

Mishpachah Beit Midrash

An Introduction to the Parashat HaShavuah (Weekly Torah Portion)

Understanding the Torah From a Thematic Perspective

Metzora (“Leper”)



BY TONY ROBINSON

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

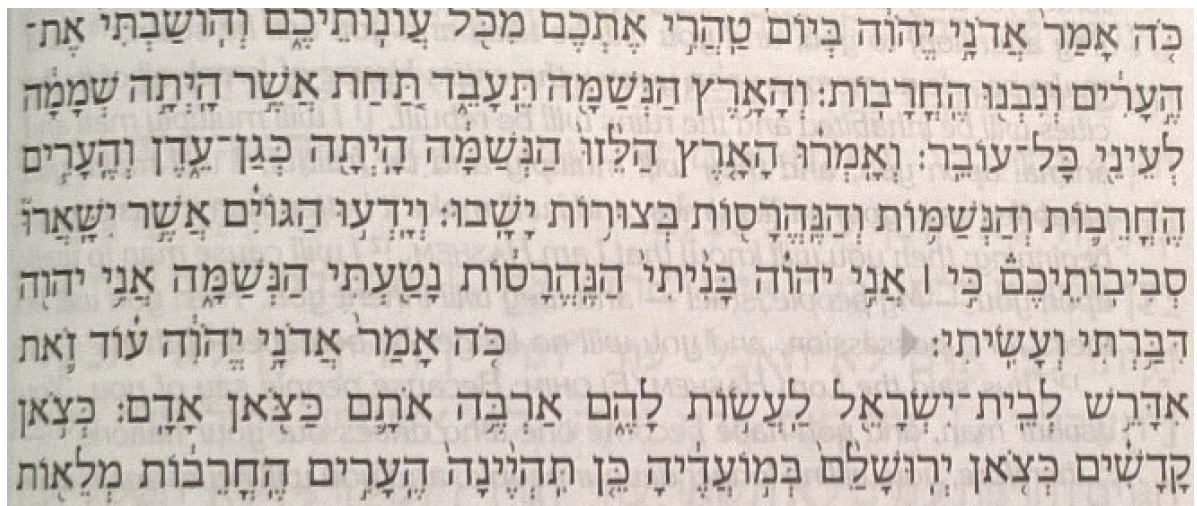
Welcome to Mishpachah Beit Midrash, the Family House of Study. Each Shabbat¹ we gather in our home and study the Scriptures, specifically the Torah.² It's a fun time of receiving revelation from the Ruach HaKodesh³. Everyone joins in—adults and children—as we follow the Parashat HaShavuah⁴ schedule. 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.

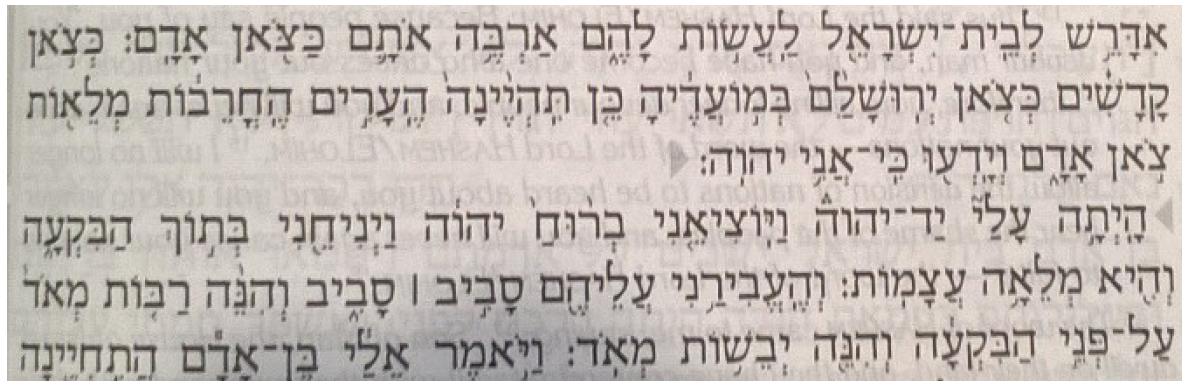
Thematic analysis of Scripture is based on the following premises. 1) Moses wrote the Torah as five *separate* books as the Ruach HaKodesh inspired him. 2) Since Adonai had him separate those words into five separate books, we surmise that each book has a unique message or theme. 3) Within each book,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

מְצוֹרָע

Metzora

(“Leper”)

Vayikra 14:1 – 15:33

(Leviticus 14:1 – 15:33)

This Week's Parshiot

1. Leviticus 14:1-20 ס
2. Leviticus 14:21-32 פ
3. Leviticus 14:33-57 פ
4. Leviticus 15:1-15 ס
5. Leviticus 15:16-18 פ
6. Leviticus 15:19-24 ס
7. Leviticus 15:25-33 פ

Tazria/Metzora Part II

[Leviticus 12-15](#)

Normally, this commentary is divided into four separate sections, each section dealing with a different aspect of the sidra (Torah portion). Due to the importance of the subject matter at hand, and because of the many misconceptions surrounding these chapters, I have changed the format in two ways.

1. I won't divide the teaching into the four sections you are accustomed to seeing. Instead, I will proceed *topically*, covering basic definitions and introducing you to

numerous concepts that will help your overall understanding of these sidras. I want to lay a foundation of understanding so that in the end, we can come to sound conclusions concerning the literal meaning of these two sidras and their Messianic significance.

2. I am going to combine Parashat Tazria and Parashat Metzora as one teaching. The first lesson will primarily concentrate on the Pashat or literal meaning of these two sidras. The second lesson will reveal their Messianic significance.

If you have recently joined Mishpachah Beit Midrash and/or are new to thematic analysis, then the next two weeks will be an excellent primer on thematic analysis. We will uncover numerous themes by comparing and contrasting Scriptures. So let's get started.

Objectives—1) *Understand that the goal of the Torah's instruction is to present a revelation of the Messiah, His mission and the necessity of His mission.* 2) *Learn The **Sign of the Messiah**, enabling you to know how to see the Messiah in the Torah.*

Introduction

Last week we studied several important doctrines presented in Leviticus 11-15. This week we will discover how those doctrines will help us understand the great work of salvation Yeshua has obtained for us. However, in order to make that connection, we need to understand that the primary purpose for the instruction of the Torah is to teach us about the work of the Messiah.

- I. Most New Covenant believers do not understand that the primary purpose of the Torah is to reveal the Messiah to us. I know this is true because of the twenty years I spent in Christianity. During that time, most of my theology (and the theology of my pastors) was based on the New Covenant Scriptures alone. Sure, we read the "Old Testament," but for the most part, doctrine was set by the New Covenant Scriptures. After all, the "Law" was done away with "in Christ," right? Except for some of the more obvious passages that refer to the work of the Messiah, like Isaiah 53, we never appealed to the "Old Testament" to prove any "New Testament" doctrines. We certainly didn't use any of the Tanakh as our **primary source** for the doctrines of the Messiah. Yet, *according to every source in the New Covenant Scriptures*, the Torah was and still is the primary source for the doctrine of the Messiah. Let's briefly prove this last assertion.

- A. Note Luke's account of Yeshua's words to the two disciples traveling on the road to Emmaus:

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

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

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

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

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

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

B. What source did the New Covenant writers use for the gospel?

¹ *Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated **to the gospel of God² which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures...*** (Romans 1:1-2)

¹ *Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. ²For indeed **the gospel was preached to us as well as to them;** but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it* (Hebrews 4:1-2).

There are many more Scriptures that clearly show we should believe Yeshua is the Messiah, not because of the testimony of the New Covenant Scriptures, but because the Torah, Prophets and Writings tell us so! The New Covenant Scriptures are essentially a commentary *confirming* the message of the Torah! However, the Torah is the foundation upon which to build!

II. Last week, I mentioned that the Torah emphasizes the theme of *Life and Death*. Furthermore, I stated that we would begin to see how prominent is the theme of *Life and Death* as we continue our studies. This theme is the main one the Torah uses to reveal to us the person and work of the Messiah. In order to prove this, let's first see how Yeshua makes the same assertion. Then, in the next section, we'll go to the Torah and prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that it teaches this concept clearly and emphatically.

A. Now, put on your thinking caps. What one word beautifully expresses both concepts of Life and Death?⁸ That's right. Resurrection, or life from the dead, is the main **sign** the Torah uses to reveal the person and work of the Messiah!

- B. Read [John 2:13-21](#). What were the Jews asking for?⁹ What sign did Yeshua say He would give them as the basis of His authority?¹⁰
- C. Read [Mark 8:27-31](#). After Peter confessed that Yeshua was the Messiah, what did Yeshua prophesy must happen?¹¹
- D. Read [Romans 1:1-4](#). According to verse four, what event declared, or authenticated that He was the Son of God, the Messiah?¹²

From Yeshua's own words we learn that His resurrection from the dead is the *sign* that verifies that He is the promised Messiah. Note that it is His *resurrection* that brings together the powerful theme of *Life and Death*! I submit to you that it is this theme of *The Resurrection* that is the *sign* of the Messiah also given throughout the Torah! If we want to see the Messiah in the Torah, we need to look for the theme of *Life from the Dead, or Resurrection*! Remember, Yeshua came to fulfill the Torah. Therefore, the Torah must substantiate everything He taught. In Yeshua's own words, the sign that proves He is the Messiah involves two concepts:

- Resurrection—This particular word captures the general theme of *Life and Death* in the sense of *Life from the Dead*!
- Three—Utilizing the Sod level of interpretation, we see that the number *Three* teaches us about the Messiah.

In the third introductory article to this Torah commentary entitled PaRDeS, you learned that there are four levels of understanding in the Scriptures. The deepest level is *Sod*, which means hidden. Sod level interpretations often involve numbers. Adonai uses numbers to teach us profound spiritual truths. The number three is the most important number in the Scriptures concerning the Messiah. With this as an introduction, let's see how the Torah teaches us about our Messiah Yeshua.

The Sign of the Messiah—The Resurrection and the Life

- I. As you read the Torah, anytime you see 1) pictures of *resurrection*, 2) pictures of renewed *life* as a result of deliverance from impending *death* and 3) pictures of victory and *renewed life* as a result of *death*, we know the Torah is about to give us a teaching concerning the Messiah. I call these themes of *The Resurrection and the Life*, and they are especially strengthened when coupled in some manner with the number *three*.

**COUPLED TOGETHER, THE THEME OF THE
RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE AND THE NUMBER
THREE CONSTITUTE**

THE SIGN OF THE MESSIAH!

- A. The first **LIVING** things (plants, grass, etc.) were created on day **THREE**! This is not strictly life from the dead; however, the principle of life coming from a state where there is no life is clear.
 - B. 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 Sabbath that occurs during the week of unleavened bread is a prophetic picture of the resurrection of the Messiah.
 - C. Jonah, who was in the belly of a great fish, should have been **dead**. But on the **THIRD** day he came forth **ALIVE**! Truly, *death* was swallowed in victory!
 - D. The Akeida (binding of Isaac) found in Genesis 22—Abraham was supposed to offer Isaac as an olah (whole burnt offering). Although Adonai prevented him from actually sacrificing Isaac on the **THIRD** day, the manner in which the Torah relates the story hints that Isaac **died** and was **RESURRECTED**. That's why Hebrews 11:17-19 records that Abraham *received Isaac from the dead through RESURRECTION figuratively!*
- II. The Two Messianic Figures, Joseph and Moses—Without a doubt, the two people who teach us the most about the Messiah through their lives are Moses and Joseph. In Genesis we saw that Joseph's life was literally overflowing with Messianic types and foreshadows, and in Exodus, we saw the same of Moses' life. How do we know for sure that these two were types of the Messiah?
- A. Joseph—While in jail ([Genesis 40](#)), Joseph interprets the dreams of two of Pharaoh's servants, the chief baker and butler. What two signs of the Messiah are evidence that this story has Messianic significance?¹³ In Joseph's interpretation of the dream, one of them is promised **life** in three days, while the other is promised **death** in three days. This is the sign that tells us Joseph's life (and this incident in particular) is a foreshadowing of the Messiah. Still not convinced? According to Isaiah 53, Yeshua was incarcerated as a criminal. How does this fact thematically relate to Joseph's life?¹⁴ How is the fact that two criminals were executed with Yeshua thematically related to Joseph's experience in Genesis 40?¹⁵ How is the fact that one criminal received life while the other received death thematically related to Yeshua's execution?¹⁶ How was the baker executed in Genesis 40?¹⁷ How are the professions of the two criminals in Genesis 40 prophetic symbols of the work of the Messiah?¹⁸ Now do you see that Joseph's life was a prophetic shadow of the work of the Messiah? And this was only one story from his life! But more importantly, remember the major clues that caused us to probe this story for Messianic significance—Life, Death and the number three!
 - B. Moses— Read [Exodus 2:1-10](#).
 - 1. What was Pharaoh's decree concerning the birth of male babies?¹⁹
 - 2. What was supposed to happen to Moses?²⁰
 - 3. How long did Moses' mother hide him?²¹
 - 4. By taking Moses out of the Nile River, what did the daughter of Pharaoh do?²²
 - 5. So we see the Torah has painted a picture of a child, Moses, who was supposed to **die**. His mother hid him for **THREE** months, then she obeyed Pharaoh's command by casting him into the water (in the basket). But Pharaoh's **death** sentence was cancelled when his daughter took Moses out of the river, and he was

given **LIFE**! This story teaches us that Moses' life will be a shadow of the Messiah.

6. Moses approached Pharaoh with three supernatural signs; 1) turning his staff into a serpent, 2) making his hand "leprous," and 3) turning water into blood. Think of the sign of the Messiah and guess how all three of these signs are thematically related?²³ Moses demonstrated the power of **LIFE over DEATH**!
- III. The Concepts of Resurrection and Life From the Dead—Numerous other concepts are used to teach us about the sign of the Messiah in the Torah. Let's look at some.
- A. Firstborn—The concept of the firstborn was given its meaning at the Passover! What great event occurred at the Passover that thematically relates the firstborn with Life and Death?²⁴ This fits the criterion of renewed **life** as a result of deliverance from impending **death**! Now, what is the Messianic understanding of the firstborn—hint, read [Colossians 1:18](#) and [Revelation 1:5](#)?²⁵ In other words, if you want to understand how the Messiah is the firstborn, then study the Torah. The Passover is an excellent place to start. We know the Passover teaches us about the work of the Messiah because the sign of the Messiah—deliverance of the firstborn from impending death to life—is our primary clue!
 - B. New Birth—Many of the Matriarchs experienced great difficulty giving birth to children. Why is this so? Using the example of Sarah, notice that she is promised a child in her old age. She was well past the age (over 90) of ability to have children. Guess how old Abram was when his name was changed and when Adonai gave him the promise concerning the birth of Isaac?²⁶ You may wonder how can we see resurrection or life from the dead in this example. Read [Romans 4:19-21](#)! Do you see how Paul saw resurrection in this story? Since Abram and Sarai were well past childbearing years, he stated that their bodies were for all intents and purposes, dead. Therefore, Isaac's birth is seen as **Life** from the **Dead**-ness of Sarai's and Abram's ability to produce seed! We know that resurrection and the number three has Messianic significance. The birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarai is a picture of the virgin birth! Thematically, what do Sarai and Miriam (Yeshua's mother) share in common?²⁷ It is only through the supernatural power of Adonai that they both received strength to conceive. To drive the point home, note 1) what Adonai said concerning the birth of Isaac and 2) what the angel stated concerning the birth of Yeshua:

Is anything too hard for the LORD (Genesis 18:14a)?

For with God nothing will be impossible (Luke 1:37).

These are what I call equivalent expressions. They both say the same thing in different words. Relating equivalent expressions that share a common theme is another way to make thematic connections. Through the usage of these equivalent expressions, it is obvious that Adonai wants us to see the revelation connecting the births of Isaac and Yeshua.

1. Rachel—It seemed that Rachel was barren for many years as her sister Leah birthed one child after another. Why was this so? Well, now we know that when

Adonai causes a child to be born to one of the Matriarchs—who has experienced barrenness—it's probably a sign of the Messiah. Guess who's born? Joseph! As we saw in Genesis, Joseph's entire life is a prophecy of the work of the Messiah! Her barrenness and Adonai's power bringing forth life from her "dead" womb is His way of telling us that the birth of Joseph is Messianic in significance.

- C. Renewed Birth—I'd like to share with you a commentary I read this year concerning the theme of *renewed life as a result of deliverance from impending death*. This is taken from a Non-Messianic Jewish Rabbi. He uses traditional Jewish sources for his information:

The story of Moshe's birth belongs to the series of biblical narratives whose subject is the "rebirth" of the main character (see my shiur on parashat Vayera in 5760, <http://www.vbm-torah.org/hparsha-5/rtf/04vayera.rtf>). In a story of "rebirth" we find a baby, young child or youth whose *life is endangered* to the point where he nearly *dies*. He is miraculously saved from that danger, and his *life is returned to him as a gift*. The Torah relates to this miracle as a sort of rebirth of the child.

The first child whose "*rebirth*" is recounted in the Torah is Yishma'el. While he wanders about with his mother Hagar in the wilderness of Be'er Sheva, their supply of water runs out. Hagar casts the child under one of the bushes and distances herself, "for she said, Let me not witness the death of the child." An angel reveals himself to her, opening her eyes to see a well of water, and thus Yishma'el's life is saved.

Yitzchak, too, is "*born again*" after being bound to the altar on Mt. Moriah. At the last moment, after Avraham has stretched out his hand to seize the knife, the angel intervenes and prevents it.

Yosef, too – after being thrown into the pit with the intention that he will die there – is "*brought back to life*," as it were, when Midianite traders pull him out of the pit and sell him as a slave.

After the story of Moshe and his "*rebirth*," we find this motif reappearing in the Prophets, in the episode of the resuscitation of the Shumanite woman's son by Elisha (II Melakhim 4) and in the salvation of Yoash from the hands of Atalia by Yehosheva, his sister (II Melakhim 11:1-3).

In each of these stories, the "*rebirth*" signifies the beginning of the child's existence on a different level: his existence is imbued with a new destiny. The nature and purpose of this destiny are always connected to the nature of the danger in which he found himself and the way in which he was saved, which themselves always hint at this difference in his future existence. In order to achieve this new level of existence or this new destiny, he had to be at death's door, and then merit the miracle of salvation. The miracle itself, and the special circumstances through which it comes about, are meant to create a change in the personality of the child, making it clear to him and to all those around him that from now on a new chapter is starting in his life, in which his destiny will be realized (emphasis mine).²⁸

Although the author doesn't understand that he is describing the sign of the Messiah, note how he understands the thematic concept very well! Also note his usage of the term *born again*! Now do you see why Yeshua was surprised that Nicodemus didn't understand the concept of being born again? If he had understood the stories like Rav Samet, then he would have seen that the Torah clearly teaches the new birth experience. Let me give you one final example of a birth that had Messianic significance.

- D. The Story of Tamar—Judah had three (hint) sons named Er, Onan, and Shelah. He gave Tamar to Er as a wife; however, Er died because of his own sins. It was the

practice then for the living brother to marry his deceased brother's wife if he died without any heirs. So Tamar was given to Onan as a wife. Onan also died an early death due to his own sins. In his mind, Judah felt that Tamar was causing the deaths of his sons, so he didn't give his youngest son, Shelah, to Tamar as a husband, fearing that he too would die. In fact, Judaism has a name for Tamar. She was an *isha katlanit*—a **deadly** (hint) woman. Tamar wanted to raise up seed in Er's name. Seeing that Judah would not give Shelah to her as a husband, she disguised herself as a harlot and had relations with Judah, who didn't know the harlot he slept with was his daughter-in-law! In [Genesis 38](#), it states that after **three** months (hint) Judah found out that Tamar was pregnant. He demanded that she be burned to **death** (hint) for being a harlot. However, she had taken his signet, cord and staff as surety when they had relations. She produced these as evidence that Judah was the father of the expectant child. Whereupon Judah realized that she had been more righteous than he. She simply wanted to raise up seed in Er's name. Since Judah was withholding his last son, she felt compelled to deceive him into impregnating her. Thus, she was not a *deadly woman*. She actually burst forth with *life* from her womb! She went on to give birth to twins named Perez and Zerah. Do you see the sign of the Messiah in this story?²⁹ So, what is the Messianic significance? Read [Matthew 1:3](#). Thus, we see that her child, Perez, is listed as an ancestor of the Messiah!!!

- IV. The Messiah and Life—We have seen that the sign of the Messiah is that He brings **life**, whether through resurrection or deliverance from impending death! The New Covenant Scriptures validate what the Torah teaches as a foundation. The New Covenant teaches that the primary **WORK** of the Messiah is to bring **life**, whether through resurrection or deliverance from impending death! Note how often Yeshua is thematically linked to **LIFE**!
- A. [John 1:4](#)—Yeshua is referred to as the source of **Life** for all mankind!
 - B. [John 3:16](#)—Eternal **Life** is found only through Yeshua!
 - C. [John 6:35](#)—Yeshua states that He is the bread of **Life**!
 - D. [John 11:25](#)—Here, Yeshua explicitly states that He is the **RESURRECTION** and the **LIFE**. Could Yeshua have been stating that He was the one prophetically portrayed in all of the examples in the Torah concerning resurrection and life?
 - E. I John 1:1—Yeshua is referred to as the **Word of Life**!
 - F. According to [Hebrews 7:16](#), the basis for Yeshua's ministry as a priest after the order of Melchizedek is His **ENDLESS LIFE**!

Purification of the Metzora and Rebirth

- I. Now that we understand the sign of the Messiah, let us return to the subject of the metzora. Last week we learned the following:
- One becomes tamei, or ritually impure, by sinning (e.g., disobeying the commandments), by coming into contact with death, or by some form of the loss of life.
 - When one is tamei they cannot come into Adonai's holy presence. That is absolutely forbidden. You can only approach Adonai when you are tahor (ritually clean).
 - Tzara'at is an affliction visited upon a person by Adonai.

- The metzora was essentially **THE WALKING, LIVING DEAD!** That's right. If we want to see what death is like, then we look to the metzora, who was totally cut off from the presence of Adonai in the Mishkan as well as all human relationships.

Parashat Metzora begins with the stages of the purification for a metzora—[Leviticus 14](#). Many have wondered about the symbolism presented in the purification rights of the metzora. The knowledge that the metzora was the **walking, living dead**, provides important information to help us gain better understanding of this ritual. What paradigm shall we use as we approach the purification procedures? The purpose of any purification procedure is to undo whatever damage has occurred. Furthermore, all sacrifices were offered to remove that which had broken the relationship between the worshiper and Adonai. Therefore, since the metzora is the **walking, living dead**, I suggest that the purification procedure is a procedure that **resurrects** them from their state of “**death**”! This is what they need. The metzora needs to be brought back to life! The metzora needs to be **born again**!

II. Understanding the Elements of the Purification Procedure—

- A. The White Color of the Metzora—In all afflictions of tzara'at, the color white is prominent. It determines whether or not a skin infliction is indeed tzara'at. Is there some reason the color white is associated with tzara'at? Read Leviticus 13:16:

Or if the raw [healthy or living] flesh changes and turns white again, he shall come to the priest (Leviticus 13:16).

In the Artscroll Chumash, the word *raw* is translated healthy. It can also be translated *live flesh*. The Hebrew words translated as *raw* flesh (רֶפָּאָה בָּשָׂר) in most English versions are easily translated as living flesh because the word translated raw is actually the Hebrew word for living/life, *chai* (חַי). In Leviticus 13:16 *live* flesh is contrasted with *white* flesh—white due to tzara'at. We know that the white flesh of tzara'at is a picture of death. Therefore, in discussions dealing with tzara'at, white is the color of death! Remember the analogy Aaron made when he saw Miriam's *white* flesh:

⁹So the anger of the LORD was aroused against them, and He departed. ¹⁰And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly *Miriam became leprous, as white as snow*. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper. ¹¹So Aaron said to Moses, “Oh, my lord! Please do not lay this sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned. ¹²Please do not let her **be as one dead**, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb (Numbers 12:9-12, emphasis mine)!”

Note that Aaron likens the metzora as to one who is **born dead**. This will be important later. It is the *lack of blood* that causes the *whiteness of death*. Therefore, we should associate the color red with life. In fact, we know this is true because Leviticus 17:11 states that *the life of the flesh is in the blood*!

- B. Read [Leviticus 14:1-7](#) concerning the cleansing of the metzora. Note that this portion of the purification procedure is not performed at the altar. This is not a sacrificial service; therefore, it has some other meaning other than substitutionary blood

atonement. In the Hebrew, the phrase translated as “running water” should literally be translated as “living water” (מֵי חַיִּים).

1. With that in mind, what word is frequently used in these verses describing the cleansing of a metzora?³⁰ What word did we say pretty much sums up the state of the metzora?³¹ How do your answers to the last two questions help support the assertion that the procedure for cleansing a metzora is a procedure that *resurrects them from death*?³²
2. What other procedure in the Torah is clearly thematically related to this purification procedure of the metzora?³³ Read [Numbers 19:1-13](#). Compare Numbers 19:1-13 with Leviticus 14:1-7. Note the following thematic connections.
 - Both procedures involve the color red (scarlet material).
 - Both procedures involve usage of cedar wood, scarlet, hyssop and crimson thread.
 - Both procedures are done to purify someone so they can draw near to Adonai’s Mishkan.
 - Both procedures involve sprinkling water on a person to purify them.

With all of these thematic connections you know that these two procedures are related. This procedure, involving the ashes of a red heifer, was performed on someone who had specifically come in contact with death! How does this fact support our assertion that the metzora was the walking, living dead?³⁴ How does sprinkling with the ashes of the red heifer support our assertion that the metzora is being reborn?³⁵ Hopefully, you see the picture the Torah is painting for us. The metzora needs to be brought back to life!

- C. Concerning the birds, do you see the sign of the Messiah?³⁶ On which days does one defiled by a corpse need to be sprinkled?³⁷ See that number three? See the theme of life and death? Do you see any signs of the birthing process—hint: what two fluids are expressed during childbirth?³⁸ Here is what I see. Although there are two birds, they should be seen as one bird representing the metzora. The bird that is slaughtered represents the metzora who died. The bird that is given life represents the re-born metzora. Note how the living bird is dipped into the blood-water mixture and then released. Doesn’t that seem similar to a child bursting forth from the womb of water and blood to experience life! What other process is pictured here regarding a commandment that we all fulfill once we’re born again?³⁹ That’s right. Did you see it? After the death of the one bird symbolizing the death of the metzora, the living bird rises from the waters of immersion in newness of life!

Purification Through the Messiah!

- I. Let’s quickly review what we’ve learned these past two weeks. Make sure you understand the flow from each bullet to the next. As you read each of these in context, you will see the big picture.

- One becomes tamei, or ritually impure, by sinning (e.g., disobeying the commandments), by coming into contact with death, or by some form of the loss of life.
- When one is tamei they cannot come into Adonai's holy presence. That is absolutely forbidden. You can only approach Adonai when you are tahor (ritually clean).
- Tzara'at is an affliction visited upon a person by Adonai.
- The metzora was essentially **THE WALKING, LIVING DEAD!** That's right. If we want to see what death is like, then we look to the metzora, who was totally cut off from the presence of Adonai in the Mishkan as well as all human relationships.
- According to the Torah, the primary work of the Messiah is to bring Life where there is Death. He is in the resurrection business!
- During purification, the metzora, who was a picture of death, is essentially re-born through resurrection.

Do you see what has been described? The Torah has used the instructions of the Metzora to teach us how sinners need to be born again! Let's see how these instructions form the basis for the New Covenant's teaching about salvation and the work of the Messiah.

- A. Can you think of a statement made by Yeshua that uses the imagery we've presented that defines a metzora—the walking, living dead?⁴⁰ Do you see the connection between a metzora and the *dead* who bury their dead? Who was Yeshua referring to as the *dead* who bury their dead?⁴¹ Yeshua uses the language of the metzora—the walking, living dead—to describe those who are physically alive, yet spiritually dead. I believe the metzora was a Torah picture of the unsaved, unregenerated person who is in need of re-birth through the blood of the Lamb! Read [Matthew 23:27](#). How is Yeshua's statement thematically related to a metzora?⁴²
 - B. Note how many passages describe the unsaved as living, yet dead—[Ephesians 2:1](#), [Ephesians 2:5](#), [Colossians 2:13](#), and [I Timothy 5:6](#). All of these passages describe the unsaved as the walking-living, yet dead! The metzora is a picture of spiritual death. Remember the death Adam and Chava (Eve) **died ON THE DAY** they transgressed! Just like the metzora who was banished from the presence of Adonai in the Mishkan, so too were Adam and Chava put out of the garden from the presence of Adonai.
- II. Now we can see that the metzora teaches us a deeper lesson concerning those who are spiritually dead. How can one who is spiritually dead be brought into right standing with Adonai? According to [John 3:16](#), one must be born again. And how is one born again? By appropriating the forgiveness of sins secured through faith in the shed blood of Yeshua the Messiah! This is the thematic connection that links the work of the Messiah to the purification process of the metzora. The metzora, who was dead, was re-born through the purification procedure involving the birds. This is a picture of the work of the Messiah who takes us from death to life through the re-birth experience of John 3:3—“Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, **unless one is born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’” The sign of the Messiah, He who delivers from death unto life is the work of the Messiah, delivering us from spiritual death unto life! Let's look at the purification process and connect it to the work of the Messiah.
- A. Earlier, we compared the purification procedure for cleansing of a metzora (Leviticus 14:1-7) with the purification procedure for someone who had touched a corpse (Numbers 19:1-13). We saw how clearly these two procedures were related. This

teaches us that the basis for purification of one who came in contact with a corpse was the same as the basis for purification of the metzora. If we can relate the purification of the one who came in contact with a corpse to the Messiah, then we'll also establish a link between the Messiah and purification of the metzora. Read [Hebrews 9:12-14](#). In verses 13-14, the efficacy of the blood of Yeshua is said to be foreshadowed not only by the blood of bulls and goats, but also by the ashes of the red heifer! These verses thematically link Yeshua's death with the sacrifice of the red cow. Therefore, Yeshua's blood is also responsible for the cleansing of every unsaved "metzora".

- B. We've already seen the sign of the Messiah in the procedure with the birds. One bird dies, whereas the other is given life. We've said this was a picture of resurrection of the metzora. Can you think of a New Covenant passage that teaches resurrection of those who are spiritually dead?⁴³
- C. The procedure with the birds also was a picture of immersion (water baptism), which is the outward symbol of what the Messiah has done within our hearts according to Romans 6:1-5.
- D. What were the two liquids associated with the cleansing of the metzora?⁴⁴ Can you think of a passage that thematically links the work of the Messiah to the blood and water of the metzora purification process?⁴⁵ What is the connection between the blood and water of the purification process and the blood and water that flowed from Yeshua?⁴⁶ Have you seen a picture of life coming from someone's side before?⁴⁷ Note the consistency of the theme, life from the side. In fact, we know that Adam was a type of Messiah. The Scriptures call him the first Adam, and Yeshua the second Adam. What picture is painted for us by the fact that Chava lived as a result of something taken from Adam's side?⁴⁸ Do you see resurrection here?⁴⁹
- E. Note that the purification procedure for cleansing of a metzora (Leviticus 14:1-7) and the purification procedure for someone who had touched a corpse (Numbers 19:1-13) both involve *sprinkling* the purification water. Now let's look at a verse from Isaiah that had always seemed puzzling. We have connected this to the blood and water that flowed from the Messiah's side. Some may still doubt that this is the significance of the blood and water that flowed from His side. Read Isaiah 52:13-15.

¹³ Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.

¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men; ¹⁵ *So shall He sprinkle many nations.* Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider (Isaiah 53:13-15, emphasis mine).

If you've studied verse fifteen before, did the language confuse you? Did you wonder what it meant by saying the Servant would *sprinkle* many nations? With your understanding of the significance of the cleansing of a metzora (he's being re-born) through sprinkling and its Messianic significance, what would you say is the proper interpretation of this verse?⁵⁰ By the way, the same Hebrew word is used for sprinkle in the purification passages (Lev 14 and Numbers 19) and in Isaiah 52:15.

- F. Earlier we saw that the white color of tzara'at was an allusion to death. Furthermore, we saw that the color red was an allusion to life. What thematic connection does this have with the red heifer?⁵¹ What is the Messianic significance of the red heifer?⁵²

The significance of the crimson wool/thread used in the purification of the metzora is possibly similar to the significance of the red heifer. It's the color red, symbolic of life through the blood. Remember, the Torah contrasted the color white and red in order that we see a contrast between **Death** and **Life**. This is the sign of the Messiah! This is not the first time that a crimson wool/thread was used as a sign. In the birth of Tamar's twin sons, Peleg and Zerah, a crimson thread was tied around the hand of Zerah as a *sign* to show that he "came out first." The harlot Rahab used a scarlet cord in her window as a *sign* to the Israelites that she and her family were to be saved alive (**LIFE**) and not destroyed (**DEATH**) along with the rest of Jericho. I think it serves as a sign of the work of the Messiah who delivers us from **Death** unto **Life**!

- G. Can you think of the thematic connection between the purification procedure of the metzora and the first Passover ceremony?⁵³ We have already learned that our salvation is based on the Passover sacrifice of Yeshua, the Lamb of God. Could the hyssop be an allusion to Passover? It's possible.
- H. [Leviticus 14:13-20](#) describes the actual sacrifices offered on behalf of the metzora. Note the ceremony where blood is placed on the ear, hand and foot. Where have we seen this before?⁵⁴ Remember, we learned that the blood ceremony was part of the dedication procedure for the priests. It would seem that there may be an allusion of some sort to the dedication of Yeshua, who offered Himself as an olah. Yeshua's ears, hands and feet were anointed with blood by the crown on His head (which surely would have caused blood to flow upon His ear) and the nails in His hands and feet. I do not know if this is significant or not, I'm just noting the thematic connection.
- III. I have stated that the purification of the metzora is a picture of the re-birth of a sinner, who was once the living dead. We have already seen many allusions to birth and life. Now consider this. Note how many passages in these last two sidras deal with the subject of birth!
 - Instructions concerning childbirth, Lev. 12:1-8.
 - Instructions concerning seminal emissions, Leviticus 15:1-18.
 - Instructions concerning the menstrual cycle, Leviticus 15:19-24.
 - Circumcision on the eighth day, Leviticus 12:1-8. Remember, we've already learned that circumcision is a picture of the new birth—[Deuteronomy 10:16](#), [Colossians 2:11](#), and [Romans 2:28-29](#)!

Surely, the sign of the Messiah is re-birth and resurrection. All of the instances of re-birth in the Torah point to the Messiah. Now do you see why Yeshua was surprised that Nicodemus didn't understand about being born again? Thematic analysis of the Scriptures helps you to see this important theme very clearly. You and I are **LIVING** testimonies of the life He freely gives. For we have been Born Again! We have passed from death (metzora, the living dead) to life!

Healing of the Metzora?

- I. Have you noticed that there is not one word in the Torah concerning how a metzora can be healed? There was no prayer, no act, no ritual, and no procedure that could heal a metzora. They were simply doomed to a life of exile. Do you realize that there are only

two recorded examples of anyone being healed of tzara'at in the Tanakh—Miriam and Na'aman? Now think for a moment. From the time of Miriam to Yeshua, we have only two instances of a metzora being healed of tzara'at! If there were instances of healing, they were few and far between. Yeshua implied such when stated that there were many metzoras in Israel during the days of Elisha who were never healed—[Luke 4:27](#). Why is this significant?

A. The sages of Israel taught that the Messiah would be able to heal the metzora! In fact, it was taught that the Messiah would be able to do these things:

- Heal a person born blind.
- Raise the dead.
- Heal a person born deaf.
- Heal a metzora.

When John the Baptist doubted whether or not Yeshua was the Messiah, he sent his disciples to Yeshua to ask Him if He was the One. Why did Yeshua tell John's disciples to tell him that "the blind see and the lame walk; the **metzoras** are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them (Luke 7:22)?"⁵⁵

B. During Yeshua's ministry, He healed many metzoras. In fact, He gave his disciples authority to heal metzoras—[Matthew 10:8](#)! Now, think for a moment. First, we know that the priests of Yeshua's day had possibly **NEVER** seen a metzora healed. Secondly, any time a metzora was healed, he had to present himself to the priest. With that in mind, why do you think the Scriptures state that many priests became obedient to the faith in [Acts 6:7](#)?⁵⁶ No wonder so many priests believed. They were able to see first-hand evidence of the sign of the Messiah who would heal the metzora!!!

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.

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 Resurrection!

⁹ A sign.

¹⁰ He would die (destroy this temple [of His body]) and be raised to life on the third day.

¹¹ He would die and be raised again on the third day.

¹² His resurrection from the dead.

¹³ The theme of Life and Death and the number three.

¹⁴ Joseph was also incarcerated as a criminal.

¹⁵ Just as Joseph was incarcerated with two criminals, so too, Yeshua was executed with two criminals.

¹⁶ During His execution, one criminal is promised eternal **LIFE**, while the other **DIES** in his sins!

¹⁷ By being hanged on a tree. Get the picture?

¹⁸ One was a baker and the other a cup bearer. These are pictures of the bread and the wine, which Yeshua used to illustrate His redemption!

¹⁹ All male babies were to be thrown to their death into the Nile River.

²⁰ He was supposed to die.

²¹ Three months.

²² She took one who was supposed to die and gave him LIFE.

²³ All three signs demonstrate that Moses had the power over life and death in his hand. He brought a dead object (the staff) to life as a serpent. Although his hand became “leprous” (a symbol of death), he was able to restore it (life). He took water (symbol of life) and turned it into blood (normally a symbol of life, but in this context it is death).

²⁴ During the Passover, the firstborn of Israel were preserved **ALIVE**, while the firstborn of Egypt **DIED**.

²⁵ The primary Messianic teaching concerning the firstborn is that the Messiah is the **FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD!**

²⁶ $99 = 3 \times 33!$

²⁷ They are both physically unable to have children. Sarai is too old and Miriam has never had relations with a man!

²⁸ Samet, Rav Elchanan. “The Double Birth of Moshe.” Yeshivat Har Etzion Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash, 2002. <http://etzion.org.il/en/double-birth-moshe>.

²⁹ Yes. Judah pronounced a death sentence upon her for harlotry. However, his death sentence was commuted and she was able to obtain life when she proved that she had not played the harlot, but had simply done what she felt compelled to do in order to ensure that Er’s name was preserved through his seed. This is renewed life as a result of deliverance from impending death. It is the sign of the Messiah and it is strengthened by the number three (three sons and it was three months after becoming pregnant that Judah tried to have her burned)!

³⁰ Live or living.

³¹ Death.

³² We have stated that the metzora is the living dead. They need to be resurrected or born again. Therefore, the purification procedure for a metzora should focus on the new **LIFE** to be given to the metzora. The repeated usage of the words **live** or **living** during the purification process supports the earlier assertions concerning resurrection!

³³ The purification (ashes of the red heifer procedure) of one who has touched a corpse (Numbers 19)!

³⁴ This is obvious. Both involve the dead.

³⁵ The purification procedure for contact with death should in some way reverse that process by imparting life. This is thematically related to the metzora who needs to be brought back from death to life through re-birth.

³⁶ Yes, one dies and one is given life.

³⁷ Days **THREE** and seven.

³⁸ Yes. During childbirth blood and water flow forth!

³⁹ Baptism.

⁴⁰ Let the dead bury their dead—Matthew 8:22.

⁴¹ The unsaved are said to be the dead.

⁴² The Pharisee's are likened unto whitewashed tombs! Their whitewashed exterior is thematically related to the white color of the metzora! Their inner state of being full of dead men's bones is thematically related to the state of death of the metzora!

⁴³ Yes. Romans 6:1-5 states that we died with the Messiah and have been risen with Him—resurrection, the sign of the Messiah.

⁴⁴ Blood and water.

⁴⁵ Yes. John 19:34 states that when a soldier pierced Yeshua's side, blood and water came out!

⁴⁶ The blood and water were sprinkled on the metzora to purify him, thus giving him life. It is the blood and water that flowed from Yeshua's side that purifies us, giving us eternal life!

⁴⁷ Sure, Chava (Eve) was given life as a result of the rib that was taken from Adam's SIDE!

⁴⁸ Just as Adam's wife, Chava, received life because of the rib taken from Adam's side, so too, Yeshua's bride receives life from the blood and water that flowed from His side! Each believer is born again based on the sprinkling of blood and water that flowed from His side, just as the metzora was given re-birth through the sprinkling of the blood and water of purification.

⁴⁹ In Scripture, sleep is a euphemism for death. Chava was given life when Adam slept. This teaches us that the bride of Messiah will be given life (eternal life by being born again) through the death of the Messiah!

⁵⁰ I would say that it is a Messianic prophecy that the Messiah would bring salvation to the nations, giving them new birth (born again) through the sprinkling of the blood and water that flowed from His side.

⁵¹ It informs us as to why the heifer had to be red. It was red because it symbolized **LIFE** through its color! And it is LIFE that was being restored to anyone who came in contact with a corpse.

⁵² Yeshua is our red heifer offering, sacrificed **OUTSIDE** the camp just as the red heifer was. The color red, an allusion to LIFE that flows in the blood, is the perfect picture of Yeshua's purpose. He is THE SOURCE OF LIFE! The heifer had to be completely red. Yeshua is LIFE!

⁵³ Hyssop was first used to apply the blood of the PASSOVER LAMB to the doorposts of the Israelites.

⁵⁴ This is similar to the procedure for dedication of the priests during the seven-day inauguration ceremony.

⁵⁵ Because these are all signs of the Messiah!

⁵⁶ All of a sudden, beginning with Yeshua's ministry, an untold large number of people were suddenly requesting the purification procedure for cleansing of a metzora! And guess whose name was mentioned each time as the source of healing? Yeshua!