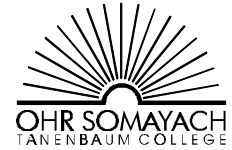


Parsha Q&A



Parshas Ki Savo

For the week ending 21 Elul 5758
11 & 12 September 1998

Parsha Questions

1. When did the obligation to bring bikkurim (first fruits) begin?
2. From which crops must one bring bikkurim?
3. How does one designate bikkurim?
4. Who shakes the basket containing the bikkurim?
5. What does "v'anisa v'amarta" mean (verse 26:5)?
6. "An Arami tried to destroy my father...." Who was that Arami?
7. During what period of the year may bikkurim be brought? Until when are the special verses recited?
8. Someone declaring that he separated terumah and maaser says: "And I didn't forget." What didn't he forget?
9. What were the Jewish People to do with the 12 stones on Mount Eval?
10. Six tribes were to stand on Mount Eval, and six on Mount Gerizim. Who and what were in the middle?
11. Who "causes the blind to go astray"?
12. How does one "strike another secretly"?
13. Eleven curses were spoken on Mount Eval. What is the significance of this number?
14. Why is the word "ashteros" used in reference to sheep?
15. How is the manner of expressing the curses in Parshas Bechukosai more severe than in this week's Parsha?
16. What is meant by "the Jewish People will become a proverb"?
17. "And there you will serve other gods...." What does this mean?
18. "In the morning you shall say, 'If only it were (last) evening' and in the evening you will say, 'If only it were (this) morning.' (28:67)" Why?
19. To which tribe did Moshe give the Torah first?
20. How long does it take to understand the depth of wisdom of one's Torah-teacher?

Sherlox Holmes World and the Misleading Mystery

"Inspiration," said world famous detextive Sherlox Holmes, "is like lightning on a dark road. It comes from above, it strikes unex pectedly, and when it does, we must capture it in our memory; then, even when it's faded, it can guide us along life's dark way."

"Speaking of lighting up the way," said Watstein, "I'm in the dark about this verse. The verse says: Cursed is one who misleads a blind person on the way (Devarim 27:18). Rashi explains that 'misleading a blind person' is not literal, but rather that it refers to giving bad advice to a person who is 'blind' regarding a cer- tain matter."

"What don't you understand?" asked Sherlox.

"What prompts Rashi to give a figurative explana tion of 'misleading a blind person'? Why can't the verse be taken literally: Cursed is someone who misdirects a blind person, that is, someone whose vision is physi cally impaired?"

"Wouldn't that limit the verse to a very specific case?" asked Sherlox.

"What of it? The surrounding verses (ibid. 17,19) are also limited to specific cases: Cursed is one who moves back his neighbor's boundary marker... Cursed is one who distorts the judgment of a stranger, orphan or widow... These verses refer to very specific sins, yet Rashi doesn't feel compelled to offer figurative explana- tions, such as: 'Moving a boundary marker' means any type of theft; or, 'a stranger' means one who is a stranger to the judicial system. Rashi offers no such interpretations. So why here does Rashi do so?"

"To answer that," said Sherlox, "we need a little inspiration on the way."

Prepared by Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem, Israel

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Parshas *Ki Savo* — 21 Elul 5758, 11 & 12 September 1998

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Answer

“Had the verse been literal,” said Sherlock, “it would merely have said: Cursed is one who misleads a blind person. Why does the verse add: Cursed is one who misleads a blind person ‘baderech’ — on the way? Misleading, by definition, means to mislead someone on the way.”

“Agreed. The phrase seems superfluous,” said Watstein.

“But what, then, does baderech — on the way — signify?”

“It signifies,” said Sherlock, “that the person is not blind in the literal sense, but rather that he is blind on the way; that is, he is blind regarding a certain path of action he wishes to follow.”

“Subtle,” said Watstein. “But I think I understand: To justify the seemingly extra phrase ‘on the way,’ Rashi says that it refers not to where the blind person is, but rather it refers to the type of blind person he is: i.e., he is blind on the way, blind regarding the path of endeavor upon which he wishes to embark. Have I seen the light, Mr. Holmes?”

“You’re on the way,” said Sherlock.

Based on Maskil L’Dovid; “Sherlock” concept by Reuven Subar

I Did Not Know That!

“And you shall take from the first of every fruit of the earth...and place (them) in the basket.” (Devarim 26:2)

By Torah law, bikkurim (first fruits) have no minimum amount which one must give. The Sages, however, required that one give a sixtieth of his crop as bikkurim (Rambam Hilchos Bikkurim 2:17). This amount, one out of sixty, is hinted in the above verse “and place in the basket.” The Hebrew word for basket — *teneh* — has the numerical value of 60.

Heard in the name of the Vilna Gaon

Recommended Reading List

Sefer Hachinuch

606-7 Power of Speech
611 Emulating Hashem

Sforno

26:17 Exalting Hashem
26:18 The Exalted Jewish People
27:15 The Curses
28:2 The Blessings
28:14 Punishment

Ramban

26:3 The Kohen of Your Day
27:3 The Stones
27:26 Upholding the Torah
28:42 The Fourth Exile

Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh

226:11 Rejoicing with Hashem and the Torah

Answers to this Week's Questions

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

1. 26:1 - After the Land was conquered and divided.
2. 26:2 - The seven species for which Eretz Yisrael is praised.
3. 26:2 - When he sees the first fruit ripen on a tree, he binds a piece of straw around it to mark it as bikkurim.
4. 26:4 - The kohen places his hands under the hands of the one bringing it, and they wave the basket together.
5. 26:5 - Speak loudly.
6. 26:5 - Lavan.
7. 26:11 - Bikkurim are brought from Shavuot until Channuka. The verses are recited only until Succot.
8. 26:13 - To bless Hashem.
9. 10. 27:2 - Build an altar.
10. 27:12 - Kohanim, levi'im and the Holy Ark.
11. 27:18 - Any person who intentionally gives bad advice.
12. 27:24 - By slandering him.
13. 27:24 - Each curse corresponds to one of the tribes, except for the tribe of Shimon. Since Moshe didn't intend to bless the tribe of Shimon before his death, he did not want to curse them either.
14. 28:4 - Because they "enrich" (m'ashiros) their owners.
15. 28:23 - In Bechukosai, the Torah speaks in the plural, whereas in this week's Parsha the curses are mentioned in the singular.
16. 28:37 - Whenever someone wants to express the idea of extraordinary suffering they will use the Jewish People as an example.
17. 28:64 - You will pay taxes to the idol-worshipping priests.
18. 28:67 - Because the curse of each hour will be greater than that of the previous hour.
19. 29:3 - To the tribe of Levi.
20. 29:8 - 40 years.

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