

Parsha QA



Parshas Behar

For the week ending 17 Iyar 5757
24 May 1997

Parsha Questions

1. Why does the Torah specify that the laws of *shemithah* were taught on *Har Sinai*?
2. If one possesses *shemithah* food after it is no longer available in the field, what must he do with it?
3. The Torah commands, "You shall sanctify the fiftieth year." How is this done?
4. Which two 'returns' are announced by the shofar during *yovel*?
5. From where does the *yovel* year get its name?
6. What prohibitions are derived from the verse "*V'lo sonu ish es amiso...*" A person shall not afflict his fellow..."?
7. What is the punishment for neglecting the laws of *shemithah*?
8. If *shemithah* is observed properly, how long is the crop of the sixth year guaranteed to last?
9. Under what circumstance may one sell ancestral land?
10. After selling an ancestral field, when can one redeem it?
11. If a home in a walled city is sold, when can it be redeemed?
12. What does the word 'days' mean in this week's *Parsha*?
13. What is considered a walled city?
14. What is the definition of a "ger toshav"?
15. To what is one who leaves *Eretz Yisrael* compared?
16. Why does Rashi mention the plague of the first born in this week's *Parsha*?
17. List three prohibitions which demonstrate the dignity with which one must treat a Jewish indentured servant.
18. Who supports the family of the Jewish indentured servant during his years of servitude?
19. If a Jew is sold as a servant to a non-Jew, does he go free after six years?
20. Where is it permitted to prostrate oneself on a stone floor?



"If you say: 'What will we eat in the seventh year? — behold! We're not going to plant seed, and we're not going to gather in our crops!' Then I will command My blessing for you in the sixth year and it will produce a crop enough for three years." (25:20)

This verse implies that the crop in the sixth year will be miraculously blessed only if the People say "What will we eat in the seventh year?" But if they don't say this, then the land will produce only the normal amount of food. If that should happen, how would the people survive? What would they eat?

I Did Not Know That!

Rabbi Yishmael said, "When the People of Israel do the will of Hashem, they will keep *shemithah* one year out of seven. But when they do not do the will of Hashem, they will end up keeping four 'shemithahs' every seven years! How so? Their land will not be very productive, and so they will need to leave it fallow every other year (in order to replenish the depleted mineral supply)."

Ramban based on the Midrash

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Recommended Reading List

Ramban

25:3	First Six Years	330
25:9	Two Kinds of "Shofar"	331
25:10	The Word "Yovel"	337
25:20	Three Year Blessing	342
25:23	Ban on Perpetual Sale	343
25:36	Two Kinds of Usury	
26:1	Commitment in Hostile Environment	

Sefer Hachinuch

Counting until Yovel
Call of the Shofar
Unfair Profit
National Land
Usury

Sforno

25:4 "A Shabbos to Hashem"

Answers to this Week's Questions

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

1. 25:1 - To teach us that just as *shemitah* was taught in detail on *Har Sinai*, so too, all the *mitzvos* were taught in detail on *Har Sinai*.
2. 25:7 - Remove it from his property and declare it ownerless.
3. 25:10 - At the beginning of the year the Beis Din declares, "This year is *kadosh* (sanctified)."
4. 25:10 - The return of the land to its original owner, and the "return" (freedom) of the slave from slavery.
5. 25:10 - From the sounding of the shofar. A ram's horn is called a *yovel*.
6. 25:17 - One may not intentionally hurt people's feelings, nor give bad advice while secretly intending to reap benefit.
7. 25:18 - Exile.
8. 25:21,22 - From Nissan of the sixth year until Succos of the ninth year.
9. 25:25 - Only if one becomes impoverished.
10. 25:24 - Anytime after two years following the sale until *yovel*. At the beginning of *yovel* it returns to the family automatically.
11. 25:29 - Only within the first year after the sale. Afterwards, even in *yovel*, it does not return.
12. 25:29 - The days of an entire year.
13. 25:29 - A city that has been surrounded by a wall since the time of Yehoshua.
14. 25:35 - A non-Jew who lives in *Eretz Yisrael* and accepts upon himself not to worship idols.
15. 25:38 - To one who worships idols.
16. 25:38 - The prohibition against taking interest is accompanied by the phrase, "I am Hashem your G-d who took you out of Egypt." Rashi explains that just as Hashem discerned in Egypt between those who were first-born and those who were not, so too will Hashem discern and punish those who lend with interest, pretending they are acting on behalf of others.
17. 25:39-43 - a) Do not make him perform humiliating tasks; b) Do not sell him publicly; c) Do not make him perform unnecessary jobs.
18. 25:41 - His master.
19. 25:54 - No. If he is not redeemed with money, he must wait until the *yovel* to go free.
20. 26:1 - In the *Mikdash*.

Bonus



If the Jewish People have trust in Hashem and don't say "What will we eat in the seventh year?" then the food grown in the sixth year will have extraordinary nutritional value. People will need to eat only a tiny bit in order to feel fully satisfied.

Sforno