The Term ṭᵉhôrâ in Genesis 7:2:
A Linguistic Study

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The first distinction between clean and unclean animals is found in Gen 7:2, a text that is assigned by historical-critical scholars to the J source.[1] Almost all scholars—Jews or Christians—put the laws about permitted or forbidden animals into the category of ceremonial or cultic law.[2] J. Moskala, in his review of literature of the Mosaic laws regarding dietary prohibitions, classifies various interpretations thematically and evaluates them in the light of recent exegetical and theological scholarly discussion.[3] In today's discussion of the topic, most Jewish and Christian scholars—both conservative and historical-critical—support the abolition of the laws regarding clean and unclean animals/food.[4]

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[1] See, for example, C. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Commentary*, trans. J. J. Scullion (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984), 427–29; G. von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 114–16.

[2] See, for example, W. C. Kaiser, "The Book of Leviticus: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994), 1:1082; J. Milgrom, "Ethics and Ritual: The Foundations of the Biblical Dietary Laws," in *Religion and Law: Biblical-Judaic and Islamic Perpectives*, ed. E. B. Firmage, B. G. Weiss, and J. W. Welch (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 159–91.

[3] See J. Moskala, *The Laws of Clean & Unclean Animals in Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale*, ATSDS 4 (Berrien Springs: ATSP, 2000), 112–49. This author outlines the following fourteen theories: The Arbitrary Command explanation, the Cultic explanation, the Sociological explanation, the Symbolic explanation, the Didactic explanation, the Psychological/Repulsiveness explanation, the Taboo and Totemism explanation, the Death-Life Antithesis explanation, the Anthropological explanation, the Nature/Culture Boundary explanation, the Ethical/Moral explanation, the Sacrificial Paradigm explanation, the Economic explanation, and the Hygienic/Health explanation.

[4] There are a few exceptions among Jewish scholars: J. Milgrom, L. R. Kass, and L. E. Goodman; and among Christian scholars: G. F. Hasel, J. Doukhan, R. M. Davidson, A. M. Rodriguez, R. J. Rushdoony, H. B. Rand, and E. A. Josephson (Ibid., 152).

Our interest is focused on a linguistic study of Gen 7:2 concentrating on the major term of this text in the Hebrew Bible. The purpose of this article is to study the meaning and usage of the Hebrew term *ṭᵉhôrâ* ("clean") in ancient Near Eastern literature and in the OT and to ascertain its theological meaning in Gen 7:2.

The Literary Structure of Genesis 7:2

The literary structure of Gen 7:2 presents three alternating microstructures: A B C // A´ B´ C´.

> A "You shall take with you seven each of" *tiqqaḥ-lᵉkā šibᵉᶜâ šibᵉᶜâ*
> > B "every clean animal" *mikōl habᵉhēmâ haṭᵉhôrâ*
> > > C "a male and his female" *ʾîš wᵉʾištô*
> A´ "two each of" *hiwʾ šᵉnayim*
> > B´ "animals that are unclean" *ûmin-habᵉhēma ᵃšer lōʾ ṭᵉhōrâ*
> > > C´ "a male and his female."[5] *ʾîš wᵉʾištô*

There is a synonymous parallelism between A "You shall take with you seven each of" [*tiqqaḥ-lᵉkā šibᵉᶜâ šibᵉᶜâ*] // A´ "two each of" [*hiwʾ šᵉnayim*], especially between "seven each of" [*šibᵉᶜâ šibᵉᶜâ*] // "two each of" [*hiwʾ šᵉnayim*].[6] The antithetical, semantic, and a precise positive-negative syntactical parallelism is evident between B "every clean animal" [*mikōl habᵉhēmâ haṭᵉhôra*] // B´ "animals that are unclean" [*ûmin-habᵉhēma ᵃšer lō ṭᵉhōra*]. In both cases, at a semantic level, the lines refer to "animals" [*habᵉhēmâ*]. On the syntactic level, there is a preposition+noun+adjective // preposition+noun+adjective parallelism, but with the components in the positive-negative case.[7] Finally, we also observe a synonymous, grammatical, and syntactical parallelism between C "a male and his female" [*ʾîš wᵉʾištô*] // C´ "a male and his female" [*ʾîš wᵉʾištô*]. This parallelism can be observed at a grammatical level between the nouns *ʾîš* and *ʾištô*, *ʾîš* is a noun masculine singular in both microstructures, and *ʾištô* is also a noun feminine singular construct in both microsections. On the syntactic level, there is a noun+noun construct (+suffix) // noun+noun construct (+suffix) parallelism in both microstructures.[8]

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[5] NKJV.

[6] As Watson points out when referring to the parallel types of words: "*synonymous word-pairs* comprise a large class with a broad spectrum . . . Its components are synonyms or near-synonyms and therefore almost interchangeable in character"; see W. G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, JSOT Supplement Series 26 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 131.

[7] In Watson's words: "*antonymic word-pairs* are made up of words opposite in meaning and are normally used in antithetic parallelism" (ibid.).

[8] For a study of biblical grammatical, semantic, and syntactic parallelism, see A. Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1985), 31–102.

ṭ^ehôrâ in Ancient Near Eastern Literature

Egyptian. Egyptian *wˁb* means both "purify" and "be or become pure"; it is also used as the adjective "pure." In its transitive sense, the verb is sometimes used concretely—"wash," "make clean" (e.g. clothing)—sometimes figuratively—"purify" (e.g., the king, priests, a temple, or an altar), that is, make free from impurity or evil. In the sense "be pure," it is used of persons, parts of the body, clothing, buildings, sacrifices, etc. As an adjective, *wˁb* exhibits a semantic shift from "pure" = "clean" to "pure" = "consecrated, sacred" and to "pure" = "unused." It is applied to persons, objects of all kinds, buildings, localities, etc.[9]

Akkadian. The Akkadian word for "pure" is *ebbu(m)*[10] or *ellu(m)* I;[11] the two are largely synonymous. The former (equivalent to Sum. [DADAG(.GA)]) means "gleaming" (metals, gold, precious stones, wood), "clean" (clothing), "sacred" or "pure" (objects, materials, or animals for cultic use; also rituals and divine beings), and "trustworthy." The latter (equivalent to Sum. [KU; SIKIL]) can also mean "gleaming" (precious stones, light, a face); it can also mean "pure" (gold, naphtha, oil, etc.). It is often applied to objects, materials, or animals used in the cult; it indicates the ritual purity of a person, and it has a meaning that comes close to the concept "holy," as applied to gods, kings, priests, their acts, dwelling places, etc. Incantations, for example, may be called "pure" or "holy."[12]

The verb *ebēbu(m)*[13] "to be (come) bright, pure" and *elēlu(m)* II[14] "to be (come) pure, free" are likewise largely synonymous and often appear together. The former means in the G stem "be clean" of hands, "clear" of illness, impurity, omen, "be free" of claims; it means in the D stem [DADAG] "cleanse," "purify (ritually)," "keep pure"; it means in the Dt stem [DADAG] "be purified, cleared."[15] The latter also means in the G stem [KU] of ominous sign "be clear"; "be pure" cultically, of person, incantation; "be free" from claims; it means in the D stem [KU] "purify" weapons in the sea; "body," mouth, hands; of deity, "purify" humans, heaven by magic; "carry out purely" ritual, offering; "dedicate by purification"; it means in the Dt stem "purify oneself," "be purified."[16]

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[9]A. Erman, and H. Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* (Leipzig: Quelle und Meyer, 1926–1931, 1963), 1:280–82.

[10]AHw, 1:180; CAD, 4:1–4; J. Black, A. George and N. Postgate (eds.), *A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian* (CDA), SANTAG 5 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), 64.

[11]AHw, 1:204f.; CAD, 4:102–06; CDA, 70.

[12]G. J. Botterweck, and H. Ringgren (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (TDOT), trans. D. E. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 5:289.

[13]AHw, 1:180f.; CAD, 4:4–8; CDA, 64.

[14]AHw, 1:197f.; CAD, 4:80–83; CDA, 69.

[15]CDA, 64; see also J. Huehnergard, *A Grammar of Akkadian*, HSS 45 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1997), 492.

[16]CDA, 69; see also Huehnergard, 493.

Ugaritic. The Ugaritic term equivalent to the Hebrew term *ṭᵉhôrâ* is the root *ṭhr* (var. *ẓhr*), which appears in Ugaritic literature in the plural form.[17] The basic meaning of adjective *ṭhr* is the same as the Hebrew adjective *ṭᵉhôrâ*, "pure."[18]

The word *ṭhr* appears in the cycle of "the Palace of Baal" in KTU 1.4 V 18–19[19] and KTU 1.4 V 33–35[20]:

[18]*wbn.bht.ksp.whrṣ* and (so) build a mansion of silver and gold,
[19]*bht.ṭhrm.iqnim* a mansion of brilliant stones (and) lapis-lazuli.

wbn.bht.ksp [34]*whrṣ.* and (so) build a mansion of silver and gold,
bht.ṭhrm.[35]*iqnim* a mansion of brilliant stones (and) lapis-lazuli.[21]

ṭᵉhôrâ in the Old Testament

The term *ṭᵉhôrâ* appears in Gen 7:2[22] in the statement: "Of every clean [*ṭᵉhôrâ*] beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female; and of beasts that are not clean [*ṭᵉhôrâ*] by two, the male and his female."[23] The LXX usually uses *katharos* and *katharizein* to translate *ṭhr* and its derivatives,[24] while the Vulgate has *mundis*. All the major English versions translate *ṭᵉhôrâ* with "clean."[25]

The root *ṭhr* and its derivatives occur 206 times in the OT.[26] The verb *ṭāhar* occurs 94 times (34 times in the Qal, 39 times in the Piel, 1 time in the Pual, and 20 times in the Hithpael), *ṭāhôr* appears 95 times, *ṭŏhar* 3 times, *ṭohᵒrâ* 13 times, and *ṭᵉhār* 1 time. The adjective feminine singular *ṭᵉhôrâ* has been defined as

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[17]See S. Segert, *A Basic Grammar of the Ugaritic Language* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1984), 162, 187 (1.4:V:19).

[18]See C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, Analecta Orientalia 38 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965), n° 1032; Huehnergard, 58, 76, 131. Hurrian: *šehali* "pure" + adverbial ending –ae [*ši-h*]*a-al-e*], hence "purely." Ugaritic: the form here is probably /*ṭuhuru*/ < *ṭahuru (cf. Arabic *ṭahur*, Hebrew *ṭāhor* < *ṭahur*, Aramaic *ṭahura*) with vowel assimilation around the guttural /h/.

[19]See M. Dietrich, O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartin, *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugaritic*, ALASP 8 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995²), 19.

[20]Ibid.

[21]J. C. L. Gibson, *Canaanite Myths and Legends* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1978²), 61; G. Del Olmo Lete, *Mitos y Leyendas de Canaán* (Madrid: Cristiandad, 1981), 203. Gibson points out *ṭhr* as "clean, brilliant" (ibid., 147), and Del Olmo Lete as "pure, brilliant" (ibid., 555). See also G. Del Olmo Lete & J. Sanmartin, *Diccionario de la Lengua Ugaritica*, Aula Orientalis Supplementa 8 (Barcelona: Ausa, 2000), 2:480, "pure, brilliant."

[22]See W. Gesenius–E. Kautzch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. A. E. Cowley (Oxford: Clarendon, 1910), 119w², 138b; P. Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Subsidia Biblica 14 (Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1996), 2:530, 537, 595, 602, 605; and B. K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 116 n. 6, 276, 289, 333, 660.

[23]KJV.

[24]A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979).

[25]ASV; NIV; NKJV; RSV; NRSV.

[26]A. Even-Shoshan, *A New Concordance of the Old Testament* (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1990), 409–10.

"clean, pure,"[27] "pure, purified, clean, cleansed, free (of impurity),"[28] "clean,"[29] "pure, be pure,"[30] "pure, be clean, be pure,"[31] "pure, be pure,"[32] and "pure, clean."[33]

Some cultic utensils are to be made of *zāhāb ṭāhôr* ("pure gold"). In the regulations governing the making of the tabernacle[34] and the account of its construction,[35] the term *zāhāb ṭāhôr* alternates with simple *zāhāb* ("gold"). The ark is to be overlaid with *zāhāb ṭāhôr*;[36] the *kappōret* is to be fashioned of *zāhāb ṭāhôr*,[37] as is the table.[38] Cultic vessels are also to be made of *zāhāb ṭāhôr*.[39] Several passages speak of *zāhāb ṭāhôr* as the material of the lampstand.[40] Finally, the snuffers and trays are of *zāhāb ṭāhôr*,[41] and the incense altar is overlaid with it.[42] There are also references to *zāhāb ṭāhôr* in the context of the priestly vestments and their fashioning;[43] two chains for the ephod,[44] two chains for the breastpiece,[45] bells on the skirts of the outer robe,[46] and a plate with the inscription *qōdeš lᵉyhwh*.[47] There are synonyms suggesting that the expression *zāhāb ṭāhôr* refers to pure, unalloyed gold.[48] Certain cultic objects are referred to expressly as "clean" or "pure." These include the table for the showbread[49]

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[27]BDB, 373.

[28]D. J. A. Clines (ed.), *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 3:342–43.

[29]W. L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 122.

[30]E. Jenni and C. Westermann (ed.), *Diccionario Teologico del Antiguo Testamento* (Madrid: Cristiandad, 1978), 1:895.

[31]E. Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers of English* (Jerusalem: U of Haifa, 1987), 240.

[32]TDOT, 5:290–91.

[33]R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer and B. K. Waltke (ed.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 1:344.

[34]Exod 25; 30:3.

[35]Exod 37.

[36]Exod 25:11; 37:2.

[37]Exod 25:17; 37:6.

[38]Exod 25:23–24 (*āśâ*); 37:10–11 (*ṣph* [Piel] "overlaid").

[39]Exod 25:29; 37:16.

[40]Exod 25:31, 39; 37:17, 22, 24.

[41]Exod 25:38; 37:23.

[42]Exod 30:3; 37:26.

[43]Exod 28; 39.

[44]Exod 28:14.

[45]Exod 28:22; 39:15, 17.

[46]Exod 39:25.

[47]Exod 28:36; 39:30.

[48]1 Kgs 7:50 (*zāhāb sāgûr*); 1 Kgs 10:18 (*zāhāb mûpāz*); 1 Chron 28:18 (*zāhāb mᵉsuqqāq*); 2 Chron 3:5, 8 (*zāhāb ṭôb*).

[49]Lev 24:6; 2 Chron 13:11.

and the lampstand,[50] and the incense is to be both *ṭāhôr* ("pure") and *qōdeš* ("holy").[51]

ṭhr is applied in the OT to corporal, moral, and religious purity.[52] Synonyms of *ṭhr* are almost always used to fix moral purity: *brr* Niphal ("be pure, keep pure"),[53] *bar* ("pure"),[54] *barur* ("pure, clean"),[55] *bōr* ("purity"),[56] *zkh* Qal ("be pure"),[57] Piel ("keep pure"),[58] Hithpael ("to purify"),[59] *zkk* Qal ("be clean, healthy"),[60] Hiphil ("make pure"),[61] *zak* ("clean, pure").[62] It is evident that pure (*ṭhr*) and holy (*qdš*) appear close joined in the OT texts, while pure (*ṭhr* [clean]) and unclean (*ṭmʾ*) always appear as opposite terms.[63]

It is the function of the priests to distinguish (*hibdîl* [*bdl*]) between the clean and the unclean.[64] There are clean and unclean animals listed in Lev 11. The law governing clean and unclean animals is intended to distinguish *ṭāhôr* ("clean"), those that may be eaten, from *ṭāmēʾ* ("unclean"), those that may not be eaten.[65] The general principle that something unclean does not produce something clean is found in Job 14:4: the unclean human race cannot bring forth a single individual who is clean in the eyes of God; therefore the distinction between clean and unclean is only found in God. Only those who are clean may take part in the cult. All who are clean may eat the flesh of the sacrifice; whoever eats of it while unclean shall be cut off from the community.[66] Some cultic acts can be performed only by a "clean man" (*ʾîš ṭāhôr*).[67] A priest who is clean may eat of the wave offering,[68] of the firstfruits,[69] and of the holy things (*qodāšîm*).[70] Cultic ceremonies are to be performed at a "clean place" (*māqôm ṭāhôr*).[71]

In the writings of Qumran, the Manual of Discipline and sometimes the Damascus Document speak of "the purity of the many" (*ṭohᵒrat hārabbim*) (1QS

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[50]Exod 31:8; 39:37; Lev 24:4.

[51]Exod 30:35.

[52]Jenni and Westermann, 1:896.

[53]2 Sam 22:27 = Ps 18:26; Isa 52:11.

[54]Job 11:4; Ps 19:9; 24:4; 73:1; Cant 6:9–10.

[55]Job 33:3; Zeph 3:9.

[56]2 Sam 22:21, 25 = Ps 18:20, 24; Job 22:30.

[57]Job 15:14; 25:4; Ps 51:7; Mic 6:11.

[58]Ps 73:13; 119:9; Prov 20:9.

[59]Isa 1:16.

[60]Job 15:15; 25:5; Lam 4:7.

[61]Job 9:30.

[62]Exod 27:20; 30:34; Lev 24:2, 7; Job 8:6; 11:4; 16:17; 33:9; Prov 16:2; 20:11; 21:8.

[63]Jenni and Westermann, 1:900.

[64]Lev 10:10; 20:25; Ezek 44:23.

[65]Lev 11:47; Deut 14:11, 20.

[66]Lev 7:19, 20.

[67]Num 19:9, 18f.

[68]Num 18:11; Lev 10:14 adds: "in a clean place."

[69]Num 18:13.

[70]Lev 22:4.

[71]Lev 4:12; 6:11; 10:12–14; 16–18; Num 19:9.

6:16, 25; 7:3, 16, 19), or "the purity of the holy men" (*ṭoḥᵒrat ʾanšê haqqōdeš*) (1QS 5:13; 8:17), or simply *ṭoḥᵒrâ* (1QS 6:22; 7:25; 8:24; CD 9:21, 23) as something that outsiders are forbidden to touch. The Hodayoth contain several occurrences of the verb *ṭhr*, mostly in the Piel, with reference to cleansing from sin and iniquity *ʿāwôn* (1QH 1:32), *pešaʿ* (1QH 3:21; 7:30; 11:10), *ʾašmâ* (1QH 4:37; 6:8). According to 1QH 3:21, the result of this cleansing is incorporation into the community. Finally, 1QH 16:12 states that the cleansing takes place through the holy spirit of God. The Temple scroll contains many additional occurrences.[72] To conclude, we must point out that in the Targums, the Talmudic, and the Midrashic literature, *ṭāhôr*, *ṭᵉhôrâ* is interpreted as "clean, pure."[73]

The Theological Meaning of Gen 7:2

The setting of all of Genesis 1–11 is universal in outlook.[74] The distinction between clean and unclean is important in this early time and universal context. Not only were clean animals and birds used for sacrifice (Gen 8:20), but after the Flood, humans were permitted to eat animals (Gen 9:3–5). The implication is that they were permitted to eat only clean animals. Therefore, the distinction between clean and unclean animals is known before the Israelites came into existence, in a universal passage and context. It can, consequently, be maintained that the distinction between clean and unclean animals is applicable to humankind in general. These dates support the idea that the distinction between clean and unclean animals is not the product of Hebrew cultic legislation, but precedes it into antediluvian times. The clean/unclean animal distinction is joined to other fundamental institutions that antedate Israelite times and are traced back to the history of beginnings, such as marriage (Gen 2:8–15), the Sabbath (Gen 2:1–3), and the like.[75]

The distinction between clean and unclean animals in the time prior to Noah was made primarily for the purpose of human food/diet and not for ceremonial or cultic reasons.[76] Sacrifices were taken only from among the clean animals, but only a few clean animals were used in the sacrificial services.[77]

We think that goodness and holiness constitute the two main concepts of the theology of Gen 7:2.

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[72]TDOT, 5:295–96; see also Jenni and Westermann, 1:901.

[73]M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York: Judaica, 1992), 520.

[74]Genesis 1–11 is universally recognized to be "universal" in outlook and to have the whole world in view. See E. A. Speiser, *Genesis*, AncB (Garden City: Doubleday, 1964), liii; Westermann, 1–64; V. P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 10; G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, WBC (Waco: Word, 1987), xlvi–liii.

[75]See Wenham, 177.

[76]For an analysis of the reasons, see Moskala, 248–49.

[77]Three species of animal (cattle, sheep, and goats: Lev 9:2–4; Exod 29:38–39, 42; etc) and two species of birds (turtledove and pigeon: Lev 1:14; 5:7).

Goodness. We may observe a goodness background. Goodness is linked to Creation by the use of the Hebrew term *ṭôb* ("good") in Genesis 1 (see Gen 1:21, 25), an adjective masculine singular like the adjective feminine singular *ṭᵉhôrâ* ("clean, pure") of Gen 7:2.[78] We suggest that surely there is a synonymous parallelism between *ṭᵉhôrâ* (Gen 7:2) and *ṭôb* (Gen 1). It is very significant that the distinction between clean and unclean animals does not start with Creation in Genesis 1, but was known in the antediluvian world after the Fall. Consequently, we think that the use of the Hebrew term *ṭᵉhôrâ* in Gen 7:2 has to do with those animals called *ṭôb* in Gen 1:21, 25; it is to say, with the clean animals of Creation, those not affected (or less affected) by the Fall (see Gen 3:14).[79]

Holiness. The second main concept of the theology of Gen 7:2 is a holiness background. We suggest that there is a linguistic connection between Gen 7:2 and Gen 2:2–3 (the Creation account). This suggestion is due to the specific terms used: *šibᵉᶜâ šibᵉᶜâ* ("seven pairs"; 7:2), *šᵉbîᶜî* ("seventh") and *yᵉqadēš* ("to consecrate, sanctify, be holy" Piel imperfect; Gen 2:2–3).[80]

The Hebrew terms used in Gen 7:2 are *šᵉnayim* ("two [pair]"), and *šibᵉᶜâ šibᵉᶜâ* ("seven pairs," lit. "seven seven," i.e., fourteen animals of each clean species—explicitly stated "the male and his mate"; 7:2). Thus one pair of unclean animals, i.e., two—male and female—and seven pairs of clean animals entered into the ark. The linguistic relationship between *šᵉbîᶜî* ("seventh [day]") of Gen 2:2–3 and *šibᵉᶜâ šibᵉᶜâ* ("seven seven [pairs]") of Gen 7:2 is very significant. This linguistic connection links holiness, seventh day, and seven pairs of clean animals, and we think it is a strong evidence that this law is a part of universal law.

The concept of holiness is linked to Creation by the use of the Hebrew terms *šᵉbîᶜî* ("seventh") and *yᵉqadēš* ("to consecrate, sanctify, be holy") in Gen 2:2–3. The root *qdš* is used for the first time in connection with Creation. The Creator made the Sabbath holy. Holiness in relation to the dietary laws means to preserve God's given order of life within its boundaries.[81] Holiness is thus the

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[78]"So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was ***good***. And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was ***good***" (Gen 1:21, 25, NKJV; emphasis added).

[79]"So the Lord God said to the serpent: 'Because you have done this, you are ***cursed*** more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life'" (Gen 3:14, NKJV; emphasis added).

[80]"And on the ***seventh*** day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the ***seventh*** day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the ***seventh*** day and ***sanctified*** it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made" (Gen 2:2–3, NKJV; emphasis added).

[81]See J. D. Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 118.

supreme motive of this law.[82] It is highly significant that this great emphasis on holiness is not to the same extent found with any other laws.

Genesis 7:2 shows that Noah is presumed to be able to distinguish between clean (edible) and unclean (inedible) animals.[83] Ceremonially clean animals would be needed also for the burnt offerings that Noah would sacrifice (Gen 8:20) and for food (Gen 9:3). Consequently, clean animals were saved in seven pairs so that they could be used for sacrifices and for food.

Conclusion

Proceding from the analysis we have carried out of the literary structure of Gen 7:2 in alternating microstructures, we think we have shown the structural, literary, and linguistic unity of the microsections of this text. Also, we have tried to demonstrate by means of a linguistic and theological study that this verse is key to explaining the distinction between clean and unclean animals as a part of universal law applicable to humankind in general.

As we have seen, the purpose of this article was to study the meaning and usage of the Hebrew term *ṭ^ehôrâ* ("clean, pure") of Gen 7:2 in ancient Near Eastern literature and in the OT and to know the theological meaning of Gen 7:2. It indicated that goodness and holiness constitute the two main concepts of the theology of Gen 7:2. Moreover, we suggest that the concepts of goodness and holiness are both linked to Creation because of the linguistic connection between Gen 7:2 and Gen 1:21, 25; 2:2–3 (the Creation account) by the use of the synonymous and parallel Hebrew terms *ṭôb* ("good"; Gen 1:21, 25) and *š^ebîᶜî* ("seventh"; Gen 2:2–3).

The terminology of clean/unclean animals appears for the first time in the Hebrew Bible in the Flood account in Gen 7:2. This background is very significant, because it shows that the distinction between clean and unclean animals did not originate with Moses and the nation of Israel, but rather with or before Noah (patriarchal period); it is pre-Mosaic, even though the list of clean/unclean animals is specified only in Lev 11 and Deut 14.

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[82]See Exod 22:31; Lev 11:44–47; 20:25–26; Deut 14:2, 21.
[83]See Wenham, 176.