jewish brothers see Him as a false prophet to the Gentiles.
- Joseph was a Hebrew; however, during his long period of separation, he was outwardly transformed into a Gentile. So likewise, Yeshua is not known as a Torah-observant Rabbi, but as a Savior for the Gentiles who advocated the breaking of Torah (Sunday Sabbath, no more Biblical feasts, dietary restrictions, etc.).

B. Note, during the first two years of the famine, Joseph provided bread for the world. The world would have perished if it weren't for Joseph, the Bread-Man of Life. Joseph's provision of bread is simply a picture of salvation from Yeshua (as we will see below). Therefore, the Torah teaches us that just as Joseph provided bread for life for the world during the first two years of the famine (while He was separated from his brothers), so likewise, *Yeshua would provide **salvation** (hint, **Bread of Life?**) to the world during the 2,000 years he was separated from His brothers!* As you can see, the thematic parallels are right on the money!

In summary, all of these thematic parallels teach us the following: Genesis 37-43 teach us about Yeshua's first advent, but Genesis 44-50 pertain to Yeshua's second advent, when He will be accepted by His brothers. Now that we've seen the prophetic significance of the number two in the central axis of our chiastic structure, let's go on to see the significance of the number five.

III. We already know that Joseph, *the Bread-Man of Life*, is a picture of Messiah Yeshua. We have already seen the thematic connection **between preservation of life by providing bread and the number five**. See the connection—the number five and bread? Remember all the *fives* we saw earlier, all connected with acts of graciousness during the time period that Joseph was the provider of bread for the world? Can you think of any story about Yeshua that is thematically related to the concepts I've just presented?<sup>24</sup>

A. Read Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:31-46, Luke 9:2-17 and John 6:1-14. Did you notice the number of fives in this story? Please note the following:

- There were only 5 loaves of bread
- There were 5,000 men.
- Yeshua had them sit in groups of 50 and 100 (5\*20)

As you can see, the thematic parallel is obvious, exact and purposeful. Just as Joseph graciously provided bread, so likewise, Yeshua provided bread for this group of people! The number five is the most prominent number in this story. Therefore, the Messianic significance of the number *five* in the central axis of our chiastic structure teaches us that Joseph is a picture of Messiah Yeshua, who provides bread to the multitude. But wait, there's more!

B. Remember our Mathematics 101 lesson? Remember how Joseph seemed to miraculously have enough bread for *everyone in the world*, even though he only saved  $\frac{1}{5}$ <sup>th</sup> of the grain during the seven years of plenty? Do you see the connection to our story in the Gospels?<sup>25</sup> Can the connection be any clearer? Joseph, the Bread-Man of Life, is a prophetic picture of the work of Messiah Yeshua. But wait, there's more!

C. Read [John 6:26-65](#). We know that Joseph provided physical bread. But how is this a picture of the work of Messiah?<sup>26</sup> That's right. And that spiritual bread is His body. You see, Yeshua is the Bread of Life!!! Now our prophetic picture is complete. Joseph, the Bread-Man of Life, provided bread to the entire world. This is a picture of the work of Messiah Yeshua, who would provide the Bread of Life (Himself) as eternal life for the world!!! Awesome!!! But wait, there's more!

D. The sign of the Messiah is written all over the story of Joseph's provision of bread! What would have happened to the people of the world had Joseph not provided them with grain during the seven years of famine? They would all have perished. This is also why we know the story of Joseph is a prophetic picture of the work of the Messiah. He brought life to those who would otherwise have died! This is the sign of resurrection. But wait, there's more!

E. Note also, the bread that was multiplied was *barley* bread. 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** Holy Day, the Day of the Omer Wave Offering (Leviticus 23)! The offering of the barley sheaves on the day after the

first Day of Unleavened Bread (the day after the Shabbat) is a prophetic picture of the resurrection of the Messiah.

- F. We know that this picture of Messiah, providing Himself as the Bread of Life is a picture of our salvation. If we eat of that bread, we will not be touched by the second death. Do you think it's a coincidence that the number five (the number that teaches grace) is the number associated with the message of salvation through the Bread of Life? Of course not. We are saved by grace through faith. The Torah teaches us this through the story of Joseph, the Bread-Man of Life!

### *Messiah's Work*

- I. Have you ever wondered why Moses wrote Genesis 47:13-27? Doesn't it seem like a strange addition to the story? Usually, strange passages have significant Messianic importance. Let's see if we can figure this one out. We would do well to remember our prophetic timeline.

- Genesis 37-43 concerns the Messiah's first advent.
- Genesis 44-50 pertains to the Messiah's second advent.

Therefore, we should try to thematically relate this passage to events surrounding His second coming. In particular, we should relate them to events that occurred after the reconciliation of Yeshua with Am Yisrael (the people of Israel).

- II. Let's also review another important prophetic picture. Earlier, I stated that Joseph's exaltation to the right hand of Pharaoh was a picture of Yeshua's exaltation to the right hand of the Father in heaven. Well, if that's true, wouldn't it make Pharaoh a type of the Father? Well, yes and no. Pharaoh is a type of the Father in one respect, his position as the supreme ruler. Pharaoh was the king of Egypt, the superpower of the world at that time. He was the earthly king of kings. Therefore, he was a type/picture of the Father as it pertains to His kingly function. We will only be able to see the significance of Genesis 47:13-27 if we realize that Pharaoh is a picture of the Father as King of the universe, with Joseph (a picture of Yeshua) at His right hand. In fact, if we hadn't already viewed Pharaoh as a picture of the Father, we wouldn't have understood that Joseph's exaltation to Pharaoh's right hand was a picture of Yeshua's exaltation to the Father's right hand. The point? Don't let the thematic connection between Pharaoh and the Father disturb you. The Torah uses the relationships amongst men to paint the thematic picture of the Messiah. After all, the lion is a picture of both hasatan and Yeshua, right?<sup>27</sup>
- A. Notice that Joseph was able to obtain all the money of Egypt and Canaan. He was able to obtain all the animals of Egypt. He was able to obtain all the land of Egypt. Thematically, he has taken **ALL** the riches and wealth of Egypt, **EVERYTHING**. Next, notice that he gave them **ALL** to Pharaoh, everything!
- B. He was also able to convert all of the Egyptians into serfs (servants/slaves) of Pharaoh. Pretty amazing eh?
- C. Lastly, note that all of the people were thankful they were able to be serfs/slaves/servants of Pharaoh! Note Genesis 47:25!

And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

Wow! What a docile group of people. Why do you think they were so subservient?<sup>28</sup> That's right. They were simply thankful to be alive, and they knew they owed their lives to Joseph—and Pharaoh, I might add. Furthermore, notice how they appeal to the **GRACE** of their master. Also, note their promise to Pharaoh—they want to be his servants.

D. Did you notice that whenever the issue of land came up, the priests were exempted from having to give up their land. Why?<sup>29</sup>

E. All together, the following subjects are discussed in Genesis 47:13-27.

- Pharaoh owns everything.
- The people are Pharaoh's servants.
- Joseph moved people to the cities.
- A special tax on the people.
- Special stipulations for the priests.

III. Can you think of how this last series of circumstances pictures the work of Messiah Yeshua?<sup>30</sup> Remember our prophetic timeline. After Yeshua returns, He will set up the Kingdom for a 1,000-year period, after which, we will be ushered into the eternal state. Let's follow each of the themes/topics developed in Genesis 47:13-27 and show how they are thematic pictures of the Millennial Kingdom and the eternal state.

A. **Pharaoh Owns Everything**—Remember how Pharaoh eventually owned **EVERYTHING**? How did Pharaoh obtain **EVERYTHING**?<sup>31</sup> That's right. Now read [I Corinthians 15:22-28](#). Based on this passage, let's see how it is thematically equivalent to the Torah passage:

- Although Pharaoh was the supreme ruler/king, it was *Joseph who handled the most important affairs of his kingdom*. So likewise, according to I Corinthians 15:24-28, Messiah will rule the universe until a specific time. Messiah is the one who is doing all the "work," not the Father, even though He is over the Son. Joseph literally gave the entire kingdom to Pharaoh—all the money, animals, land and people! After bringing the nation of Egypt through the trial of famine, Joseph was able to give **EVERYTHING** to Pharaoh. So likewise, according to I Corinthians 15:24-28, at the set time, Messiah Yeshua will hand **EVERYTHING** over to the Father and be subject to Him! How awesome! It's all pictured prophetically in our story in Genesis!
- And what was the enemy that Joseph conquered? He conquered the enemy of death! How you may ask? Because, had it not been for his ability to interpret Pharaoh's dreams, the world of Egypt and Canaan would have certainly perished. Therefore, all of Joseph's actions were directed towards saving the people from death. This shouldn't surprise us. Our story in Genesis is filled with explicit statements that Joseph's actions were for the purpose of saving lives. Once again, we see that the theme of **Life and Death** is a major one we can use to help interpret the Torah. It just so happens that according to I Corinthians 15:24-28, death is the last enemy Yeshua also overcomes. Merely a coincidence? Lastly, note that Joseph was able to give

Pharaoh the kingdom immediately after he had saved the nation from the specter of death imposed by the famine. In other words, he turned the kingdom over after he had "defeated" death. Need I say any more?

- B. ***The People Are Pharaoh's Servants***—Read [Revelation 21:24-27](#). The people are thankful to Joseph and Pharaoh for saving their lives and pledge their lives in service to the king and his right-hand servant. This is a picture of those who enter eternal life. These are the ones who are thankful to the King and His Son who saved them from the second death. They are not concerned about owning their own money, flocks or lands. They are simply thankful to be able to serve the King, receiving His abundance of grace.
- C. ***Joseph Moved the People to the Cities***—For some reason, Joseph was concerned with moving the people from the country into the cities. Furthermore, in Genesis 47:21, we see that he was concerned with everything within the *borders* of Egypt. Now read [Revelation 21](#) and [Ezekiel 47-48](#). What is the most important subject of these passages?<sup>32</sup> Simply amazing. The themes of Genesis 47:13-27 are the same themes of the Millennium and eternal state. Note how the passages in Revelation and Ezekiel focus on the Great City, New Jerusalem, and who can go into and out of it, just as Joseph moved people into the cities.
- D. ***A Special Tax on the People***—Read [Ezekiel 45-46](#). What is the emphasis?<sup>33</sup> Once again, we see a thematic equivalence to our Torah portion. The taxation of twenty percent on the produce of the land is simply a picture of how one day, we will all return to Adonai a portion of the blessings we obtain from Him.
- E. ***Special Stipulations For the Priest***—Read [Ezekiel 44-45](#). Notice that the subject is special stipulations and instructions for the priests who serve in the Kingdom to come! In fact, Ezekiel 40-48 is all about the Millennial Kingdom. As we can see, all of the themes introduced in Genesis 47:13-27 are developed in Ezekiel 40-48! Read [Ezekiel 45:1-45](#). How is it thematically related to Genesis 47:13-27?<sup>34</sup>

In summary, Genesis 47:13-27 is a prophetic picture of the Millennial Kingdom and the eternal state. As I've stated many times before, the Torah is a prophetic book. Most people do not see most of its prophetic aspects because they haven't been taught to think thematically, which is the Holy One's way for interpreting His Eternal Word. Once we begin to think thematically, these gems of truth shine brightly before us. Remember, the doctrines of the Scriptures can be found in the narratives of the Torah. May Father YHVH continue to bless your understanding of the Torah, the Tree of Life!

### ***More Portraits of Messiah Yeshua***

- I. We have already seen a picture of the Father's love for His Son through the love of Abraham for Isaac and the love of Jacob for his son Joseph. Thematically, these two relationships teach us about the incredible love between the Father and His Son, Yeshua. We noted earlier that Jacob turned his affections toward Benjamin after he lost Joseph. The thematic connection between Benjamin and Joseph is that they were both children from Rachel, the wife Jacob loved the most. Note how Genesis 44:30 states that Jacob's soul is bound up with Benjamin's soul. Again, this teaches us of the closeness of the Father and the Son, Yeshua.

- II. Earlier, we noted how Judah was willing to give his life in exchange for Benjamin's. How is this a picture of the work of Messiah?<sup>35</sup> It is not a coincidence that it was Judah (hint, the tribe of Judah) who was willing to give his life for another. This prophetic act teaches us that Messiah, the ultimate substitute, would be from the tribe of Judah. We know that descent into a prison/pit is a Torah picture of death. Therefore, Judah's willingness to go into the pit/prison was a picture of his willingness to die for Benjamin (see Romans 5:7-8)! As you can see, once we begin to understand the Torah's prophetic language, we are inundated with pictures of the work of Messiah 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](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).

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<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> He was mostly concerned about causing the death of his father.

<sup>9</sup> He is now offering Joseph an alternative to Benjamin's continued incarceration.

<sup>10</sup> Substitution. He will take Benjamin's place.

<sup>11</sup> The numbers two and five and lack of food.

<sup>12</sup> Yes. It addresses the fact that Joseph was sent from the Holy One to provide bread/food for them for the remainder of the five years!

<sup>13</sup> So that he could save the lives of his family!

<sup>14</sup> Is he still *alive*?

<sup>15</sup> Is he still *alive*?

<sup>16</sup> Joseph's leadership secured life for the entire nation.

<sup>17</sup> One explanation could be that the Holy One multiplied the grain!

<sup>18</sup> Yes. All of his actions are directed towards service to Pharaoh.

<sup>19</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>20</sup> The servant says that the proposal will be "according to your words." However, the final solution was not according to their words.

<sup>21</sup> He should have died because the cup was found in his possession.

<sup>22</sup> After the famine had been in the earth for two years.

<sup>23</sup> Yes, just as Joseph revealed himself after two years of famine, so likewise, Yeshua is about to reveal Himself to Israel after 2000 years!

<sup>24</sup> Yes, Yeshua fed a multitude with bread!

<sup>25</sup> Yes. Yeshua multiplied the bread just as it was done for Joseph!

<sup>26</sup> Just as Joseph provided physical bread, so likewise, Yeshua provided spiritual bread!

<sup>27</sup> I Peter 5:8 states that hasatan is a lion. Whereas, Yeshua is referred to as the lion of the tribe of Judah.

<sup>28</sup> They knew that had it not been for Joseph, they would have all perished!

<sup>29</sup> The priests were a special exemption because their land was given to them directly by Pharaoh.

<sup>30</sup> Yes!!! This is a picture of the end of the age, beginning with the Millennial Kingdom, extending into the eternal state!

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<sup>31</sup> It was given to him by Joseph.

<sup>32</sup> The City, New Jerusalem, and its borders. Furthermore, the passage in Ezekiel is concerned with the borders of Eretz Yisrael (the land of Israel).

<sup>33</sup> Offerings to the Holy One.

<sup>34</sup> It speaks of the *land* inheritance of the Levite *priests*.

<sup>35</sup> Judah was willing to give up his life for another. This is a perfect picture of the work of the Messiah.