

“PaRDeS PaRaDiSe: The Four Jewish Levels of Interpretation”

Basic Function, Nuts and Bolts: This table is presenting ... Have fun!

The Hebrew / Aramaic word PARDES is spelled in Hebrew and Aramaic without vowels as PRDS. PaRDeS in Hebrew means orchard, especially referring to the Garden of Eden. The same Persian root word makes the English Paradise (PaRaDiSe). The Aramaic word appears three times in the Peshitta, Aramaic New Covenant (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor 12:4; Rev 2:7).

Pashat [Simple, Literal]	Remez [Hint]	Drash [Search, Insi
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These are the four levels of understanding the scriptures. Each layer is deeper and more intense than the last. Compare to the layers of an onion. Visualize turning a cut precious stone, viewing the variant fractals formed by many facets of one gem stone. This is God’s Word, his Torah [Teaching].

First level: PASHAT [Simple]. The intended, explicit meaning. A literal and straight-forward reading. Judaism also clarifies, accepted traditions that interpret the text are also used as Pashat. Using the customary meanings of the words presented; it could be figurative, symbolic, or idiomatic in the natural reading. Talmud says,

“No passage loses its Pashat” (b.Shab. 63; b.Yeb. 24).

Second level: REMEZ [Hint]. Deeper meanings implied by the text, reading between the lines. Remez departs from the literal meaning of the text in search of hints and allusions. Comparing textual variations and using linguistic analysis, possibly morphing the letters as the text allows. Example, Hebrew can be used as letters, numbers, pictures, musical notes, and measurements.

Third level: DRASH [Search]. Allegory, type or discourse application of the text. Search the text in relation to the rest of the Scriptures, other literature, or life itself in order to develop a teaching. Can include moral teachings and Torah based legal court rulings.

it Three features of a Drash:it* 1. It does not contradict any Pashat meaning. 2. Let scripture interpret scripture. Let the use of words or phrases in the whole clarify the specific passages. 3. Primary parts of allegories represent specific realities. Allegories, like parables, have limits to their application.

Fourth level: SOD [Hidden]. The hidden, secret or mystic meaning of a text. This could involve rendering the letters to prime roots, paleo-Hebrew pictures, numerology, musical notes; a primary form that reveals unseen meanings.

Organized by Thomas Robinson for One Unity Resource Bible, 2016

Reference Articles:

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One Unity Resource Bible
The One Unity Resource Bible translation of the Holy Bible into American English with some transliterated Hebrew notations

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Language: English

Dialect: American

Translation by: Thomas Robinson

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Note that in addition to the rules above, revising and adapting God's Word involves a great responsibility to be true to God's Word. See Revelation 22:18-19.

2016-10-03

PDF generated using Haiola and XeLaTeX on 11 Nov 2022 from source files dated 9 Oct 2020

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