

What Does the Tanakh Say About Resurrection on Day Three?

Although most people are hard pressed to find the Torah's teaching on death, burial and resurrection, once you begin to study thematically you will understand that Adonai is trying almost desperately to teach us about this concept. The pages of the Bible are literally shouting out to us, teaching this profound concept of resurrection on day three.

The Tanakh's Use of Vegetation to Teach About Resurrection

- ***Genesis 1:11-13*** –And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day.
 - We do not literally see resurrection, but this passage hints at resurrection as follows:
 - Until day three, there is no physical life on the earth
 - On day three, the first living entities were created
 - ***The picture of resurrection? On day three life sprang forth from where there was no life!***
 - Notice that this picture of resurrection is clearly associated with the number 3!
 - Notice how Adonai is using vegetation to teach us about resurrection
- ***Isaiah 40:6-8*** –⁶ The voice said, “Cry out!” and he said, “What shall I cry?” “***All flesh is grass***, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. ⁷ ***The grass withers, the flower fades***, because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; ***surely the people are grass***. ⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.”
 - This passage clearly equates man with grass via metaphor. Analogies such as this, where man is equated with some type of vegetation are abundant in Scripture.
 - Also as clear, the withering of the flower speaks of the death of a person.
 - If Adonai uses vegetation to paint a picture of how man is appointed to death, then should not the opposite, the revival of vegetation, by default represent resurrection? In the following examples we will let the Word of Adonai speak for itself!
- ***Job 38:26-27*** – To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man; To satisfy ***the desolate and waste ground***; and to cause ***the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?***
 - Again, we see pictures of resurrection taught through agriculture

- A desolate and waste ground speaks of vegetative **DEATH** and barrenness. Within that context, the springing forth of the tender herb is surely hinting at **RESURRECTION**.
- **Job 14:7-10** – For there is hope of a tree, *if it be cut down, that it will sprout again*, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.
 - Here is another picture of resurrection using vegetation. The tree being cut down speaking of its **DEATH**. Therefore, if it buds again, this speaks of resurrection
 - Once again, the picture is clear as Adonai uses vegetation to paint pictures of death and resurrection.
- **Isaiah 26:19** - May Your *dead come to life, may my corpses arise*. Awake and shout for joy, you who rest in the dirt! For Your dew is like the dew that [revives] vegetation (Artscroll Chumash translation).
 - This passage is deafening in its declaration that Adonai uses vegetation to paint pictures of **DEATH** and **RESURRECTION** in humans! How can we not miss this application?
 - Obviously, vegetation that revives to life as a result of the watering dew is equated to those physical corpses that are to rise from the earth from death to life.
- **Numbers 17:8** - And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, *the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds*.
 - Resurrection – Life from a dead branch! This is another example of resurrection using vegetation. Aaron’s rod, a dead stick, brought forth **LIFE**.
 - Note how this passage is clearly thematically connected to Genesis 1:11-13 through the following theme:
 - The fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth

120 Men of the Great Assembly

- A panel of 120 prophets and sages including Ezra, Nehemiah, Mordecai, Daniel, Simeon the Righteous and the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, constituted the ultimate religious authority at the onset of the Second Temple Era (4th century BCE).
 - Among their accomplishments was the composition of the text of our standard prayers and blessings, known as the Shemoneh Esrei (Amidah). The Shemoneh Esrei is a series of 18 prayers prayed three times a day by devout Jews.
 - Note the time frame of the beginning of its composition, ***the 4th century BCE!***

- **The Significance of the Second Blessing That is Attributed to Isaac** – “You are eternally mighty my Lord, *the resuscitator of the dead* are you. Abundantly able to save. Who makes the wind to blow and Who makes the rain descend. Who sustains the living with kindness, *resuscitates the dead* with abundant mercy, supports the fallen, heals the sick, releases the confined and *maintains His faith to those asleep in the dust*. Who is like You O Master of mighty deeds and who is comparable to You O King Who causes death and *restores life* and *makes salvation sprout*. And You are faithful to *resuscitate the dead*. Blessed are *You Who resuscitates the dead*.”
 - The dominant theme in this prayer is clearly resurrection
 - Mentions resuscitating the dead four times
 - What does *restores life* mean? In context, it clearly means to resuscitate the dead.
 - What does *maintains His faith to those asleep in the dust* mean? That Adonai will be faithful to resurrect them
 - What does *makes salvation sprout mean*? It is a clear reference to resurrection in human beings as taught by the blossoming of life from dead vegetation as in Isaiah 26:19! From our previous discussions it is apparent that the 120 Men of the Great Assembly saw the connections between vegetative growth and decline with **LIFE/RESURRECTION** and **DEATH**, respectively! Thus, “makes salvation sprout” is a clear reference to **RESURRECTION**! Yes, sprouting vegetation = **RESURRECTION**.
 - Clearly, they have understood the Torah’s “language” of resurrection! And the source of this wisdom as we have seen and will continue to see, has absolutely nothing to do with paganism/heathendom.

Stories of Literal Death and Resurrection

- ***I Kings 17:17-24*** . . . ²⁰ Then he cried out to the LORD and said, “O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?” ²¹ And he stretched himself out on the child **three** times, and cried out to the LORD and said, “O LORD my God, I pray, let this child’s soul come back to him.” ²² Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; ***and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived*** . . .
 - Notice that this is a literal resurrection
 - Notice the language of resurrection – the soul/life of the child came back to him; he revived
 - Notice that Elijah stretched upon the child **THREE** times
 - Notice that this was a נַעַר (na’ar) or youth who was resurrected
- ***II Kings 4:8-37*** . . . he stretched himself out on the **child**, and the flesh of the child became warm. ³⁵ He returned and walked back and forth in the house, and again went up and stretched himself out on him; then the child sneezed **seven times**, and the child opened his eyes.

- Notice that this is a literal resurrection
 - Notice that the boy sneezed seven times
 - Notice that this was a יָלֵד (yeled) or boy who was resurrected
- **II Kings 13:20-20** . . . ²⁰ Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the raiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year. ²¹ So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, **he revived** and stood on his feet . . .
- Notice that this is a literal resurrection
 - Notice the language of resurrection – he revived
 - Notice that this occurred during the spring of the year
 - Two of the stories of literal death and resurrection involved the resurrection of a youth or נַעַר (na'ar)
 - Although three is the number that teaches resurrection, one of the youths has the number seven associated with his death and resurrection. In order to understand why the number seven is used here, we need to see the stories of the resurrection of the Shunammite woman's son and the resurrection of the widow of Zarephath's son as one story! This is so clear when one considers all the themes that connect these two stories. Adonai is using two stories with the same themes to teach us something. This is a veiled allusion to the cleansing of one who came in contact with **DEATH**. This cleansing had to occur on days three and seven (Numbers 19)! These two resurrections teach this thematically since the numbers three and seven, associated with resurrection, are the numbers associated with purification from death!
 - It is interesting to note that there are **THREE** stories in the Tanakh of literal resurrections performed by a prophet. There are also **THREE** stories in the New Testament of literal resurrections performed by the prophet Yeshua.
 - Resurrection of a widow's child – The Widow of Zarephath (I Kings 17:17-24) versus the Widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-17)
 - Resurrection of a prominent person's child – The Shunammite woman (II Kings 4:8-37) versus Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue (Luke 8:40-56)
 - Resurrection of a dead man – The man thrown into Elisha's grave (II Kings 13:20-20) versus Lazarus (John 11:1-37)

Death, Resurrection and the Number Three

Pictures of Resurrection

- ***Hosea 6:1-2 . . .*** ¹Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. ²***After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight.***

- This clear reference to resurrection will be accomplished on the ***THIRD DAY***
- Notice the resurrection language (revive us)!
- It is also a parallelism where revive is equivalent to raise us up!

After two days He will revive us;

on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight

- ***Jeremiah 38:7-13 . . .*** ⁷ Now Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs, who was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon. When the king was sitting at the Gate of Benjamin, ⁸ Ebed-Melech went out of the king's house and spoke to the king, saying: ⁹ "My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, ***whom they have cast into the dungeon, and he is likely to die from hunger in the place where he is.*** For there is no more bread in the city." ¹⁰ Then the king commanded Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, saying, "***Take from here thirty men with you, and lift Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon before he dies.***" ¹¹ So Ebed-Melech took the men with him and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took from there old clothes and old rags, and let them down by ropes into the dungeon to Jeremiah. ¹² Then Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, "Please put these old clothes and rags under your armpits, under the ropes." And Jeremiah did so. ¹³ ***So they pulled Jeremiah up with ropes and lifted him out of the dungeon.*** And Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

- In this example, we see a picture of death and burial when Jeremiah is thrown into a pit. The scripture even notes that Jeremiah will flirt with death if left there.
- Next Jeremiah's life is saved when men come to hoist him from the waterless pit. This is a clear picture of resurrection and escape from death. Most importantly, we see the number ***THIRTY***, our number ***THREE***, that shows up so often in these stories of death and resurrection! Perhaps the Holy One is trying to teach us something?
- This story is easily thematically connected to the story of Joseph's brothers who threw him into a pit. In both stories, someone is thrown into a pit and a statement is made that there is no water in the pit. Since thematic connections exist to show equivalence between people, places, things and events the story of

Jeremiah in the pit and Joseph in the pit is one and the same. If we can see death and resurrection in the story of Jeremiah in the pit then surely the story of Joseph in the pit is also a story of death and resurrection even though it does not have its own number **THREE**, which is thus supplied by inference from thematically relating it to Jeremiah's thematically similar story.

The Phrase, "The Third Day"

Pictures of Resurrection

- ***II Kings 20:1-11*** . . . ¹In those days ***Hezekiah was sick and near death***. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Set your house in order, ***for you shall die, and not live.***'" . . . ⁵"Return and tell Hezekiah the leader of My people, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely ***I will heal you. On the third day*** you shall go up to the house of the LORD. ⁶ And I will add to your days fifteen years . . . ⁸ And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What is the sign that the LORD will ***heal me***, and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD ***the third day?***"
- Although Hezekiah did not literally die and resurrect, the story hints of resurrection because the death decree had been made
 - Notice the language of resurrection – die and not live, heal you, third day
 - This "healing" for Hezekiah was literally salvation from death.

The Association of LIFE and DEATH With the Number THREE

- ***Genesis 40:20-23*** . . . ²⁰Now it came to pass ***on the third day***, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. ²¹ Then ***he restored the chief butler to his butlership again***, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. ²² ***But he hanged the chief baker***, as Joseph had interpreted to them. ²³ Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.
- On the third day one would LIVE and the other would DIE

The Association of LIFE With the Number THREE

- **Genesis 42:18 . . .** ¹⁸ Then Joseph said to them *the third day*, “Do this *and live*, for I fear God.
 - Joseph gives the brothers a chance to LIVE and it’s associated with the third day

- **I Kings 3:16-18 . . .** ¹⁶ Now two women who were harlots came to the king, and stood before him. ¹⁷ And one woman said, “O my lord, this woman and I dwell in the same house; and I gave birth while she was in the house. ¹⁸ Then it happened, *the third day after I had given birth, that this woman also gave birth*. And we were together; no one was with us in the house, except the two of us in the house.
 - Life sprang forth from the womb on day **THREE**
 - Birth itself is a picture of resurrection, where the child, hidden within the womb springs forth to life.

- **I Kings 18:1 . . .** And it came to pass after many days that the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in *the third year*, saying, “Go, present yourself to Ahab, and *I will send rain* on the earth.”
 - Water is life; therefore, the sending forth of water is the sending forth of LIFE, and it is here associated with the number three.

- **2 Kings 18:13-16 . . .** ¹³ And in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. ¹⁴ Then Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, “I have done wrong; turn away from me; whatever you impose on me I will pay.” And the king of Assyria assessed Hezekiah king of Judah *three hundred* talents of silver and *thirty* talents of gold. ¹⁵ So Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king’s house. ¹⁶ At that time Hezekiah stripped the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.
 - Faced with certain death from King Sennacherib, King Hezekiah offers a ransom for his life! And how much was that ransom? Notice the association of the number **THREE** with **LIFE**!

- Next, let’s look at an amazing teaching on LIFE and the number THREE. We have already discussed chiastic structures. Please take note of the following chiastic structure.

Joshua 9:17-20

- A) Joshua 9:17—Am Yisrael came to their cities on the **third day**
- B) Joshua 9:18a—Am Yisrael **didn’t attack them**
- C) Joshua 9:18b—The rulers had **sworn to them**
- D) Joshua 9:18c—**The congregation of Israel complained against the leaders**

- C) Joshua 9:19a—The leaders told Am Yisrael, “We have *sworn to them.*”
 B) Joshua 9:19b—*We may not touch them*
 A) Joshua 9:20—*We will let them live*

This chiastic structure is taken from the story of how the Gibeonites deceived Israel. Let us compare elements A in the two halves of the chiastic structure. Notice how Joshua 9:17 is thematically connected to Joshua 9:20 through the chiastic structure. These verses clearly connect LIFE with the number THREE! Looking at elements A, there is no natural thematic equivalence between the fact that Israel went to their cities on the third day (Joshua 9:17) and the fact that the Israelites allowed the Gibeonites to live! In fact, one would be tempted to start the chiastic structure with elements B! However, we have seen that the Tanakh clearly associates LIFE with the number THREE in countless ways. Chiastic structures are just one of the ways that Adonai “forces” us to see a thematic connection between two very dissimilar themes.

Hints at Resurrection and Life

Miscellaneous

- **Zechariah 13:9** . . . ⁸ And it shall come to pass in all the land,” Says the LORD, “That *two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die*, But *one-third shall be left in it.* ⁹ *I will bring the one-third through the fire*, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, ‘This is My people’; And each one will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’”
 - One third of the people will attain LIFE.
- Exodus 32:1-35 – Moses *interceded THREE times* to spare the nation of Israel from annihilation!
- **THREE** matriarchs (Sarah, Rebecca and Rachel) needed supernatural help to conceive children.
 - Death and resurrection is most easily seen in Sarah’s situation.

Romans 4:16-21 – ¹⁶ Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all ¹⁷ (as it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations”) in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, *who gives life to the dead* and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; ¹⁸ who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, “So shall your descendants be.” ¹⁹ And not being weak in faith, he *did not consider his own body, already dead* (since he was about a hundred years old), *and the deadness of Sarah’s womb.* ²⁰ He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was

strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, ²¹ and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

Clearly then, even the birth of Isaac is a teaching on resurrection in that life sprang forth from Sarah's "dead" womb!

- Genesis 17:1, 17 – ¹ When Abram was *ninety-nine* years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless . . . ¹⁷ And shall Sarah, who is *ninety* years old, bear a child?"
 - Abraham was 99 (**THREE** times **THIRTY THREE**) years old when Isaac was promised to him.
 - Sarah was 90 (**THREE** times **THIRTY**) years old when Isaac was promised to her.
- There were **THREE** cities of refuge where an unintentional killer could flee to have his life preserved from the avenger of blood. He could remain there until the death of the high priest, whereupon he was able to return to his ancestral heritage (which itself is another picture of resurrection. . . more later).
- **Genesis 6:15-16 and 7:13** . . . ¹⁵ And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be *three hundred* cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height *thirty* cubits. ¹⁶ You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and *third* decks . . . On the very same day Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the *three* wives of his sons with them, entered the ark.
 - Genesis 6 and 7 describe how Noah and his **THREE** sons and **THREE** daughters-in-law escaped the death of the flood waters on a boat that was THREE HUNDRED cubits long, **THIRTY** cubits in width and had **THREE** levels. They escaped death and attained **LIFE**.
- **Exodus 4:3-9** . . . ² So the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A rod." ³ And He said, "Cast it on the ground." **So he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent**; and Moses fled from it. ⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail" (**and he reached out his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand**), ⁵ "that they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you." ⁶ Furthermore the LORD said to him, "Now put your hand in your bosom." And he put his hand in his bosom, and when he took it out, behold, **his hand was leprous, like snow**. ⁷ And He said, "Put your hand in your bosom again." So he put his hand in his bosom again, **and drew it out of his bosom, and behold, it was restored like his other flesh**. ⁸ "Then it will be, if they do not believe you, nor heed the message of the first sign, that they may believe the message of the latter sign. ⁹ And it shall be, if they do not believe even these two signs, or listen to your voice, that you shall take water from the river and pour it on the dry land. The water which you take from the river will become blood on the dry land."
 - The **THREE** signs given to Moses all represent signs of resurrection.
 - The **LIVING** serpent came from a **DEAD** stick.

- With that in mind, we should easily be able to see the teaching of **LIFE** and **RESURRECTION** on day **THREE** as the person who has contacted a corpse is cleansed partially on day **THREE**.

Death and Exile

One of the most profound teachings on resurrection has to do with death and exile. This teaching is introduced to us in Genesis 3 when Adonai stated that the day Adam and Eve would eat from the tree of the knowledge they would die. Therefore, we should expect them to physically die on that day. However, they don't physically die. But what happened to them on the day they ate from the forbidden tree? They were banished, or shall we say exiled from the Garden of Eden, their ancestral heritage. This is the first of many teachings that equate death with exile! Thus, if it is **DEATH** when you are exiled from your ancestral heritage, by analogy, it must equal **LIFE** when you return to your ancestral heritage. This connection of return to ones ancestral heritage with resurrection is most easily seen in the great prophecy of Ezekiel 37.

Ezekiel 37:10-14 – ¹⁰ So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet [**RESURRECTION**], an exceedingly great army. ¹¹ Then He said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!’ ¹² Therefore prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, O My people, I will open your graves [**RESURRECTION**] and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel [**RETURN**]. ¹³ Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves [**RESURRECTION**], O My people, and brought you up from your graves [**RESURRECTION**]. ¹⁴ I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land [**RETURN**]. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it and performed it,” says the LORD.’”

With that understanding, notice how the following passage teaches resurrection on day **THREE** with respect to Israel's return to their ancestral heritage, Eretz Yisrael!

- **Joshua 1:11** . . . ¹⁰ Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ¹¹ “Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, ‘Prepare provisions for yourselves, for **within three days** you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.’”
 - The nation of Israel had been exiled from their ancestral heritage for over 400 years. This return represented LIFE, a return to one's ancestral heritage.

Associating Death With the Number Three

Most of what we have learned involves LIFE on day THREE; however, the idea of resurrection on day three by default has a connection to DEATH, because on the third day, one passes from DEATH to LIFE. Therefore, we should not be surprised to find examples of death associated with the number three.

- **Genesis 34:25** . . . Now it came to pass *on the third day*, when they were in pain, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came boldly upon the city and **killed all the males**.
 - On the third day there would be DEATH for the men of Shechem
- **I Chronicles 21:9-12** . . . ⁹ Then the LORD spoke to Gad, David's seer, saying, ¹⁰ "Go and tell David, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "I offer you **three** things; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do it to you.'"" ¹¹ So Gad came to David and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Choose for yourself, ¹² either **three** years of famine, or **three** months to be defeated by your foes with the sword of your enemies overtaking you, or else for **three** days the sword of the LORD—the plague in the land, with the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the territory of Israel.' Now consider what answer I should take back to Him who sent me."
- **Deuteronomy 34:7-8** . . . ⁷ Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he **died**. His eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished. ⁸ And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab **thirty** days. So the days of weeping and mourning for Moses ended.
- **Numbers 20:29** . . . Now when all the congregation saw that **Aaron was dead**, all the house of Israel mourned for Aaron **thirty** days.
- **2 Samuel 18:14** . . . ¹⁴ Then Joab said, "I cannot linger with you." And he took **three** spears in his hand and thrust them through Absalom's heart, **while he was still alive** in the midst of the terebinth tree. ¹⁵ And ten young men who bore Joab's armor surrounded Absalom, and struck and killed him.
 - Here, Absalom is a picture of the Messiah being "hung on a tree." What's unusual here is that even after having three spears thrust through his heart, Absalom is still **ALIVE**, almost defying death. It's not until ten young men come and beat him that he finally succumbs to death! Thus, hinting at power of **LIFE** over **DEATH**.
- **Exodus 15:22-25** . . . ²² So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went **three days in the wilderness and found no water**. ²³ Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. ²⁴ And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" ²⁵ So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet.
 - Again, water equals life. Furthermore, the wilderness is a place of death with no water, scorpions and serpents.
 - Therefore, once again we see death associated with the number **THREE**.

Seeing God, Yet Not Dying

The ancients had a worldview that was in many ways different from ours. For example, it is easy to see that they felt strongly that if they were to see God they would die. There are numerous instances when characters in the Tanakh say Adonai and feared for their lives.

- **Genesis 32:29-30** – ²⁹ Then Jacob asked, saying, “Tell me your name, I pray.” And He said, “Why is it that you ask about My name?” And He blessed him there. ³⁰ So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, “***For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.***”

- **Genesis 32:29-30** – ²¹ When the Angel of the LORD appeared no more to Manoah and his wife, then Manoah knew that He was the Angel of the LORD. ²² And Manoah said to his wife, “***We shall surely die, because we have seen God!***” ²³ But his wife said to him, “If the LORD had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering from our hands, nor would He have shown us all these things, nor would He have told us such things as these at this time.”

Interestingly enough, the previous quotes provide the basis for understanding a thematic teaching on resurrection on the third day when Adonai appeared to the children of Israel.

- **Exodus 19:10-16** . . . ¹⁰ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. ¹¹ And let them ***be ready for the third day***. For ***on the third day*** the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. ¹² You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, ‘Take heed to yourselves that you do not go up to the mountain or touch its base. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. ¹³ Not a hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot with an arrow; whether man or beast, he shall not live.’ When the trumpet sounds long, they shall come near the mountain.” ¹⁴ So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes. ¹⁵ And he said to the people, “Be ready for ***the third day***; do not come near your wives.” ¹⁶ Then it came to pass ***on the third day***, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.

- When Adonai appeared to the people, their meeting was shrouded with the potential for death as the people were about to “see the God of Israel.”

- The scripture itself demonstrates that death was a natural occurrence for a person who had seen Adonai. During the covenant ceremony at Mount Sinai Adonai refrained from killing the leaders of Israel whom He allowed to see Himself.

Exodus 24:9-11 – ⁹ Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, ¹⁰ and *they saw the God of Israel*. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity. ¹¹ But on the nobles of the children of Israel *He did not lay His hand. So they saw God*, and they ate and drank.

Isaiah 6:5 – "*Woe to me!*" *I cried. "I am ruined!* For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and *my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.*"

- Thus, on the third day the children of Israel escaped death!

Escaping Death And the Number Three

Another series of texts in the Tanakh teach resurrection when, in the natural, a person is faced with death. A situation is come upon where there is no means humanly possible for survival. But then, through some miracle, life is preserved. These are shadowy images of death and resurrection. The death is hinted at through the natural circumstances that endanger someone's life. Resurrection, or life from the dead, is hinted at when those life-threatening circumstances are overcome. Amazingly enough, many of these near-death situations involve the number THREE!

- *Judges 7:6-7, 16 and 22 . . .* ⁶ And the number of those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was *three hundred* men; but all the rest of the people got down on their knees to drink water. ⁷ Then the LORD said to Gideon, "By the *three hundred* men who lapped I will save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hand . . . ¹⁶ Then he divided the *three hundred* men into *three* companies, and he put a trumpet into every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and torches inside the pitchers . . . ²² When the *three hundred* blew the trumpets, the LORD set every man's sword against his companion throughout the whole camp; and the army fled to Beth Acacia, toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel Meholah, by Tabbath.
- Here we see a few verses bursting forth with the number **THREE** and three hundred men who defied all odds and were able to live. Truly, they conquered death.
- *I Chronicles 11:11 . . .* ¹¹ And this is the number of the mighty men whom David had: Jashobeam the son of a Hachmonite, chief of the captains; he had lifted up his spear against *three hundred*, killed by him at one time.

- Notice how one man was able to subdue 300! Surely, a picture of resurrection life in the face of impending death.
- **II Samuel 23:18-19** . . . ¹⁸ Now Abishai the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief of another three. He lifted his spear against **three hundred** men, killed them, and won a name among these **three**. ¹⁹ Was he not the most honored of **three**? Therefore he became their captain. However, he did not attain to the first **three**.
 - Again, note how these two verses are pregnant with the number three, signifying resurrection power over death!
- **I Chronicles 11:12-14** . . . ¹² After him was Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, who was one of the **three** mighty men. ¹³ He was with David at Pasdammim. Now there the Philistines were gathered for battle, and there was a piece of ground full of barley. So the people fled from the Philistines. ¹⁴ But they stationed themselves in the middle of that field, defended it, and killed the Philistines. So the LORD brought about a great victory.
 - Notice that this event occurred during the spring time before the barley harvest.
 - The Israelites had fled from an untold number of Philistine warriors and David and Eleazar were able to defy all odds and get victory over their enemies. In the process, they demonstrated victory over certain death.
- **2 Samuel 23:9-10** . . . ⁹ And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, one of the **three** mighty men with David when they defied the Philistines who were gathered there for battle, and the men of Israel had retreated. ¹⁰ He arose and attacked the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand stuck to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to plunder.
 - Eleazar the son of Dodo surely should have died as he took on an untold number of Philistines; however, he obtained victory over death.
- **2 Samuel 23:13-17** . . . ¹³ Then **three** of the **thirty** chief men went down at harvest time and came to David at the cave of Adullam. And the troop of Philistines encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁴ David was then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem. ¹⁵ And David said with longing, “Oh, that someone would give me a drink of the water from the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!” ¹⁶ So the **three** mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and took it and brought it to David. Nevertheless he would not drink it, but poured it out to the LORD. ¹⁷ And he said, “Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this! Is this not the blood of the men who went in jeopardy of their lives?” Therefore he would not drink it. These things were done by the **three** mighty men.
 - Against all odds, **THREE** of David’s **THIRTY** mighty men break through an unknown number of Philistine warriors and secure a drink of water for David. David refused the water, recognizing that these men risked their lives for his sake. Take note of the abundant usage of the number **THREE** in this story of escape from **DEATH**.

- Notice that this event occurred during the harvest time!
- **2 Samuel 23:18-19** . . . ¹⁸ Now Abishai the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruah, was chief of another **three**. He lifted his spear against **three hundred** men, killed them, and won a name among these **three**. ¹⁹ Was he not the most honored of **three**? Therefore he became their captain. However, he did not attain to the first **three**.
- Here is yet another example of one man who was able to kill 300 men. Should he not have perished? Who ever heard of such a thing nowadays, that one man should kill 300? Are we not to question such a victory? Should we not wonder why it is that so many men who faced certain death were able to overcome it against all odds? And certainly our curiosity should be peaked by the voluminous usage of the number **THREE**! All of these stories are meant to teach us that the number **THREE** teaches **RESURRECTION**!

Hiding in “Death” For Three Days

- **1 Samuel 20:3, 5-13** . . . ³ Then David took an oath again, and said, “Your father certainly knows that I have found favor in your eyes, and he has said, ‘Do not let Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.’ But truly, as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, **there is but a step between me and death**.” . . . ⁵ And David said to Jonathan, “Indeed tomorrow is the New Moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king to eat. But let me go, **that I may hide in the field until the third day** at evening. ⁶ If your father misses me at all, then say, ‘David earnestly asked permission of me that he might run over to Bethlehem, his city, for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.’ ⁷ If he says thus: ‘It is well,’ your servant will be safe. But if he is very angry, be sure that evil is determined by him. ⁸ Therefore you shall deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the LORD with you. Nevertheless, if there is iniquity in me, kill me yourself, for why should you bring me to your father?” ⁹ But Jonathan said, “Far be it from you! For if I knew certainly that evil was determined by my father to come upon you, then would I not tell you?” ¹⁰ Then David said to Jonathan, “Who will tell me, or what if your father answers you roughly?” ¹¹ And Jonathan said to David, “Come, let us go out into the field.” So both of them went out into the field. ¹² Then Jonathan said to David: “The LORD God of Israel is witness! When I have sounded out my father sometime tomorrow, **or the third day**, and indeed there is good toward David, and I do not send to you and tell you, ¹³ may the LORD do so and much more to Jonathan.
- Verse three signals to us that we have a **LIFE** and **DEATH** situation. Next, we note the usage of the phrase “on the third day” two times! And what was happening during these three days? David was hiding in a field!
- This is another common situation the Tanakh uses to teach us about death, burial and resurrection on the third day. It is a very good picture of death, burial and resurrection because after death a body is “hidden away” as it were, out of sight. At the time of resurrection the body is openly revealed. This is typified by the person coming out of hiding where his body had once been out of sight.

- **Joshua 2:16 and 22 . . .** ¹⁶ And she said to them, “Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you. **Hide there three days**, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way.” . . . ²² They departed and went to the mountain, and stayed there **three days** until the pursuers returned. The pursuers sought them all along the way, but did not find them.
 - Here, we see a clear picture of death “hiding in a mountain” for **THREE** days. Most likely, with people chasing them, they were in a cave on the mountain! Then, after three days, they emerge alive.
 - And what was the intent of their pursuers? **DEATH!** Yet, these men were preserved from **DEATH** and emerged **ALIVE** after three days of being hidden on a mountain.
 - Also, take note that these men are referred to as young men, **הַנְּעָרִים**. I will have more to say on that later.
 - The life of David is filled with such hidings as he fled from Saul!

For Three Days and Three Nights

Next, let’s look at the phrase “three days and three nights.” Amazingly enough there are three references to this phrase in the Tanakh!

- I Samuel 30:12 – And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. So when he had eaten, his strength came back to him; for he had eaten no bread nor drunk water for **three days and three nights**.
- Esther 4:16 – “Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink **for three days, night or day**. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!”
- Jonah 1:17 – Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish **three days and three nights**.

Let’s compare and contrast these three passages and determine if there are any common themes.

- In all three passages a person is faced with a life or death situation
 - In I Samuel 30:12 the Egyptian youth (**נִיעָר**) was in a near life and death situation having neither eaten nor drank for three days and three nights. The text hints at resurrection in that it states, “and his spirit returned to him,” as translated by the Artscroll Tanakh! This clearly hints at resurrection. For what is death, but when the spirit leaves the body? Thus the text paints a picture of death and resurrection for our Egyptian youth. We must also note usage of the phrase **THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS**. This story also has another **THREE** in it. This adventure that David finds himself in began in II Samuel

30:1 – Now it happened, when David and his men came to Ziklag, *on the third day*, that the Amalekites had invaded the South and Ziklag, attacked Ziklag and burned it with fire.

- In Esther 4:16 we are also presented with a life or death situation, for we see that Esther exclaimed, “If I perish, I perish!” However, we have even more evidence that hers was a life and death situation if we take note of the verses preceding our main passage.
 - Esther 4:10-11 – ¹⁰ Then Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him a command for Mordecai: ¹¹ “All the king’s servants and the people of the king’s provinces know that *any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king, who has not been called, he has but one law: put all to death*, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter, that he may live. *Yet I myself have not been called to go in to the king these THIRTY days.*”

As you can see, Esther’s situation is also marked by the number THREE!

- Jonah 1:17 is the clearest picture of a life or death situation of the THREE passages we’re examining! Surely, the average person who is swallowed by a large fish and is in the belly of the fish for THREE days will be DEAD! However, miraculously Jonah emerged ALIVE after **THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS**. Furthermore, how can we not see the belly of the fish as a picture of the grave? Throughout Jonah 2:1-10, Jonah likens his stay in the belly of the fish to a stay in the grave, a pit and sheol! This is the clearest picture of death, burial for three days and resurrection.

Clearly, all three passages present a thematic teaching on **DEATH** and **RESURRECTION**! In each story we see a picture/painting/hint of the death of someone followed by a picture/painting/hint of their resurrection. The Egyptian youth, who suffered from not having the essential food (bread) and water to sustain life for three days, is revived. In Esther’s case, she escapes death by the skin of her teeth, for as of the moment she approached the king without his having summoned her, a death penalty was upon her. And Jonah miraculously emerged alive, defying all odds after spending **THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS** in the belly of a fish! I find it amazing that there are THREE stories in the Tanakh that mention **THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS** and that all three of them present clear pictures of death and resurrection!

The Youth (הַנְּעָרִים) Who Are Brought to Death’s Door

These examples represent some of the clearest “pictures” of death and resurrection. The Tanakh has numerous examples of youth (הַנְּעָרִים) who are brought to death’s door. In most of these examples we clearly see the number THREE associated with the “picture” of their death and resurrection!

- The Binding of Isaac (Genesis 22:1-19) – In this story, Isaac is brought to death’s door as his father Abraham is about to slay him (picture of death). Then, at the last moment his life was spared (picture of resurrection). The number **THREE** appears in the story because it took Abraham and Isaac three days to find Mount Moriah.
- Ishmael’s Near Death (Genesis 21:8-21) – This story relates how Ishmael almost died in the desert after being banished by Abraham. He was brought to death’s door as he almost died from lack of water (picture of death). He was then saved from death when the Angel appeared and showed his mother a well (picture of resurrection). The number three doesn’t appear in the story itself, but this story is told as a parallelism along with the Binding of Isaac, which supplies the number **THREE**.
- Joseph’s Stay in the Pit (Genesis 37:12-36) – Joseph was thrown into a pit by his brothers. We have already seen that pits are “pictures” of death, burial, graves and corpses. Thus, immediately after Joseph’s brothers throw him into the pit, the Ishmaelite traders happen upon the scene bringing, as it were the myrrh for Joseph’s burial. From that point on Joseph is “dead” for all intents and purposes. First, his father is tricked into thinking he had been killed by a wild beast. Next, some 20 odd years later, Joseph’s brothers even think he is dead! His death is also taught most dramatically through the chiasmic structure that extends from Genesis 37 – 50. His “death” is thematically connected to those events surrounding Jacob’s burial in Genesis 49-50! His “resurrection” occurs later in the story when the brothers bring Father Jacob the “good news” that Joseph is still **ALIVE!**
- Moses’ Birth (Exodus 2:1-10) – When Moses was born he was supposed to die, for Pharaoh had made the decree to throw all male babies into the River (Nile). He is brought to death’s door as his mother “obeyed” Pharaoh’s decree by completing the “picture” of his death. She did this by putting him into the Nile River in what should have been his casket, since apart from some miracle, his survival was less than probable. Pharaoh’s daughter “resurrects” him by taking him from the Nile, thus securing his safety and future. The number **THREE** appears when the text informs us that his mother had hid him for three months in defiance of Pharaoh’s decree.
- Joseph’s Incarceration in Prison (Genesis 40:1-23) – Joseph was imprisoned with a cupbearer and baker. They both had dreams which involved the number **THREE**. The cupbearer had a dream that revolved around three grape vines. The baker had a dream that centered about three baskets. Joseph interpreted that the three vines and baskets both represented three days. Then, on the third day the baker died (picture of **DEATH**) and the cupbearer lived (picture of **LIFE**).
- Tamar’s Near Death (Genesis 38:1-30) – Tamar, the daughter-in-law of Judah, was able to get herself impregnated by Judah by feigning to be an harlot. After **THREE** months of pregnancy, Judah found out she was pregnant and commanded to have her burned for playing the harlot. Whereupon Tamar furnished **THREE** items she had secured from Judah, thus providing evidence that he was the father! She was

brought to the brink of death (picture of death) with Judah's decree and then fantastically saved by the three articles of security (picture of resurrection).

- Daniel in the Lion's Den (Daniel 6:1-28) – Similar to Jonah and the big fish, the story of Daniel in the lion's den is one of the more fantastic and clear teachings on DEATH and the number THREE! Daniel was one of **THREE** advisors who ruled over 120 satraps. He prayed **THREE** times per day. King Darius was tricked into making an ill-advised law that almost cost Daniel his life. The law was to be in effect for **THIRTY** days. Daniel was thrown into a lion's pit (a clear picture of death and burial in a tomb) but emerged alive the following day (an even clearer picture of resurrection and power over death)!
- **Daniel 3:1-30** – (Three Hebrew Children) – **THREE** Hebrew youth defied King Nebuchadnezzar's decree to worship the image of gold. The penalty for their defiance was to be thrown alive into an hot fiery furnace. Once again, the **THREE** youth are surely destined for DEATH once thrown into the furnace (picture of death). However, through miraculous intervention, they are delivered from the flames (picture of resurrection).

An Example of Death and Resurrection Taught Through Chiastic Structures

The Tanakh uses even more elaborate mechanisms to ensure that we understand its teaching on death and resurrection and its association with the number three. We have already discussed the instance of the men who hid for three days on a mountain - most likely in a cave (picture of death) – and then emerge after three days alive, having escaped their death decree. It is interesting to note the chiastic nature of that story below.

Joshua 2:16-22

A) Joshua 2:16—Rahab said "***Go to the mountains*** lest the pursuers see you"; ***hide three days until the pursuers turn back***

B) Joshua 2:17-18a—Spies said "you shall ***tie this cord of scarlet thread in the window***"; spies said "we are ***absolved of this oath*** unless..."

C) Joshua 2:18b—Spies said "bring your father and his entire house, your mother and brothers ***into the house***

D) Joshua 2:19a—Spies said "anyone who leaves the doors of your house for the outside, his blood will be on his own head and we'll be absolved

C') Joshua 2:19b—"Anyone who stays with you ***in the house***"

B') Joshua 2:20-221—Spies said "if you relate this discussion we will be ***absolved of our oath***"; Rahab ***tied scarlet cord in the window***

A') Joshua 2:22—After ***arriving at the mountain***, the spies ***hid three days until the pursuers turned back***; pursuers couldn't find them because they were hiding

The story of Rahab's deliverance from Jericho by the spies employs one of the Tanakh's most often used literary devices, the chiasitic structure. Note how their stay with Rahab in her house is told chiasitically.

A) Joshua 2:6-7—Rahab ***hid*** the spies on the ***roof*** in stalks of ***flax***; the pursuers pursued them towards the Jordan crossing; the pursuers went in the wrong direction

B) Joshua 2:8-12a—Rahab said "I know Adonai has ***given you the land***"; ***swear*** to me by Adonai

C) Joshua 2:12b-13—Give me a sign that you will keep alive my father, mother, brothers, sisters and all that's theirs by saving our souls from death

B') Joshua 2:14b-16—Spies said "When ***Adonai gives us the land***"; ***our souls will die in place of yours***

A') Joshua 2:15-16—Rahab lowered the spies by a ***rope***; she lived ***high on the city wall***; she told spies to ***hide*** for ***three days*** until the pursuers turn back, then continue; pursuers went in wrong direction

As you can see, the story of the spies' original stay in Rahab's house is yet another instance of people hiding for three days, giving us a clear thematic picture of death, burial and resurrection! This story is no different than the one involving their stay for three days on the mountain.

There is however, another story about youth who hide to prevent their discovery.

➤ ***II Samuel 17:15-22*** – ¹⁵ Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "Thus and so Ahithophel advised Absalom and the elders of Israel, and thus and so I have advised. ¹⁶ Now therefore, send quickly and tell David, saying, 'Do not spend this night in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily cross over, lest the king and all the people who are with him be swallowed up.'" ¹⁷ Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed at En Rogel, for they dared not be seen coming into the city; so a female servant would

come and tell them, and they would go and tell King David. ¹⁸ Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom. ***But both of them went away quickly and came to a man's house in Bahurim, who had a well in his court; and they went down into it.*** ¹⁹ ***Then the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground grain on it; and the thing was not known.*** ²⁰ And when Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house, they said, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" So the woman said to them, "They have gone over the water brook." And when they had searched and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem. ²¹ ***Now it came to pass, after they had departed, that they came up out of the well*** and went and told King David, and said to David, "Arise and cross over the water quickly. For thus has Ahithophel advised against you." ²² So David and all the people who were with him arose and crossed over the Jordan. By morning light not one of them was left who had not gone over the Jordan.

As you can see, this story does not have a three in it. Furthermore, the youth do not even stay a complete day in the well. Would we be justified to use this instance as an example of death, burial and resurrection as the youth give a picture of death in their descent into the pit and a picture of resurrection upon their reemergence? In fact, we can do this. To prove why this is acceptable, let's first note that this story of the two youth who descend into the well to avoid detection by Absalom's cronies is intimately thematically connected to the story of the spies who stay on Rahab's roof!

<i>II Samuel 17:15-24</i>	<i>Joshua 2:1-24</i>
Jonathan and Ahimaaz are two spies for David	The two Israelites are spies for Joshua
Jonathan and Ahimaaz were given military intelligence and told to deliver the message to King David (a military leader)	The two spies were given military intelligence and told to deliver the message to Joshua (a military leader)
Jonathan and Ahimaaz came to a man's house in Bahurim	The two spies came to Rachav's house in Jericho
A girl gave Jonathan and Ahimaaz military intelligence	Rachav gave the two spies military intelligence
A young man saw Jonathan and Ahimaaz and told Absalom	It was told to the king of Jericho that the two spies had come in
A woman helped Jonathan and Ahimaaz hide in a well	Rachav helped the two spies hide on the roof
A woman covered the well Jonathan and Ahimaaz went into with goats	Rachav covered the two spies (on the roof) with stalks of flax
Absalom's servants inquired about Jonathan and Ahimaaz	The king of Jericho's servants inquired concerning the two spies
A woman told Absalom's servants that Jonathan and Ahimaaz had fled	Rachav told the king of Jericho's servants that the two spies had fled
Absalom's servants searched for	The king of Jericho's servants searched

Jonathan and Ahimaaz but couldn't find them	for the two spies but couldn't find them
Jonathan and Ahimaaz emerged from hiding after Absalom's servants left	The two spies emerged from hiding after the king of Jericho's servants left
The woman said that Jonathan and Ahimaaz had gone across a body of water (the Jordan)	The spies crossed over the Jordan
Jonathan and Ahimaaz delivered military intelligence to David	The two spies delivered military intelligence to Joshua

The large number of thematic connections assures us that these two stories are thematically connected. The beauty of our discovery is that Adonai inspired the writers of the books of Joshua and II Samuel to record the events as they did, enabling us to make the connections. More importantly, these two stories were real events that happened to real people. What an awesome testimony to the sovereignty of our Elohim! For it is He Who controls all events on earth so that they fulfill His will.

There is one more connection. According to II Samuel 15:35-37, Jonathan and Ahimaaz were the sons of Abiathar and Zadok, respectively. Thus, we may assume that they were *relatively young men*, being sons of the two priests. Furthermore, according to II Samuel 17:18, Jonathan and Ahimaaz descended into the well at a man's house in a place called Bachurim. It just so happens that Bachurim means *young men*! It is the plural of bachur (**rWx'B**) which means *young man*. With that in mind, note the description of the two spies recorded in Joshua 6:22-23.

Joshua said *to the two men who had spied out the land*, "Go into the prostitute's house and bring her out and all who belong to her, in accordance with your oath to her."²³ So *the young men* who had done the spying went in and brought out Rachav (Rahab), her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. They brought out her entire family and put them in a place outside the camp of Israel.

As you can see, the two spies are referred to as *young men*. The Stone Edition of the Tanakh²³ translates Joshua 6:23a as:

So they entered—*the youthful ones, the spies*—and they brought out Rachav...

Remembering that thematic connections exist to show equivalence between people, places, things and events it is clear that Jonathan and Ahimaaz equal or are equivalent to the youthful spies of Rahab! The youthful spies of Rahab have the total thematic package of death, burial, resurrection and the number three. In fact, they give us that picture twice, once staying on Rahab's roof for three days, then staying on the mountain for three days, a double witness. Now, we see through the abundance of thematic connections between the events of Joshua 2 and II Samuel 17 that Jonathan and Ahimaaz and their actions are equivalent to the youthful spies!

Other examples such as this one abound in scripture that I don't have time to share in these short moments. Also, I'm sure many others await discovery!

A Final Note

At this point I'd like to discuss one way Jewish scholars dismiss the assertion that the Torah teaches about resurrection. In his classic book, *The Last Trial, On the Legends and Lore of the Command to Abraham to Offer Isaac as a Sacrifice*, the author, Shalom Spiegel, seems to do his best to promote the idea that resurrection on day three is a pagan concept. Throughout the book he is endeavoring to explain why so many of the concepts taught in Christianity concerning the resurrection of Yeshua are so similar to the stories found in the Jewish Midrashim concerning the Binding of Isaac (the Akeidah). In numerous places, he comments that Jewish sources are rather meager when touching the subject of bodily resurrection on day three.

For example, he notices the clear connections between the narratives (midrashic narratives) of the Akeidah and the crucifixion in that both involve the concept of resurrection. He even notes:

Not for nothing did the Haggadah attach Isaac's righteousness to the "Resurrection of the Dead" Benediction (in the Shemoneh Esreh Prayer). Page 109

But then he goes on a few sentences later to state:

Christian literature is brimful of this subject (the resurrection on the third day); in our sources there are only hushed hints.

By this he means that 1) there are few references of resurrection on the third day in Jewish sources and 2) the references that do mention resurrection on day three are "hushed," meaning not spoken of openly and essentially covered up in silence. He goes on to state:

On the subject of the third day of Resurrection, the Midrashim are rather meager, but the Gospels are rich with information. Attend well: it may be that from this poverty of explicit statement, and perhaps also from the silence growing out of caution, you will hear the voice which is the voice of Jacob crying out because of what the hands which are the hands of Esau have done to him. Much did our fathers suffer when priests and apostates forced them into disputations before kings and pontiffs, to prove from Talmudic literature that the messiah had already come. p. 111

Thus, Spiegel gives a reason for Jewish rabbis to "ignore or push aside" references to the third day resurrection in Jewish sources, specifically Talmudic sources. It was to prevent

these sources of information from being used against them in disputations. It is at this point that Spiegel comments on what he feels is the source of the few notions of resurrection on the third day in Jewish literature.

But it is certain that the very notion goes back essentially to times long before Christianity, and before Judaism no less. This three-day season between the death and resurrection of the gods was well known to many nations in the ancient Near East. The Babylonian Tammuz and Osiris, the god of the Egyptians—among others—go down to the nether world and come up again on the third day. It may be that such a belief grew out of experience, actual observation of corpses, that after three days their facial features begin to decompose. Hence the laws in the event of death and the mourning customs of the ancient world: “The height of the mourning period lasts for the first three days. Why! Because the shape of the face is still recognizable (that long); for we learn in the Mishnah: In testimony regarding the identity of a dead man, what counts is only recognition of the features of the face with the nose still part of it—(nothing else,) even if other bodily signs or his garments are identified. After three days, there is no acceptable testimony.” In the skies too the ancients could observe this period, that the moon gets overcast, as though it had died, and then returns anew after three days. That is why this interval was such a favorite and became widespread in fasting ritual, temple cults, miracle stories, witchcraft, and also in beliefs about that wonder world of Resurrection of the Dead. p 112

Here, Spiegel clearly states that the source of the Midrashic notion of resurrection on day three is pagan ritual. He even uses this line of logic and applies it to Scripture!

After two days will He revive us, on the third day He will raise us up that we may live in His Presence” (Hos. 6:2) was already an old, old saying in the days of the prophet, and ***it was taken over from ancient fasting and mourning custom, to express the hope of the people’s rising again after its defeat and downfall*** in the days of Rezin and ben Remaliahu). And quite possibly even at that date this imagery and manner of speaking were so customary and common that no one was sensitive any longer to their pagan roots or origin.

At all events, here is clear testimony that at least as early as the eighth century before the Christian era and the birth of Christianity, pagan conceptions of gods dying and returning to life in countless cycles of death and life were widely known among the people . . . And some dust from the world of idolatry settled on us as well. This leftover from the province of heathendom, which was a minor consequence in Israel, became the central concern of the Christians, who sought to restore it to its pristine power and relevance. p 113

As can be seen here, Spiegel is so confident that the notion of the third day resurrection is a relic of pagan worship that he even posits that Hosea 6:2 was pagan in origin! Thus, he has taken a passage of God-breathed scripture that is meant to teach us about the death and resurrection in three days and attributed it to pagan ritual and heathen superstition!

All of the quotes above were taken from chapter nine of Spiegel's book. Throughout this chapter, Spiegel notes the many ways that the Christian Gospel is similar to the Midrashic tales of Isaac's Akeidah and he is trying to determine the reason why there are so many similarities. He is trying to do so without succumbing to the temptation of stating that the similarities between the Midrashic Akeidah stories and the Christian Gospel are the result of Christian influence. In other words, a significant number of modern rabbis teach that the sages of the Midrash, influenced by the Christian Gospel, wrote midrashim that incorporated themes similar to the Christian Gospel for various reasons which I shall not discuss here. In fact, he devotes a large portion of his book endeavoring to show that the midrashic sources of the Akeidah themes were written well before Christianity ever existed and thus could not have been written as a response to the Christian Gospel.

How cautious we must be even with strange expressions in our sources, and it is in vain we undertake to erase or emend these. p 107

However, not being familiar with the abundance of Biblical evidence for a third day resurrection, and seemingly unknowledgeable of how to interpret the Tanakh thematically, according to the methods of Chazal (the Jewish sages of antiquity past), Spiegel attributes every similarity between the Christian Gospel and the midrashic commentaries on the Akeidah to a common pagan root! Thus, whether he is referencing 1) a quote from Scripture; 2) a quote from the masters of the Midrash; or 3) a quote from the Shemoneh Esreh, which was crafted by the 120 men of the great assembly and included the prophets, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi; if there is any reference to resurrection in connection with the Akeidah Spiegel carte blanche attributes the source to heathenism! This is simply misguided. Furthermore, it ignores the wealth of information within the Torah and the rest of the Tanakh, which clearly and undeniably teaches the concept of resurrection on day three.

Spiegel is correct in promoting the idea of the third day and resurrection predating Christianity. He is also correct in stating that the notion of resurrection on day three goes back to days of antiquity. However, he is wrong when he states that it originated with heathendom. The truth is that the idea of resurrection on day three 1) was introduced to the world by Adonai 2) has been around since the creation of the world and 3) was developed throughout the period of the history of Israel in the Jewish Scriptures. Adonai devoted copious amounts of text to this theme within the Tanakh in anticipation of the work of the Messiah. In the words of Shalom Spiegel himself, "*How cautious we must be even with strange expressions in our sources, and it is in vain we undertake to erase or emend these,*" I add, "*How cautious we must be even with strange expressions in our sources, and it is in vain we undertake to **attribute their source to paganism and not recognize their Divine inspiration.***"

A Quick Thematic Study Of Pits and Their Strong Association With The Grave

The Basic Thematic Connection

Thematic connections come in all sorts, shapes and sizes. The easiest way to make a thematic connection is to note similes and metaphors in scripture. These are easy because the thematic connection is contained within the verse you are looking at and there is no need to connect the theme in the verse to another verse elsewhere. Let us look at thematic connections concerning the word *pit*. We will simply note how this word is used in scripture and allow Adonai to teach us what He wants us to know about it.

Literal - Here are some examples where the word *pit* is *literally* connected to the grave, death and/or Sheol.

- Genesis 37:20 - Come therefore, *let us now kill him and cast him into some pit*; and we shall say, ‘Some wild beast has devoured him.’ We shall see what will become of his dreams!” Clearly, the pit was supposed to be his grave. This association thematically connects a pit to the grave.
- Numbers 16:30 - But if the LORD creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the LORD.” Clearly, this pit is a place of death. This association thematically connects a pit to death.
- Numbers 16:33 - So they and all those with them went down alive *into the pit*; the earth closed over them, *and they perished* from among the assembly. Their descent into the pit caused their death. This association thematically connects a pit to death.
- 2 Samuel 18:17 - And they took Absalom and *cast him into a large pit* in the woods, and *laid a very large heap of stones over him*. Then all Israel fled, everyone to his tent. Clearly, this pit was Absalom’s burial place. This association thematically connects a pit to the grave.
- Isaiah 14:19 - But you are *cast out of your grave* Like an abominable branch, Like the garment of *those who are slain*, *Thrust through with a sword*, Who go down *to the stones of the pit*, *Like a corpse* trodden underfoot. This verse clearly thematically connects a pit to the grave, corpses and slain bodies.

- Jeremiah 41:7 - So it was, when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah *killed them and cast them into the midst of a pit*, he and the men who were with him. Clearly, this pit was a burial or grave site.
- Jeremiah 41:9 - Now *the pit* into which Ishmael had *cast all the dead bodies* of the men whom he had slain, because of Gedaliah, was the same one Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel. Ishmael the son of Nethaniah *filled it with the slain*. This pit became a mass grave.
- Ezekiel 28:8 - They shall throw you *down into the Pit*, And you shall *die the death of the slain* In the midst of the seas. Again, the scripture connects a pit to those who have been slain. Furthermore, those who die in the seas are equated to those who go down into a pit.
- Ezekiel 31:14 - ‘So that no trees by the waters may ever again exalt themselves for their height, nor set their tops among the thick boughs, that no tree which drinks water may ever be high enough to reach up to them.’ For they have all been *delivered to death, To the depths of the earth, Among the children of men who go down to the Pit.*’ The pit is equated to those delivered to death and to the depths of the earth.
- Ezekiel 32:23 - Her *graves are set in the recesses of the Pit*, And her company is all around *her grave*, All of them *slain, fallen by the sword*, Who caused terror in the land of the living. This passage literally states that the graves are located in the recesses of a pit.
- Ezekiel 32:24 - “ There is Elam and all her multitude, All around her *grave*, *All of them slain, fallen by the sword*, Who have gone down uncircumcised *to the lower parts of the earth*, Who caused their terror in the land of the living; Now they bear their shame with *those who go down to the Pit*. The slain and the grave are located in the pit.
- Ezekiel 32:25 - They have set her bed *in the midst of the slain*, With all her multitude, With *her graves all around it*, All of them uncircumcised, *slain by the sword*; Though their terror was caused In the land of the living, Yet they bear their shame With *those who go down to the Pit*; It was put in the midst of the slain. Those who are slain and their graves are equivalent to the pit.
- Ezekiel 32:29 - “ There is Edom, Her kings and all her princes, Who despite their might Are laid beside *those slain by the sword*; They shall lie with the uncircumcised, And with *those who go down to the Pit*. Those slain by the sword are equivalent to those who go down to the pit.
- Ezekiel 32:30 - There are the princes of the north, All of them, and all the Sidonians, Who have *gone down with the slain* In shame at the terror which they caused by their might; They lie uncircumcised with those *slain by the sword*, And bear their shame with *those who go down to the Pit*. Those slain by the sword are equivalent to those who go down to the pit.

Figurative - Here are some examples where the word pit is *figuratively* connected to the grave, death and/or Sheol.

- Job 33:30 - *To bring back his soul from the Pit, That he may be enlightened with the light of life. Rescue from the pit equals life!*
- Psalm 28:1 - *To You I will cry, O LORD my Rock: Do not be silent to me, Lest, if You are silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit. Obviously, like those who die.*
- Psalm 30:9 - *“What profit is there in my blood, When I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise You? Will it declare Your truth?”*
- Psalm 35:7 - *For without cause they have hidden their net for me in a pit, Which they have dug without cause for my life.*
- Psalm 49:9 - *That he should continue to live eternally, And not see the Pit. Not seeing the pit is to live eternally!*
- Psalm 69:15 - *Let not the floodwater overflow me, Nor let the deep swallow me up; And let not the pit shut its mouth on me. Here we see that death by drowning is equated to going into a pit.*
- Psalm 143:7 - *Answer me speedily, O LORD; My spirit fails! Do not hide Your face from me, Lest I be like those who go down into the pit.*
- Jonah 2:6 - *I went down to the moorings of the mountains; The earth with its bars closed behind me forever; Yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD, my God. Jonah equates his stay in the belly of the fish in the depths of the seas as going into a pit!*

Figurative - Here are some examples where the word pit is *figuratively* connected to prisoners

- Isaiah 24:22 - *They will be gathered together, As prisoners are gathered in the pit, And will be shut up in the prison; After many days they will be punished. Being gathered into a pit is clearly equivalent to being shut up in prison. This is also another verse that teaches that exile is equal to death! Can you show how?*
- Isaiah 51:14 - *The captive exile hastens, that he may be loosed, That he should not die in the pit, And that his bread should not fail. Not dying in a pit is equivalent to an exile being loosed.*
- Ezekiel 19:4 - *The nations also heard of him; He was trapped in their pit, And they brought him with chains to the land of Egypt. Being trapped in a pit is thematically equivalent to being brought in chains to another nation. This is also another verse that teaches that exile is equal to death! Can you show how*

Parallelisms – In its simplest form, a parallelism occurs when the writer states something twice using different words. This often looks like poetic repeats; however, we can learn many associations (thematic connections) from these parallelisms.

Psalm 33:9 - For he spoke, and *it came to be*; he commanded, and *it stood firm*.

In this example, speaking of Adonai’s creation of the earth, the psalmist says one thing two times. As you can plainly see, For he spoke is clearly thematically connected to he

commanded. Also, *it came to be* is thematically connected to *it stood firm*. What's important here is that the parallelism shows that the two thematically connected items are equal or equivalent to each other. This simple literary device will become the foundation for all that you ever learn from the Bible as we shall soon see. Here are examples of parallelisms that equate the pit with death, the grave, and sheol.

- Job 33:22 - Yes, *his soul* draws near the Pit, And *his life* to the executioners. In this example, soul is equated to life and the pit is equated with executioners, i.e., those who bring on death.
- Job 33:18 - He keeps back *his soul* from the Pit, And *his life* from perishing by the sword. In this example soul is equated with life and pit is equivalent to perishing by the sword.
- Psalm 30:3 - O LORD, You *brought my soul up* from the grave; *You have kept me alive*, that I should not go down to the pit. In this example the pit is equivalent to the grave.
- Proverbs 1:12 - Let us *swallow them alive* like Sheol, And *whole*, like those who go down to the Pit. In this example the word whole stands alone for the implied phrase swallow them whole. Those who go down to the pit is equivalent to those who swallowed alive by Sheol.
- Proverbs 23:27 - For a *harlot* is a deep pit, And a *seductress* is a narrow well. Clearly, just as an harlot is a seductress, should we not see that a deep pit is equivalent to a narrow well? When we consider Proverbs 7:27 (Her house is the way to hell), we can easily see that her deep pit is the pit of the grave!
- Descending to the chambers of death.
- Isaiah 14:19 - Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit. Here we see that the depth of Sheol is equivalent to the depth of the pit.
- Isaiah 38:18 - For Sheol cannot *thank You*, Death cannot *praise You*; Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your truth. Here we learn that Sheol = Death = the pit. We also learn that thanking Adonai is praising Adonai.

As we can clearly see, the pit has been utterly thematically connected to death, the grave, corpses, slain bodies, etc. In other words, the scriptures teach that a pit can be a figurative place of death, burial and slain bodies! This example will be very important as we consider Messianic prophecy, but for now I've used it as an example of how to learn Adonai's wisdom His way, thematically.

Now, let's take a look at Genesis 37:24.

²⁴ Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And ***the pit was empty; there was no water in it.***

From a western point of view, the statement in Genesis 37:24 of there being no water in the pit should seem rather curious. So what? Why should a pit have water in it? The reason the scripture states that the pit had no water in it is because it was actually a cistern! Water was scarce in that area of the world and rain water was

often collected and stored in cisterns, or holes dug out of the earth. Note, this is not the same as a well, which actually has a source of water in it! The Hebrew word used throughout the narrative of Genesis 37:22-30 is the word **בֹּר** (SEC H953), which can be translated as **pit, cistern, well, dungeon or prison**. Hebrew words are derived from a three-letter, consonantal, verbal/action root. The Hebrew word **בֹּר** (בֹּר) is derived from the following three-letter consonantal root; **בֹּר** (SEC H952), which means to bore. Note the following passages where the word **בֹּר** is translated as cistern—Jeremiah 2:13 and Isaiah 36:16.

“ For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves **cisterns**—broken cisterns that can hold no water (Jeremiah 2:13).

Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: ‘Make peace with me by a present and come out to me; and every one of you eat from his own vine and every one from his own fig tree, and every one of you drink the waters of his own **cistern** . . . (Isaiah 36:16)

Closely connected to the word cistern/pit **בֹּר** is the Hebrew word translated as **well, b’eir** **בְּאֵר** (SEC H875). A well, **בְּאֵר**, was a deep shaft bored below the surface of the earth until it connected to a source of water, such as the ones dug by Jacob in the book of Genesis. The Hebrew word **b’eir** (בְּאֵר) is derived from the following three-letter consonantal root; **בֹּאֵר** (SEC H874), which means to dig. A contrast of the words for cistern and well are found in Proverbs 5:15.

Drink water from your own cistern (**בֹּר**, a hole or pit to hold water), and *running water* from your own well (**בְּאֵר**, a shaft dug to a source of water).

As you can see, the words for cistern and well have similar verbal roots, which mean to bore or dig. This makes sense and it is easy to see why the words cistern/pit and well/pit have similar roots. They’re both holes the ground! Finally, what is the significance of a pit with no water in it? We know that water is essential for life. Therefore, the fact that the cistern contained no water is another hint of death residing in the pit.

Earlier we learned that a pit is a picture of the grave. It is a place harboring death. Now, we can add wells/cisterns to that group of thematically connected entities.

pit = grave = belly of the fish = cistern = well = dungeon = prison = place of corpses

