

# Parsha Q&A



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For the week ending 6 Tishrei 5756  
29 & 30 September 1995

## Parshas Vayelech

### Parsha Questions

1. How old was Moshe when he died?
2. Why was Moshe unable "to go out and come in" (31:2)?
3. What happened to Moshe's Torah knowledge on the day of his death?
4. How did Moshe foresee the relationship between Yehoshua and the Elders?
5. What did Hashem tell Yehoshua concerning his relationship with the Elders?
6. How often does the *Hakhel* (assembly of the Jewish People) take place?
7. Why does the Torah call the year of the *Hakhel* the "Shemita year"?
8. What sections of the Torah does the King read at the *Hakhel*?
9. In what physical location does the King read at the *Hakhel*?
10. Why were the men commanded to come to the gathering?
11. Why were women commanded to come to the gathering?
12. Why were the parents commanded to bring their infant children to the gathering?
13. What does it mean when Hashem hides his face from the Jewish People?
14. What function does the song *Ha'azinu* serve?
15. Where was the Torah that was written by Moshe placed?
16. What was the normal manner of assembling the congregation? Why was it not done that way for the teaching of *Ha'azinu*?
17. In 30:19, Moshe called upon the Heaven and Earth as witnesses and in 31:28, he does so again. What is the difference between the two times?
18. What did Moshe claim the Jewish People would do immediately after his death?
19. How long after Moshe's death were the Jewish People careful in their service of Hashem?
20. How did Moshe perceive the period in which Yehoshua led the Jewish People?

**BONUS**  
**Q:**

"And Moshe called to Yehoshua and said to him *in the sight of all of Israel*, 'Be strong and of good courage' (31:7)."

Why did Moshe instruct Yehoshua publicly, "in the sight of the Jewish People," rather than in private?

### ***I Did Not Know That!***

***"And Moshe went and spoke these words to all of Yisrael (31:1)."***

Where did Moshe go? Into the heart of every Jew.

*Mayana shel Torah*

### **High Holiday Bonus Questions!**

1. Rosh Hashanah is not only the start of the new year; it is also the start of the month of Tishrei. However, Rosh Chodesh Tishrei is celebrated at a different time compared to other Roshei Chodashim. What is the difference?
2. All two-day holidays are only one day in Israel. That is, of course, except for Rosh Hashanah, which is two days EVERYWHERE. Why?
3. One expects to eat an apple dipped in honey on the first night of Rosh Hashanah. But did you know that many people also have a sheep's head dipped in honey? Why?
4. This Mishneh on Rosh Hashanah is called Rosh Hashanah. What is the Mishneh on Yom Kippur called?
5. Everyone is supposed to fast on Yom Kippur, even pregnant women. So what do the Mishneh and Gemara say one should do if a pregnant woman says "(Honey)...I'm hungry...please feed me."

## Recommended Reading List

### Ramban

31:1	Bidding Farewell
31:2	Loss of Knowledge
31:18	Hiding Redemption

### Sefer Hachinuch

612	The Gathering
613	Writing a <i>Sefer Torah</i>

### Sforno

31:18	Hiding of Hashem
31:21	Attitude

## Answers to this Week's Questions

**All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated**

- 31:2 - Exactly 120.
- 31:2 - Hashem did not let him, because the power of leadership was being transferred to Yehoshua.
- 31:2 - The well-springs of knowledge were closed up for him.
- 31:7 - He foresaw that they would work in partnership.
- 31:7 - That he alone would be the leader – for there can only be one leader in each generation.
- 31:10 - Once every seven years, in the first year of the new *Shemittah* period.
- 31:10 - Because the laws of *Shemittah* still applied to the harvest.
- 31:11 - From *Devarim*: 1:1-6:9; 11:13-21; and 14:22-28:69.
- 31:11 - On a wooden platform erected in the *Azara*.
- 31:12 - In order to learn.
- 31:12 - In order to hear words of Torah.
- 31:12 - So that the parents could receive a special reward for bringing them, because they demonstrated how precious Torah learning is even for those who cannot yet understand it.
- 31:17 - He ignores their distress.
- 31:21 - It comes as a warning to the Jewish People of what will befall them if they abandon Torah.
- 31:26 - It is uncertain. There are two opinions: it was placed beside the *Aron*; or it was placed inside the *Aron* itself.
- 31:28 - The Jewish People were normally assembled by blowing the trumpets, however at this time the trumpets had already been hidden away.
- 31:28 - In 30:19, he was informing the Jewish People of his intention to call upon them as witnesses. In 31:28, he was actually calling upon them.
- 31:29 - Corrupt themselves.
- 31:29 - Throughout the entire reign of Yehoshua.
- 31:29 - As if he himself were still ruling.

**BONUS**

A:

Moshe wasn't speaking to Yehoshua in the presence of the Jewish People. The words, "In the sight of all Israel" and "Be strong and of good courage," are read as one phrase — "In the sight of all Israel be strong and of good courage!" Although a leader must be humble in his heart, he must "Be strong and of good courage" in the eyes of the nation.

*Meshech Chochma*

## High Holiday Bonus Answers!

- A typical two-day Rosh Chodesh is celebrated on the 30th of the preceding month and the 1st of the New Month. Rosh Chodesh Tishrei differs in that it is celebrated on the 1st and 2nd of Tishrei.
- During the time of the Beis HaMikdash (The Temple in Jerusalem), the start of the month was determined by witnesses who testified before Beis Din that they saw the new moon — Beis Din would then declare a new month. However, Rosh Hashanah begins on the 1st of the month, leaving no time to get the word out (even in Jerusalem). On the first potential day for Rosh Hashanah, people used to desist from work and wait to hear if Beis Din declared a new moon. If Beis Din didn't declare a new month, then the people knew the next day would be Rosh Hashanah; they effectively kept two days of Rosh Hashanah. When the fixed calendar was instituted after the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, 2 days were fixed for Rosh Hashanah everywhere so as not to change the tradition of our forefathers. See the *ArtScroll Rosh Hashanah* p.51 for a complete explanation.
- One of the Significant Omens for Rosh Hashanah is a Sheep's Head (other omens are fenugreek, leek, beet, dates, gourd, pomegranate and fish). As we eat it, we ask God to "make us as the head (over many nations) and not the tail (subservient to some other power)." (based on Deut. 28:13 and Ramban's explanation). The sheep also alludes to the *Akeidah* (binding of Isaac), in which a ram replaced Isaac on the Altar. People that don't use a sheep's head can use the head of another animal (like a fish), though in this manner they lose the allusion to the *Akeidah*.
- Mishneh *Yoma* which means "The Day" in Aramaic.
- The Mishneh says you give her food. The Gemara adds that you first tell her "It's Yom Kippur today" but if she still wants food, you give it to her.

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