



Understanding the Parsha

Devarim Deuteronomy 32:1-52

Parashat HaShavuah

הַאֲזִינוּ

Devarim (Deuteronomy)

32:1-52

Ha'azinu
(Give ear)

We will Learn how to

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

The Overall Literary Structure of Shira Ha'azinu

This week's sidra (Torah portion) is composed of a song (Shira[Shira is Hebrew for song.] Ha'azinu) given to Moses. Before we look closer at this song thematically, let's look at its literary structure. Devarim 32:1-43, which contains Shira Ha'azinu, is written with two phrases on each line of the Torah scroll, each phrase separated by a Parsha Stumah. It would look similar to this.

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We already know that each Parsha contains its own thematic message; so, we should expect that each phrase contains a thematic message. With this understanding, let's look closer at Shira Ha'azinu.

Please read Judges 2:8-18. This is part of a test. I'll explain the importance later. For now, make a mental note of which thematic connections you can make to this passage.

A General Outline of Shira Ha'azinu

Thematic analysis demands that we learn to see the theme or general topic of a passage. Let's do this for Shira Ha'azinu. As you go through the song, see if you can figure out when the theme/topic changes. Let's use this outline below. You may see other themes/topics besides these. That's good, that means you are getting an eye for thematic analysis. **Fill in the spaces to complete our outline:**

Read Devarim 32:1-2 Introduction.

Read Devarim 32:3-4 Greatness of the H O.
Holy One

Read Devarim 32:5-6 Corruption and lack of understanding of A Y.
Am Yisrael

Read Devarim 32:7-9 A call to r our history.
remember

Read Devarim 32:10-14 Adonai's C for Am Yisrael, bringing them from nothing to greatness.
care

Read Devarim 32:15-18 Am Yisrael's r against the Holy One.
rebellion

Read Devarim 32:19-21 Adonai's response to Am Yisrael's r.
rebellion

Read Devarim 32:22-26 The Holy One's p of Am Yisrael.
punishment

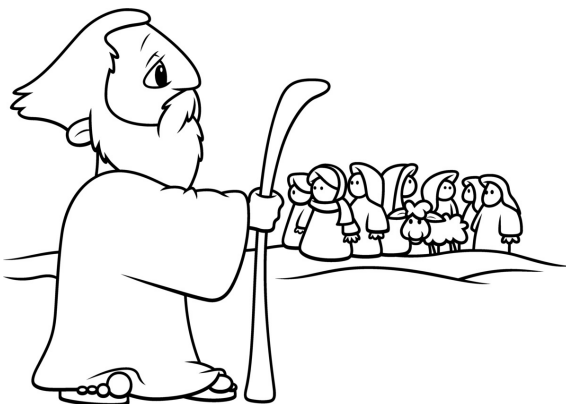
Read Devarim 32:27-31 The false notions of Am Yisrael's e concerning their punishment.
enemies

Read Devarim 32:32-34 Source of Am Yisrael's S.
suffering

Read Devarim 32:35-39 Adonai's measured r.
response

Read Devarim 32:40-43 P of Am Yisrael's enemies.
Punishment

As you can see, the song follows a definite thematic flow. We can generalize even more. The basic flow of this song is sin, judgment and deliverance. Before going on, let's look that this song is thematically connected to last week's sidra (Torah portion).



Look at another passage of Scripture in the Torah thematically related to Shira Ha'azinu, read Devarim 31:14-30

The last portion of Parashat Vayeilekh is definitely thematically related to Shira Ha'azinu. How many thematic connections do you see between these two passages?

Both passages speak of Am Yisrael going after S.
strange

g. Both passages take place in E Y.
gods Eretz Yisrael

(the land of Israel). Both passages speak of Am Yisrael's r rebellion against the Holy One.

Both passages speak of Adonai's burning a anger. Both passages speak of Adonai h hiding

His face from Am Yisrael. Both passages speak of the e evil that will be visited upon Am Yisrael.

Both passages speak of Am Yisrael growing f fat.

Wow! As you can see, these passages have a lot of connections. Of course, we shouldn't be surprised that they are connected because Adonai commanded Moses to write Shira Ha'azinu (see Devarim 31:19, 22 and 30) **exactly** because this order of events would happen! So then we can know that Devarim 31:14-30 and Shira Ha'azinu are really different accounts of the same events.

Another way we can see the connections between Shira Ha'azinu and Devarim 31:14-30 is by using a Table. Let's look at the thematic flow of Devarim 31:14-30 in Table I and Shira Ha'azinu in Table II below.

Table I Thematic Flow of Devarim 31:14-30

Phase	Reference	Key Word(s)
Death of Strong Leader COLOR BLUE	Devarim 31:16a	Death, died
Am Yisrael Rebelled COLOR GREEN	Devarim 31:16b	Forsake, gods of the land, break covenant
Adonai's Response to Am Israel COLOR YELLOW	Devarim 31:17a	Anger, flare/burn, forsake them, conceal my face
Consequences of Rebellion COLOR ORANGE	Devarim 31:17b	Become prey, evils and distresses upon them

Table II Thematic Flow From Shira Ha'azinu

Phase	Reference	Key Word(s)
Remembering History COLOR BLUE	Devarim 32:7-9	Death, died, forgot, didn't remember
Am Yisrael's Rebellion COLOR GREEN	Devarim 32:15-18	Grow fat, forsake, abominations, ignore, provoke, new gods
Adonai's Response to Am Israel COLOR YELLOW	Devarim 32:19-22a	Conceal my face, fire, blaze
Consequences of Rebellion COLOR ORANGE	Devarim 32:23-26	Sword, famine, dread, evils against them,
Adonai Refused to Totally Destroy Them COLOR RED	Devarim 32:35-39	Relent, compassion, their power is gone, none remains
Punishment of Am Yisrael's Enemies COLOR PINK	Devarim 32:40-43	Sword, vengeance, judgment, enemies, blood, intoxicate

Notice the connections? The color codes should be helpful. They are especially obvious when we look at the key words used in each thematic portion. See how many of the key words are found in both passages. Although they are not exactly the same, each passage is definitely speaking of the same sequence of events. Remember the similarities. Since the events of Devarim 31:14-30 and Shira Ha'azinu are the same, let's make a new table that includes the events and themes from Tables I and II.

Table III Tables I & II Combined

Phase		Reference	Key Word(s)
Death of Strong Leader	COLOR BLUE	Devarim 31:16a	Death, died
Remembering History	COLOR BLUE	Devarim 32:7-9	Death, died, forgot, didn't remember
Am Yisrael's Rebellion	COLOR GREEN	Devarim 32:15-18	Grow fat, forsake, abominations, ignore, provoke, new gods
Adonai's Response to Am Israel	COLOR YELLOW	Devarim 32:19-22	Conceal my face, fire, blaze
Consequences of Rebellion	COLOR ORANGE	Devarim 32:23-26	Sword, famine, dread, evils against them
Adonai Refused to Totally Destroy Them	COLOR RED	Devarim 32:35-39	Relent, compassion, their power is gone, none remains
Punishment of Am Yisrael's Enemies	COLOR PINK	Devarim 32:40-43	Sword, vengeance, judgment, enemies, blood, intoxicate

Finding the Time Frame For the Events in Shira Ha'azinu

Let's see if we can figure out the timeframe for the fulfillment of Moses' prophecy in Shira Ha'azinu. Since we know that Devarim 31:14-30 and Shira Ha'azinu are one and the same (through thematic analysis), we can look to Devarim 31:14-30 as a source to answer our questions.

Read Devarim 31:14-30. Where do the events take place?

In the land.

You might expect that these two passages would simply repeat Moses' third speech, the Tochacha (Admonition), found in Devarim 27-28. Remember, in that speech, Moses prophesied that exile would be Am Yisrael's ultimate punishment. Did you notice, Devarim 31:14-30 and Shira Ha'azinu never mention the word exile!

Some other reasons why Shira Ha'azinu does not refer to exile.

1. Shira Ha'azinu speaks of Am Yisrael's enemies having military victory over them. This, suggests that they are in the land, since in exile, Am Yisrael does not wage war, rather, they are already taken as captives. [Ibid]





2. The theme of repentance, so clearly seen in Devarim 27-28, is totally lacking in Shira Ha'azinu.

3. Lastly, nothing is said about the re-gathering. [Ibid]

Shira Ha'azinu is a prophecy referring to, "an historical process that is not far off, and which will begin immediately after Moshe's death." [Ibid.]

Also, "Ha'azinu is not a review of a single historical process at all; Shira Ha'azinu is about events that would come to pass soon after Moses' death. And, Shira Ha'azinu has prophetic importance to many generations of Israelites, not just one. I will show you how this reasoning is sound and simply excellent—a thematic work of art! For now, let us just summarize by saying that Shira Ha'azinu is a prophecy of events that would occur repeatedly in the lives of Am Yisrael beginning not too soon after Moses' death.

(Comments 1-3 from an article entitled, Song of the Future or Song of the Present, by Rabbi Elchanan Samet of The Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash, <http://www.vbm-torah.org/parsha.60/51haazin.htm>.)

Although I agree with Rav Samet, I also think there's another possibility. We have already seen how closely Devarim 31:14-30 and Shira Ha'azinu are thematically related. So much so, we know they are prophecies on the same sequence of events. If you recall, Shira Ha'azinu does not mention a specific time in which its events would occur. So, let's see if we can glean some information concerning WHEN the events of Shira Ha'azinu should occur from Devarim 31:14-30.

Read Devarim 31:29. According to this passage, when will the events of Devarim 31:14-30 take place?

In the l d or (end of days).
latter days

Hmm. The latter days? How do the Scriptures characterize the time period in which we are currently living?

The l d.
latter days

That's right. So, because of the many different thematic connections between Devarim 31:14-30 and Shira Ha'azinu, I think that since Devarim 31:14-30 is to happen in the latter days, then Shira Ha'azinu will also happen in the latter days.

It seems this would contradict Rav Samet's conclusions in 1-3, which envision these events happening soon after Moses' death! So, who's right, Rav Samet or this lesson? Will Devarim 31:14-30 and Shira Ha'azinu happen sooner or later? I suggest that both time frames are correct!

Devarim 31:14-30 and Shira Ha'azinu are prophecies of events that will repeat themselves many times in different generations of Israelites beginning soon after Moses' death.

Devarim 31:14-30 and Shira Ha'azinu are prophecies of events that will happen in the latter days.

As an aside, since we know that Shira Ha'azinu is a prophecy about Am Yisrael in the latter days — which obviously includes now in this period of time — let's answer a couple of insightful questions.

According to Shira Ha'azinu, why will Am Yisrael experience judgment?

Because they f_____ and r_____ against Adonai.
forsook rebelled

How does one forsake/rebel against the Holy One?

By forsaking His T_____.
Torah

So, do you mean to tell me that judgment is in store for Am Yisrael in these latter days because we have forsaken the Torah? That's right. Now guess what that means? The Torah could not possibly have been abolished after Yeshua's death and resurrection. This was just another indirect proof that the Torah is for all generations. Moses, the great prophet, has once again prophesied of the days in which we currently live.



Can you find the words from this Parsha?

H	T	S	Y	A	D	R	E	T	T	A	L
A	E	E	N	E	M	I	E	S	A	F	D
A	I	S	R	A	E	L	F	B	D	A	E
Z	W	S	N	O	D	O	R	F	E	T	S
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K	S	N	O	I	T	A	R	E	N	E	G



HAAZINU
LATTER DAYS
GENERATIONS
MOSES
DIED
REBEL
FORSAKE
TORAH
ENEMIES
DESTROY
PUNISH
ISRAEL
GODS
FAT