

# Parsha Q&A



## Parshas Behar / Bechukosai

For the week ending 22 Iyar 5759  
7 & 8 May 1999

### Parsha Questions

#### Behar

1. If one possesses *shemita* food after it is no longer available in the field, what must he do with it?
2. From where does the *yovel* year get its name?
3. What prohibitions are derived from the verse "*v'lo sonu ish es amiso* — a person shall not afflict his fellow"?
4. If a home in a walled city is sold, when can it be redeemed?
5. What does the word "days" mean in this week's Parsha?
6. What is considered a walled city?
7. To what is one who leaves *Eretz Yisrael* compared?
8. Why does Rashi mention the plague of the firstborn in this week's Parsha?
9. List three prohibitions which demonstrate the dignity with which one must treat a Jewish indentured servant.
10. Where is it permitted to prostrate oneself on a stone floor?

#### Bechukosai

1. To what do the words "*bechukosai telechu*" refer?
2. When is rain "in its season"?
3. What is meant by "you shall eat your bread to satisfaction"?
4. What is meant by "and a sword will not pass through your land"?
5. Which progression of seven transgressions are taught in Chapter 26, and why in that particular order?
6. What is one benefit which the Jewish People derive from the Land of Israel's state of ruin?
7. What positive element is implied by the words "and I will bring them into the land of their enemies"?
8. In verse 26:42, why is the word "remember" not used in connection with the name of Yitzchak?
9. What happens when a poor person dedicates the value of a person to the *Beis Hamikdash* and doesn't have sufficient funds to fulfill his vow?
10. Where must "*ma'aser sheini*" be eaten?

### PAR-PLEXED!

#### How do you answer this perplexing Parsha question?

*Parshas Bechukosai* starts with ten verses describing blessings that result from Torah study and observance. Then, more than thirty verses describes the curses brought about by laxity in Torah study and observance. Why do there seem to be more curses than blessings? Doesn't this contradict the principle that G-d always rewards in greater measure than He punishes?

#### Answer:

The blessings are written in general terms; each one is really an entire category and includes many blessings. Each curse, on the other hand, is spelled out in detail (in order to inspire fear and alarm). In reality, though, there are more blessings than curses.

*Ibn Ezra*

### I Did Not Know That!

"And five of you will pursue a hundred [enemy soldiers]." (26:8)

This refers to our weakest soldiers; our weakest soldier will be able to defeat twenty enemies. Our strongest soldier will be able to defeat a thousand or more.

*Ohr HaChaim Hakadosh, based on Toras Kohanim*

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## Recommended Reading List

### Behar

### Sforno

25:4 "A Shabbos to Hashem"

### Ramban

### Bechukosai

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

**Ramban**

26:6 Taming of Wild Animals  
 26:11 Theology of Medicine  
 26:12 Promise for the Future  
 26:16 Analysis of Jewish History

### Sefer Hachinuch

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330 Counting until Yovel  
 331 Call of the Shofar  
 337 Unfair Profit  
 342 National Land  
 343 Usury

350 Dedicating One's Value  
 352 Switching Korbanos  
 360 Animal Tithes

## Answers to this Week's Questions

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

### Behar

1. 25:7 - Remove it from his property and declare it ownerless.
2. 25:10 - From the sounding of the shofar. A ram's horn is called a *yovel*.
3. 25:17 - One may not intentionally hurt people's feelings, nor give bad advice while secretly intending to reap benefit.
4. 25:29 - Only within the first year after the sale.
5. 25:29 - The days of an entire year.
6. 25:29 - A city surrounded by a wall since the time of Yehoshua.
7. 25:38 - To one who worships idols.
8. 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 firstborn 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.
9. 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.
10. 26:1 - In the *Mikdash*.

### Bechukosai

1. 26:3 - Laboring in the study of Torah.
2. 26:4 - At times when people are not outside (e.g., Shabbos nights).
3. 26:5 - You will only require a little bread to be completely satisfied.
4. 26:6 - No foreign army will travel through your land even on their way to a different country.
5. 26:14,15 - Not studying Torah, not observing *mitzvos*, rejecting those who observe *mitzvos*, hating Sages, preventing others from observing *mitzvos*, denying that Hashem gave the *mitzvos*, denying the existence of Hashem. They are listed in this order because each transgression leads to the next.
6. 26:32 - No enemy nation will be able to settle in the Land of Israel.
7. 26:41 - Hashem Himself, so to speak, will bring them into their enemies' land. This means that even when the Jews are in exile, Hashem will supply them with leaders who inspire them to keep the Torah. This guards the Jews from assimilating into the host culture.
8. 26:42 - Because the image of Yitzchak's ashes (who was prepared to be brought as an offering) upon the altar is always before Hashem.
9. 27:8 - The person whose value was donated goes before the *kohen*, who sets the obligation according to the poor person's ability to pay.
10. 27:30 - In Jerusalem.