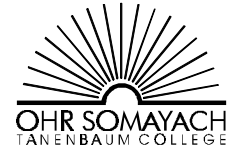


Parsha QA



Parshas Shlach

For the week ending 26 Sivan 5758
19 & 20 June 1998

Parsha Questions

1. Why is the portion about the spies written immediately after the portion about Miriam's *tzara'as*?
2. To what was Moshe really referring when he asked the spies "Are there trees in the land?"
3. Who built Hebron?
4. Which fruits did the *meraglim* bring back from *Eretz Yisrael*?
5. How many people were needed to carry the grape cluster?
6. Why did Hashem shorten the journey of the *meraglim*?
7. Why did the *meraglim* begin their report by saying that the land is "flowing with milk and honey?"
8. Why did the *meraglim* list Amalek first among the hostile nations they encountered?
9. How did Calev quiet the people?
10. Why did the Land appear like a "land that eats its inhabitants?"
11. Besides the incident of the *meraglim*, what other sin led to the decree of 40 years of wandering in the desert?
12. On which date did the *Bnei Yisrael* cry because of the report of the *meraglim*? How did this affect the future of the Jewish Nation?
13. "Don't fear the people of the land ... their defense is departed" (14:9). Who was their chief "defender?"
14. Calev and Yehoshua praised *Eretz Canaan* and tried to reassure the people that they could be victorious. How did the Jewish People respond?
15. "How long shall I bear this evil congregation (14:27)?" Hashem is referring to the ten *meraglim* who slandered the Land. What halacha do we learn from this verse?
16. How is the *mitzvah* of *challah* different from other *mitzvos* that are associated with *Eretz Yisrael*?
17. What is the minimum measurement of *challah* that must be given to a *kohen* according to Torah Law? Rabbinic Law?
18. Verse 15:22 refers to what sin? How does the text indicate this?
19. Moshe's doubt regarding the punishment of the *mekoshesh etzim* (wood-gatherer) was different than his doubt regarding the punishment of the blasphemer. How did it differ?
20. How do the *tzitzis* remind us of the 613 commandments?

Sherlox Holmes and the Espionage Mystery

Two cloaked figures emerged from Scotland Yard into the gray London morning. "I've advised the Chief Inspector to continue investigating Mr. Walter Bradley regarding the Tinkham burglary. I'm sure that a bit of probing will show him to be the guilty party," said world famous detective Sherlock Holmes.

"Mr. Bradley?" said Watstein. "Of all the suspects, I found him the least suspicious. He seemed so calm during questioning."

"Too calm, don't you think?"

"How so?"

"It's not every day a person like him is called to Scotland Yard for questioning. Should he not be even a bit nervous? Yet he showed not the slightest apprehension whatsoever. His strong exterior is a telltale sign of inner apprehension," said Sherlock. "Often in these matters the strong one is the weak one, and the weak one, he is strong."

"Fascinating insight," said Watstein. "It reminds me of Rashi's comment on the following verse: Moshe told the spies: **'See the land, what is its nature? And the nation who dwells upon it: Is it strong? Is it weak? Few in number, or many? And what kind of land is it in which they dwell; is it good or bad ... unfortified or fortified?'** (Numbers 13:18-19) On the phrase **'Is it strong? Is it weak?'** Rashi comments: **'Moshe gave them a formula: If the people live in unfortified cities then they are physically strong, for they rely on their might; but if they live in fortified cities, then they are physically weak.'**

"Exactly," said Sherlock. "The strong one is weak, the weak one is strong."

"But tell me," asked Watstein. "As true as it is, how does Rashi see it in the text itself? Certainly, there are other ways to discern whether or not a soldier is strong or weak? Perhaps the spies were simply asked to see how the people looked. Are they big, tall and healthy, or small and weak?"

"The strong one is weak, Dr. Watstein, the strong one is weak."

What did Sherlock mean?

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Parshas **Shlach** — 26 Sivan 5758, 19 & 20 June 1998

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Answer

Sherlox said, "Notice all the phrases describing opposites: 'Few or many? Good or bad? Unfortified or fortified?' In every single case, the Hebrew text uses the normal formula, which is to separate the two opposites with the Hebrew word 'im.' For example: 'ha-me'at hoo, im rav — are they few, or many?' In this context, the word 'im' has the connotation of the English word 'or.' Yet there is one exception: 'Hachazak hoo, harafeh — Is it strong? Is it weak?'"

"Why, I had never noticed that before. The word 'im' is missing! Indeed, it is an exception," said Watstein.

"Indeed," said Sherlox. "Now, Watstein, say the phrase again, and listen to what you're saying."

"'Hachazak hoo harafeh,' Watstein repeated to himself. "It sounds like: 'The strong one is the weak one!'"

"And the weak one is strong," replied Sherlox.

I Did Not Know That!

The minimal volume of dough requiring that challah be separated from it is 43 egg-volumes plus a fraction. The word challah hints at this number by the combined numerical value of its letters: 43! (Challah is spelled ches lamed hey. Ches=8, lamed=30, hey=5)

Heard from Rabbi Yisroel Simcha Schorr

Recommended Reading List

Ramban

13:4	Order of the <i>Meraglim</i>
13:27,32 & 14:1,3	Tactics of the <i>Meraglim</i>
14:17	Moshe Rabbeinu's Prayer
15:2	Order of the Chapters

Sefer Hachinuch

385	Challah
386	Tzitzis
387	Avoiding Intellectual and Physical Temptations
11:22	Never Satisfied

Answers to this Week's Questions

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

- 13:2 - To show the evil of the *meraglim* (spies), that they saw Miriam punished for *lashon hara* (negative speech) yet failed to take a lesson from it.
- 13:20 - Moshe wanted to know if there were any righteous people in the land whose merit would "shade" the Canaanites from attack.
- 13:22 - Cham.
- 13:23 - A cluster of grapes, a pomegranate and a fig.
- 13:23 - Eight.
- 13:25 - Hashem knew the Jewish People would sin and be punished by spending a year in the desert for every day of the *meraglim's* mission. Therefore, Hashem shortened the journey to soften the decree.
- 13:27 - Any lie which doesn't start with an element of truth won't be believed; therefore, they began their false report with a true statement.
- 13:29 - To instill fear in the Jewish People. The Jewish People were most afraid of Amalek, because they had attacked the Jewish People once before.
- 13:30 - He fooled them by shouting, "Is this all that the son of Amram did to us?" The people quieted themselves to hear what disparaging thing Calev wished to say about the "son of Amram" (Moshe).
- 13:32 - Hashem caused many deaths among the Canaanites so they would be preoccupied with burying their dead and not notice the *meraglim*.
- 13:33 - The golden calf.
- 14:1 - The 9th of Av. This date therefore became a day of crying for all future generations: Both Temples were destroyed on this date.
- 14:9 - Iyov.
- 14:10 - They wanted to stone them.
- 14:27 - That ten men are considered a congregation.
- 15:18 - The obligation to observe other mitzvos associated with *Eretz Yisrael* began only after the possession and division of the Land. The obligation to observe the mitzvah of *challah* started immediately upon entering the Land.
- 15:20 - No fixed amount is stated in the Torah. Rabbinic Law requires a household to give 1/24, and a baker to give 1/48.
- 15:22 - Idolatry. "All these commandments" means one transgression which is equal to transgressing all the commandments — i.e., idolatry.
- 15:34 - Moshe knew that the *mekoshesh etzim* was liable for the death penalty, but not which specific means of death. Regarding the *megadef* Moshe didn't know if he was liable for the death penalty.
- 15:39 - The numerical value of the word *tzitzis* is 600. *Tzitzis* have eight threads and five knots. Add these numbers and you get 613.