

Parsha Q&A



Parshas Vzot HaBracha

For 24 October 1997/22 Tishrei 5758 in Israel
25 October 1997/23 Tishrei 5758 Outside Israel

Parsha Questions

1. Before giving the Torah, Hashem went to 'Seir' and 'Mount Paran.' Why?
2. How was the Torah written before it was given at Mt. Sinai?
3. Why is Yehuda blessed immediately after Reuven?
4. Where is Shimon's blessing found in the Parsha?
5. In Levi's blessing, which relatives are referred to as A) father, B) brother and C) son.
6. What covenant (*bris*) did Levi keep?
7. Why was Binyamin blessed before Yosef?
8. Which Tribe received the 'best' portion of *Eretz Yisrael*?
9. Besides the sun, which celestial body helps fruit to ripen?
10. If there were only 7 Canaanite nations, why did Yehoshua need to conquer 31 kings?
11. Who are the "*Rivavos Ephraim*?"
12. What was the partnership between Zevulun and Yissachar?
13. What three things did the land of Zevulun possess?
14. What did visiting merchants see that inspired them to convert to Judaism?
15. The tribe of Gad saw "the beginning — *reishis*." The beginning of what?
16. The source of the Jordan River was in the territory of which tribe?
17. Which tribe possessed the *Kinneret*?
18. The daughters of which tribe married High Priests and Kings?
19. Who wrote the last eight verses in the Torah, starting with the verse, "and Moshe died...."
20. Who buried Moshe?

Bonus
Q:

Keeping in mind the concept of "*mida kneged mida* (measure for measure)," what mitzva did Moshe do to deserve the honor of being buried by Hashem Himself?

I Did Not Know That!

The Torah's last verses describe Moshe's death. According to Rabbi Meir, Moshe wrote these verses '*B'dima* — in tears.' But this word can also be read '*B'dema* — jumbled.' This implies that Moshe wrote these verses in a disorderly fashion so their meaning could not be discerned.

Based on *The Vilna Gaon*

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Recommended Reading List

Ramban

- 33:6 Why not Shimon?
33:12 The Shelter of Binyamin

Sforno

- 33:6 Reuven's Blessing
33:7 Shimon's Blessing
33:17 The Kingship of Yosef
33:25-6 The Collective Blessing

Answers to this Week's Questions

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

- 33:2 - In order to offer the Torah to the people of Seir (Eisav's descendants) and the people of Paran (Yishmael's descendants).
- 33:2 - Black fire on white fire.
- 33:7 - Because both of them admitted their sin.
- 33:7 - It is hinted at in Yehuda's blessing.
- 33:9 - A) Maternal grandfather, B) Maternal half-brother, and C) Grandson through the daughter.
- 33:9 - *Bris Mila* (circumcision).
- 33:12 - Because the *Beis HaMikdash*, built in Binyamin's portion, was 'more beloved' than the *Mishkan* built in Yosef's portion.
- 33:13 - Yosef.
- 33:14 - The Moon.
- 33:17 - Since the Land was so desirable, all foreign kings and governments acquired palaces and property there.
- 33:17 - Those slain by Yehoshua, a descendant of Ephraim.
- 33:18 - Zevulun engaged in commerce and provided for Yissachar, thus enabling Yissachar to study Torah full-time.
- 33:19 - *Taris*, a type of fish; *Chilazon*, a mollusk whose blood was needed for the *techeles* (a dye needed for *tzitzis*); and a type of sand needed for white glass.
- 33:19 - They saw that the Jews serve one G-d and follow a unified Kashrus code.
- 33:21 - They saw the beginning of the conquest of the land, and chose that as its portion.
- 33:22 - Dan.
- 33:23 - Naftali.
- 33:24 - Asher.
- 34:5 - According to one opinion, Yehoshua wrote it. Rabbi Meir says Moshe himself wrote it with tears.
- 34:6 - According to one opinion, Hashem buried Moshe. According to Rabbi Yishmael, Moshe buried himself.

Bonus

A:

While the Jewish People were busy collecting gold and silver from the Egyptians, Moshe concerned himself with locating and transporting Yosef's remains. Moshe wanted to honor the oath made to Yosef, that his remains would be taken out of Egypt and buried in Israel. Since he honored Yosef in burial, he himself was honored in burial.

Medrash Rabba