

THE LIGHTHOUSE FELLOWSHIP

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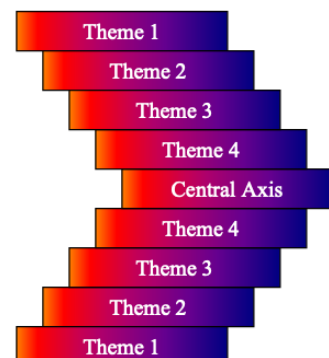
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Digging into the Torah

The Final Days of Jacob and Joseph

I. Read Genesis 47:28-50:26. Compare the first four verses of this passage to the last three verses. Do you see the connection between these two passages? If so, then 1) how are they related and 2) what does the fact that they appear at the beginning and ending of this week's sidra suggest to you? ⚡ That's right. Remember, 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.

I am convinced that chiasmic structures are one of the main thematic tools used to help us understand the thematic flow of the Scriptures. In fact, most of the stories of the Tanakh move from one chiasmic structure to another. Furthermore, many smaller chiasmic structures are "nested" within larger ones that span over two, three or more books! This week, we will rely upon the following chiasmic structure to guide us in our analysis. You may want to try your hand at this. See if you can decipher the chiasmic structure found in this week's sidra.



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- A) Genesis 47:28-31—Before dying, Jacob requested that his bones be taken up from Egypt
- B) Genesis 48:1-6—Perceived Jacob was ill; Joseph and his sons appeared before Jacob; Jacob commanded his sons
- C) Genesis 48:7—Rachel was buried on the road to Ephrath
- D) Genesis 48:8-20—Jacob "saw" Ephraim and Manasseh; the eulogy concerning Joseph; Manasseh and Ephraim to become a multitude
- E) Genesis 48:21-22—Jacob about to die; talked of securing land of the Amorites
- F) Genesis 49:1-2—Prophecy of the future
- G) Genesis 49:3-4—Reuven
- H) Genesis 49:5-7—Simeon and Levi to be dispersed/separated/scattered among his brothers (within Israel)
- I) Genesis 49:8-12—Blessings of leadership to Judah
- J) Genesis 49:13—Zebulun
- K) Genesis 49:14-15—Issachar, impoverished
- L) Genesis 49:16-17—Dan described in warfare (causing the rider to fall backwards)
- M) Genesis 49:18—I have waited for Thy Salvation O YHVH!**
- L') Genesis 49:19—Gad described in warfare (at first overcome, but later, he overcomes his enemy)
- K') Genesis 49:20—Asher, abundance
- J') Genesis 49:21—Naphtali
- I') Genesis 49:22-25—Blessings of fruitfulness to Joseph
- H') Genesis 49:26—Joseph was exiled/separated from his brothers
- G') Genesis 49:27—Benjamin
- F') Genesis 49:28—Prophetic blessing
- E') Genesis 49:29-33—Jacob was about to die; talked of securing the land (cave of Machpelah)
- D') Genesis 50:1-11—Canaanites saw their mourning; Jacob was eulogized; It was an imposing company (large multitude)
- C') Genesis 50:12-14—Jacob was buried in Machpelah
- B') Genesis 50:15-21—Perceived Jacob was dead; Jacob's other son's appeared before Joseph with "command" from Jacob
- A') Genesis 50:22-26— Before dying, Joseph requested that his bones be taken up from Egypt

A. Do you know how points G – K are thematically related?⁹ Do you know how points L –J' are thematically related? ¹⁰ Finally, do you see how points I' – G' are thematically related?¹¹ As you can see, this is a highly structured text. It is not haphazard in the least!

B. Note how almost every theme in the first half of the structure is thematically connected to the identical theme in the second half of the structure! There were a couple of themes I could not decipher, so I just

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listed the tribe. But be assured, they are there. I just couldn't see the connection this time.

C. Note how points A – E (Genesis 47:28-48:22) and E' – A' (Genesis 49:29-50:26) both deal with the last words of the dying and their burial.

Connecting the Torah with the NT

As I've stated before, the prophecies of the Torah (which are often hidden within the narratives) are only shadows of the realities. Therefore, they will be more "obscure" than the truth they point to. This is why you need to understand how to analyze the scriptures thematically. It is the theme of the prophecy that will help you see its Messianic significance. In other words, even though the Torah's shadows, pictures and allusions can be somewhat obscure and not as detailed, thematically, they will foreshadow the reality perfectly.

II. Earlier, we noted that the central axis was obviously Messianic in scope. In fact, our chiastic structure contains many allusions that are clearly Messianic! Let us therefore examine the following portions of our chiastic structure—I, L, M and H'.

Chiastic Structure, Level I

I. Level I mainly concerns the blessings given to Judah. Read Genesis 49:8-12. We already know that Judah inherited the blessing of leadership, but the prophecy goes further.

- A. Note the reference to warfare. What thematic connection to the Messiah can you make that shares the theme of warfare—hint, think of the earliest chapters of Genesis?³² Based on Genesis 3:14-15, we know that the salvation of the Messiah will involve warfare against hasatan in some manner. Could the references to Judah's hand being on his enemy's neck be an allusion to the Messiah's victory over His enemies? Let's dig further.
- B. Note how Judah is referred to as an awesome lion, Genesis 49:9. How is this thematically connected to the Messiah? ³³ So, who is the lion

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Jacob referred to in Genesis

49:9? It is obviously Jesus. In other words, Jacob's prophecy pertained not only to Judah, not only to his descendants (the tribe of Judah), but to Messiah Jesus Himself! He is the ultimate fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy. But wait, there's more!

- c. Read Genesis 49:10. This is a clear Messianic prophecy that the Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah—the scepter will not depart from Judah. And what is the meaning of the phrase, "until Shiloh comes?" Let me quote from the Artscroll Chumash:, page 279:

- a. The Midrash explains that the word Shiloh is a composite of the words **Al yiv** , [meaning] a gift to him, a reference to the King Messiah, to whom all nations will bring gifts.

Can you make a thematic connection to a New Covenant passage that captures the same thought? ³⁵ That's right. In Matthew 2:1-12, we can read how the wise men brought gifts to Him who was born King of the Jews! Isn't that amazing! The fact that wise men from the nations brought gifts to the Messiah is taught prophetically in the word Shiloh. What's even more amazing is how the Rabbis' interpretation lines up exactly with the historical account of Jesus's birth! I quoted from the Chumash because I wanted you to see how much wisdom the Rabbis are able to glean from just one word. The New Covenant Scriptures verify their understanding.

D. Read Genesis 49:11. Do you understand the Messianic significance of this verse? If you haven't guessed it, read Zechariah 9:9 and Isaiah 63:3. Have you guessed it now?³⁶ As you can see, the reference to the donkey in Genesis 49:11 is actually a prophecy of the first advent of the Messiah, who is from the tribe of Judah. He approached the city riding on a donkey. The reference to His garments being washed in blood is a prophecy of the day of judgment when Jesus will return to render judgment upon His enemies. The thematic

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connections—from the writings of the prophets and the New Covenant Scriptures—to the words donkey, garment, blood and wine—used in the Torah portion— clearly demonstrate that Jacob's prophecy was Messianic in scope and not limited to Judah or his earthly descendants.

Chiastic Structure, Level L

- I. Earlier, we saw how the Rabbis interpreted the prophecy of Genesis 49:16-17 as referring to Samson. In the previous section, we saw that Messianic prophecy was clearly thematically connected to the theme of warfare. Now, here's a question. How is the prophecy of Dan thematically connected to the theme of warfare and the Messiah?³⁷ You see that? If we have made the correct connections, then we should expect to see some Messianic significance with respect to the tribe of Dan, possibly through Samson. Before looking to Samson, let's correctly define the Torah's foundational definition of salvation.
- II. When we, as Westerner's, speak of salvation, we generally think of John 3:16. Furthermore, to the Western mind, salvation has the connotation of being saved from our sins so that we can go to heaven one day.³⁸ Our concept of salvation is more intangible, ethereal and other worldly. The Hebraic view (and the scriptural view) of salvation is totally at odds with our current Western mindset. I will quote to you from Marvin Wilson's book, *Our Father Abraham*:
The Hebrew verb *yasha* means "to save" or "to deliver," and the noun *Yeshua*, "salvation," derives from it. In the Hebrew Bible, this verb is not used in the sense of "escape to heaven." Rather, a careful study of its many occurrences reveals that the main idea is "to liberate," "to deliver from evil," or "to free from oppression."
- III. In most instances, salvation was wrought when Father YHVH defeated Israel's enemies, either directly or through human agents. Here are two perfect examples from the book of I Samuel.

"And Jonathan spoke good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and

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because his works have been to thee-ward very good: For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause (I Samuel 19:4-5, emphasis mine)?" And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation (I Samuel 2:1, emphasis mine).

In the first example, Biblical salvation was brought when David killed Goliath. In the second example, salvation was brought when Hannah was able to conceive. This enabled her to rise above Elchanah's other wife whom had been her constant antagonist, reminding her of her barrenness. My point? If we want to understand what is salvation, we need to look to the examples of salvation recorded in the Scriptures. If we want to understand how the Messiah has brought us salvation, shouldn't we look to the plethora of examples of salvation given throughout the Tanakh? Should it surprise us that the greatest pictures of the Messiah would be found in those stories depicting Israel's (the people of Israel) deliverance from earthly foes? Should we not look at the examples where people are delivered from death or harm so that we can get a clear picture of the Messiah, the greatest deliverer? Of course we should, if we understand the Scriptural definition of salvation—deliverance from your enemies! In fact, every judge in the book of Judges is a clear type of the Messiah. We can clearly see (through thematic analysis) pictures of the Messiah's first and second advent through the stories of the judges. With this understanding, let's see how the judge, Samson, will teach us about the work of the Messiah.

- A. Read Judges 13:2-7. Unless you have a Tanakh, you won't know that these verses are a Parsha P'tuchah. This means that this Parsha has its own unique theme. As you read the passage, did it seem as if you read certain facts twice? By now, you should know where I'm going. This time, instead of a chiasmic structure, the themes of the first half of the Parsha are repeated in the second half in the same order as the first half. Furthermore, there is no central axis. It is simply a parallelism. However, just as in chiasmic structures, we should

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compare and contrast the themes that are linked through the structure. It looks like this:

- A) Judges 13:2—The description of a barren woman
- B) Judges 13:3a—Appearance of an angel
- C) Judges 13:3b—Promise of a son
- D) Judges 13:4-5a—Stipulations of the Nazirite vow
- E) Judges 13:5b—He will save Israel
- A) Judges 13:6a—Description of a man and woman
- B) Judges 13:6b—Appearance of an angel
- C) Judges 13:7a—Promise of a son
- D) Judges 13:7b—The Nazirite vow
- E) Judges 13:7c—His death

Although chiasmic structures and parallel structures may seem boring, they often pay huge dividends, as in this case. Did you notice how each theme of the structure was essentially a mirror image of its counterpart...except in E)? And what is the message we are to glean by thematically connecting E to E'? How about this:

**The promised son (whom we know to be Samson) will
Save Israel through His Death!!!**

Do you realize the Messianic significance of this connection?⁴⁰ Absolutely amazing! Do you know how many people (including myself) have read these few verses and never realized their true message? This is the reason why we all must continue to grow in our thematic analysis skills, so that such gems will not go unnoticed. After all, the Holy One put them here for our benefit. This thematic teaching at the beginning of the story of Samson's life is a prophecy of how he would deliver Israel through his death. But it's much more. I invite you to see.

B. Study these few verses carefully. Can you think of any other people in the scriptures thematically related to Samson through the unusual circumstances of their births?⁴¹ Did you realize that Samuel, Samson and John the Baptist were all Nazirites? Did you realize that the mothers of Samuel, Samson and John the Baptist were all barren? Now,

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how do they differ? Well, Samuel and John the Baptist were priests, but Samson wasn't. Let's look at this further.

C. Since John the Baptist and Samuel are the more closely thematically related of the three, let's see what their connection teaches us. Why does the Torah thematically link Samuel and John the Baptist?

1. Read I Samuel 7:1-8. These verses record Samuel's first message to the people as a priest and prophet—his first sermon. Compare them to John the Baptist's first recorded message found in Matthew 3:1-12. How are they thematically related? ⁴² See the connection?
2. Now read I Samuel 16:1-11 and compare it to Matthew 3:13-17 and John 1:29-34. How are these passages thematically related?

D. Now we see how Samuel and John the Baptist are thematically related. They both identified the future king of Israel! You see? They were both sent to reveal the Messiah to us. Samuel revealed David, a type of Messiah, and John the Baptist revealed Jesus the Messiah!

E. Now the question is why is Samson thematically related to Samuel and John the Baptist? It is for the same reason, because Samson too is going to reveal the Messiah to us! Samuel revealed the picture of the Messiah by pointing us to David. John the Baptist revealed the Messiah to us by literally pointing Him out to us. However, Samson is going to reveal the Messiah to us by using his life to sketch a picture of the Messiah. I do not have enough time to show you all of the ways Samson is a picture of the Messiah in this lesson, so I will concentrate on just a couple of revelations.

III. What was one of the main ways God repeatedly used Samson?⁴⁴

Thematically, Samson was used by God as a warrior to defend Israel (the people of Israel) from their enemies. Let's go back to the garden.

Remember the promise God made to Adam and Chava (Eve) concerning her seed? In Genesis 3:14-15 God promised them that the seed of the woman would one day crush hasatan's head. Thus, we see that our

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redemption through Jesus the Messiah will involve warfare against hasatan. In fact, we know that this aspect of warfare has been present throughout the covenants God made with the Patriarchs and Israel. In Genesis 22:17, God promises to Abraham that his descendants will possess the gate of their enemies. We've already seen that the story of deliverance from Egyptian bondage under Pharaoh was actually a picture of the deliverance of the sinner from the bondage of sin under hasatan (Satan). Just as Israel were totally helpless to deliver themselves from Egypt, so too are we totally helpless to deliver ourselves from the bondage of sin! Just as God sent a redeemer (Moses) to rescue Israel from Egyptian bondage, so too did He send Jesus to deliver us from the bondage of sin (Romans 5-9)!

A. With that as a background, read Judges 16:23-31. What signs of the Messiah do you see? Remember our working definition—Anytime one 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 [or 30, 300, 3,000]. Do you see any?⁴⁵ In the most general terms, what is this story describing?⁴⁶ The most important phrase that thematically connects this episode of warfare to the Messiah is Judges 16:30b—“So the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life.” How so? Read Colossians 2:15. Here we see that Jesus won his greatest battle against hasatan and his minions through His death! In fact, note how Judges 16:30b is emphatic that Samson killed more in his death than in his life!!! Chaverim, this is a picture of how Jesus's greatest victory occurred through His death! Although Samson had destroyed many of Israel's enemies during his lifetime, his greatest victory came as a result of his death. So likewise, although Jesus destroyed many of the works of hasatan (sickness, etc.) during His life, it was through His DEATH that He won the greatest victory over hasatan and secured eternal LIFE for us!!! The story of Samson's final

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battle is how the Holy One teaches us that Messiah Jesus will obtain his greatest victory over the enemy of mankind through His death. This thematic connection is best pictured in the following verse.

¹⁴ Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and release those [us] who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Hebrews 2:14-15, emphasis mine)

This verse clearly shows two things. First, Satan was defeated through Jesus's death—just as Samson's greatest victory came through his death. Secondly it teaches that we were freed from fear through Jesus's death, just as Israel were freed from fear of the Philistines through the death of Samson!

B. Lastly, note the following picture. When Samson pushed the two pillars, what motion did he make with his hands and what was the prophetic significance? ⁴⁷

IV. Read Judges 15:1-13. Notice the following facts:

- The Philistines are ruling over Israel.
- The men of Judah are concerned that Samson may cause the Philistines to attack them.
- The men of Judah arrest Samson.
- The men of Judah hand Samson over to the Philistines.

Knowing that Samson's life will teach us about Jesus, we should immediately make the following thematic connections—listed to correspond to the bullets above.

- The Romans ruled over Israel during Jesus's lifetime.
- According to the Pharisees, John 11:48 states the following; "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.
- The men of Judah arrested Jesus. Furthermore, his betrayer was named Judah!
- The men of Judah handed Jesus over to the Romans.

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Chaverim! The story of Samson's arrest and transfer to the Philistines is the story of Jesus's arrest and transfer to the Romans by the Jewish nation. Is it a coincidence that it was the tribe of Judah that handed Samson over to the Philistines? Is it a coincidence that Joseph was handed over to the Egyptians by his brothers? Is it a coincidence that Moses fled for his life, fearing that one of his own brothers had informed the Egyptians concerning his deed? Is it a coincidence that David had to flee from his brothers and actually live with the Philistines for a period of time? What do Joseph, Moses and David have in common? They are all types of Messiah Jesus. Then obviously, we must see that Samson is a type of the Messiah also. He was a judge, a deliverer who brought Scriptural salvation, thus teaching us about the ultimate deliverer, Jesus, and His great work of salvation.

Chiastic Structure, Level M

Now that we know the correct definition of salvation, we can easily see that Jacob is prophetically calling out for the Salvation of YHVH. His Name is Jesus (Salvation).

Chiastic Structure, Level H'

I. The theme of Life and DEATH (Resurrection) is the main theme the Torah uses to reveal to us the person and work of the Messiah. In order to see this, let's first understand the ministry roles Jesus had to fulfill in order to bring about our great salvation.

A. What three leadership roles will the Messiah ultimately fulfill and when? ⁴⁸ What role is Jesus fulfilling now? ⁴⁹ Read Genesis 49:26. Knowing that Joseph is a type of Messiah Jesus, and based on how the Torah states that he was a "Nazirite," how is Jesus a "Nazirite?"

B. Prophetically, we know that the 20-year period of Joseph's separation from his brothers corresponds to the time period between his descent into Egypt as a slave (a picture of his death and Messiah's first advent when He was rejected) and his exaltation to the right hand of Pharaoh (a picture of Messiah's exaltation to the Father's right hand and the second advent). Therefore, Joseph's 20-year period of separation corresponds exactly to Jesus's 2,000-year separation from Israel!

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C. Remember, the Nazirite vow enabled the average Israelite to attain a degree of holiness equivalent to the High Priest's. Thus, the Nazirite was thematically connected to the High Priest! The purpose of the vow was so that the individual could draw closer to God during a period of separation. By calling Joseph a nezir, the Torah has obviously connected him to the Nazirite, who took a vow of separation. Furthermore, we can understand the Messianic significance of Joseph's nezir status. Joseph was a nezir during his 20-year separation from his brothers. Remember, the Nazirite was someone most closely thematically related to the High Priest. Therefore, Joseph's "Nazirite" or nezir status was a prophecy of the fact that Messiah Jesus would be a High Priest during His period of separation from His brothers (the past 2,000 years)! The fact that 1) Joseph was referred to using the language of the Nazirite and 2) the Nazirite vow is used to teach us about the High Priestly ministry of the Messiah, shows us that His separation from his brothers was prophetic of the Messiah's separation from His brothers during His period of ministry as a High Priest!

II. Earlier, we clearly saw allusions to Messiah Jesus through the prophecies/blessings given to the sons of Jacob. This is one form of prophecy. But remember the primary axiomatic truth we've learned from the Torah—the lives of the Patriarchs are prophetic shadows of future events that will occur in the lives of their descendants, especially the Messiah? We've seen how this worked with Samson. Can we find more? You bet!

A. Read I Kings 1:32-40, a story describing Solomon's anointing as king. Did you see it? There were two specific Messianic pictures/acts in this passage. Did you see them?

B. Read I Kings 1:38 and Luke 19:30-38. As you can see, Solomon's trip on David's mule during his inauguration as the new king is a prophetic picture of how Messiah Jesus would ride into the city on a donkey to cheers and exultation from the people. It is a prophetic act. It is clearly thematically connected to Jesus.

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C. Read I Kings 1:40 and Luke 19:39-40. Did you see it? Jesus's reference to the "rocks crying out" is a definite allusion to I Kings 1:40! Could it be any clearer? Jesus is obviously alluding to Solomon's inauguration so that we can understand his Messiahship. He is King Messiah and He's pointing us to this truth in the Tanakh. It's as if He's saying, "If you want to see where the scriptures testify of my life, mission and ministry, then look to the story of the inauguration of King Solomon!" As we state at the end of each book of the Torah