Parsha Questions

1. When did the obligation to bring bikkurim (first fruits) begin?
2. From which crops must one bring bikkurim?
3. What does 'v'anisa v'amarta' mean (verse 26:5)?
4. How does one designate bikkurim?
5. Who shakes the basket containing the bikkurim?
6. “An Arami tried to destroy my father....(26:5)” Who was that Arami?
7. Starting when in the year are bikkurim brought? Until when are the special verses recited?
8. Someone declaring that he separated trumah and maaser says “and I didn’t forget (26:13).” What didn’t he forget?
9. Eleven curses were spoken on Mt. Eval. What is the significance of this number?
10. What were the Jewish People to do with the 12 stones on Mount Eval?
11. Six tribes were to stand on Mount Eval, and six on Mount Grizim. Who and what were in the middle?
12. Who “causes the blind to go astray?”
13. How does one “strike another secretly?”
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 one’s teacher’s wisdom?

Bonus: ‘Vidui’ is a word usually used in reference to confession of sin. Why, then, is the declaration that one has properly given tithes to the Levi’im called ‘Vidui Ma’aser’?

I Did Not Know That!

The parsha of bikkurim contains the name of Hashem 13 times, corresponding to the 13 attributes of Hashem’s Kindness. Similarly, the 13 Attributes and the mitzva of bikkurim are listed in the same paragraph in Parshas Ki Sisa (Shmos 34). This hints that the mitzva of bikkurim arouses Divine Mercy.

Meshech Chochma
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. 26:5 - Speak loudly.
4. 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.
5. 26:4 - The kohen places his hands under the hands of the one bringing it, and they wave the basket together.
6. 26:5 - Lavan.
7. 26:11 - Bikkurim are brought starting from Shavuos (until Chanukka). The verses are recited only until Succos.
8. 26:13 - To bless Hashem.
9. 27:24 - Each curse corresponds with 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.
10. 27:2 - Build an altar.
11. 27:12 - Kohanim, Levi'im and the Ark.
12. 27:18 - Any person who intentionally gives bad advice.
13. 27:24 - By slandering him.
14. 28:4 - Because they ‘enrich’ (m’ashiros) their owners.
15. 28:23 - In Bechukosai, the Torah speaks in the plural, whereas, in this 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 worshiping 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.

Due to the sin of the Golden Calf, the first-born of every family lost the right to perform the temple service, and thereby receive Trumah and Maaser. Thus, “I removed the holiness from my house, and I gave it to the Levi...” is a confession to the sin of the Golden Calf.

Sforno