

Parsha Q&A



Parshas Ki Sisa

For the week ending 16 Adar 5758
13 & 14 March 1998

Parsha Questions

1. How many "geira" are there in a shekel?
2. What was the minimum age of military service in the Jewish army?
3. What were the three different types of *terumah* donated?
4. The Jews were counted after *Yom Kippur* and again after *Pesach*. Both times they numbered the same amount. How can this be? Didn't some 19 year olds turn 20 during that six month period?
5. How many ingredients comprise the incense of the *Mishkan*?
6. According to Rashi, why are sailors called "malachim"?
7. What is the difference between *chochma* (wisdom), *bina* (understanding), and *da'as* (knowledge)?
8. Shabbos is a "sign." What does it signify?
9. When did the Jewish People begin to give contributions for the building of the *Mishkan*?
10. How many books are there in Tanach?
11. From where did the men take the earrings that they donated to make the calf?
12. Why did Aharon build the altar for the golden calf by himself?
13. Why did Moshe break the Tablets?
14. How can two brothers belong to two different tribes?
15. Why did Moshe ask that his name be erased from the Torah?
16. How has the sin of the golden calf affected the Jewish People throughout history?
17. In verse 33:2, Hashem says that the inhabitants of *Eretz Canaan* would be driven out of the Land. In that verse, only six of the seven Canaanite nations are mentioned. What happened to the seventh?
18. How did Hashem show that He forgave the Jewish People?
19. How did Moshe become wealthy?
20. How do the light rays shining from Moshe's face show us the powerful effect of sin?

Rashi never just comments; something in the text always impels him to do so. Rashi's comments are answers to unspoken questions and difficulties arising from a thoughtful reading of the Torah. Therefore, anyone who wants a true understanding of Rashi's classic Torah commentary must always ask

"What's Bothering Rashi?"

"And you speak to the Children of Israel saying: Keep My Sabbaths, for it is a sign between Me and you for your generations, to know that I am Hashem Who sanctifies you."(Exodus 31:13)

Rashi comments on the words "For it is a sign:" It is a great sign between us that I have chosen you, in that I let you inherit the day on which I rested as your day of rest. Rashi changes the meaning of the verse. The simple meaning is that Shabbos is the sign, but Rashi doesn't say this. He says the sign is "that I have chosen you." Why? **What's bothering Rashi?**

Answer: Reading the verse carefully (as Rashi did) you will notice that the word "Sabbaths" is plural while the verse says "it is a sign" in the singular. So the apparently reasonable meaning is not grammatically correct. Therefore Rashi says "it" refers to the sign (not to Shabbos), meaning: The fact that G-d chose us to give us His day of rest as ours is a great sign of the special relationship between us. This is truly an original interpretation.

Based on Dr. Avigdor Bonchek's new book "What's Bothering Rashi?" Feldheim Publishers

Prepared by Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem, Israel
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Parshas Ki Sisa — 16 Adar 5758, 13 & 14 March 1998

Production Design: Lev Seltzer ∞

I Did Not Know That!

“And they shall give... (30:12)”

The word *V'nasnu* — “and they shall give” — is a palindrome. It is spelled the same backwards as forwards. This hints that giving charity is a two-way street. When a person gives charity he should realize that he or his offspring might one day need to be on the receiving end of charity. And then his good deed will come back to assist him.

Vilna Gaon

Recommended Reading List

Ramban

30:13	<i>Lashon HaKodesh</i>
30:19	Washing Hands
31:2	Betzalel
32:1-4	The Golden Calf
32:18	Sounds
33:11	Yehoshua's Age
34:27	A Renewed Covenant
34:28	The Second Tablets

Sefer Hachinuch

105	Equality in Sacrifices
107-8	Anointing

Malbim

28:5	Trustworthy Treasurers
28:30	The <i>Urim V'Tumim</i>
29:9	Donning of the Kohen's Garments
30:1	The Incense-Altar
30:12	The Concept of Counting People
31:2	The Name Betzalel
31:13	A Taste of the World-to-Come

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Answers to this Week's Questions

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

- 30:13 - Twenty.
- 30:14 - Twenty.
- 30:15 - For the *Adanim* (sockets), for the purchase of communal sacrifices, and for the building of the *Mishkan*.
- 30:16 - Their ages were calculated based on Rosh Hashana, not based on their individual birthdays.
- 30:34 - Eleven ingredients were used making the incense.
- 30:35 - Because they stir (*malach*) the water with their oars.
- 31:3 - *Chochma* is knowledge acquired from others. *Bina* is the deduction of new knowledge from what one has already learned. *Da'as* is holy inspiration.
- 31:13 - It is a sign between Hashem and the Jewish People that He has chosen them and a sign to the nations of the world that He has sanctified the Jewish People.
- 31:18 - The 11th of Tishrei.
- 31:18 - 24.
- 32:2,3 - From their ears.
- 32:5 - He hoped that by building it by himself it would take longer and in the interim Moshe would return.
- 32:19 - Moshe reasoned: If the Torah forbids those who have estranged themselves from the Torah to partake in even a single commandment (*Pesach* sacrifice), surely the *entire* Torah cannot be given to a whole nation who has estranged itself from Hashem!
- 32:27 - Half-brothers, sharing the same mother.
- 32:32 - So people shouldn't say "Moshe was unworthy to plead for mercy on behalf of the Jewish people."
- 32:34 - Whenever Hashem punishes the Jewish People, part of that punishment comes as payment for the sin of the golden calf.
- 33:2 - The seventh nation, the Girgashites, voluntarily emigrated.
- 33:14 - He agreed to let His *Shechina* dwell among them.
- 34:1 - Moshe carved the Tablets out of precious stone. Hashem commanded Moshe to keep the leftover fragments.
- 34:35 - Before the sin of the golden calf, the people would not have been afraid to look at the light rays, but after the sin they were afraid.