

Parsha Q&A



Parshas Ha'azinu

For the week ending 8 Tishrei 5757
20 & 21 September 1996

We wish all our readers a Gemar Chasima Tova.

Parsha Questions

1. What is so special about the heavens and the earth that Moshe chooses them as witnesses?
2. Why is the Torah compared to rain?
3. In what way is Hashem "faithful without injustice?" (32:4)
4. Why is Hashem called a "Tzaddik"?
5. How many floods did Hashem bring upon the world?
6. Which group of people does the Torah call "fathers"? Cite an example.
7. Why did Hashem separate the peoples of the world into exactly 70 nations?
8. Why is the merit of the Jewish People's ancestry called a "rope"?
9. How is Hashem's behavior toward the Jewish People similar to an eagle's behavior toward its offspring?
10. Hashem says regarding punishment of the Jewish People "I will spend my arrows on them" (32:23). What is the *positive* aspect of this punishment?
11. How does the idea of "*chillul Hashem*" not allow the nations to destroy the Jewish People?
12. What will happen to the nations that conquer the Jewish People?
13. When Hashem overturns a nation that persecutes the Jewish People, His attribute of Mercy is "replaced" by which attribute?
14. When Hashem punishes the heathen nations, for whose sins does He exact punishment?
15. How will Hashem's punishment change the way the nations view the Jewish People?
16. On what day was *Ha'azinu* taught to the Jewish People?
17. In verse 32:44 Yehoshua is called *Hoshea*. Why?
18. In verse 32:47 what does "it is not empty from you" mean?
19. Why did Hashem tell Moshe that he would die a similar death to that of his brother Aaron?
20. If Moshe had spoken to the rock rather than striking it, what would the Jewish People have learned?

Bonus Q:

Rashi states that Hashem "pays" the righteous for their mitzvos in the World to Come, whereas he "pays" the wicked for their mitzvos in this world (32:4). But since Hashem is just, why is it that an evil person is rewarded only in this world, even if he did a perfect *mitzvah*?

I Did Not Know That!

The Torah is often compared to "water." In 32:2, the Torah is likened to rain, dew, light rain, and showers, corresponding to the four types of students in the fifth chapter of *Pirkei Avos*. One who is quick to learn and quick to forget, one who is slow to learn and slow to forget, one who is slow to learn but quick to forget, and one who is quick to learn but slow to forget.

Ba'al HaTurim

Prepared by Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem, Israel

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22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103, Jerusalem Israel

972-2-581-0315

fax: 972-2-581-2890

ohr@virtual.co.il

38 East 29th Street 8th floor, New York, NY 10016, USA

1-212-213-3100

fax: 1-212-213-8717

RZCorlin@aol.com or estern@Aol.com

613 Clark Avenue West, Thornhill, Ontario L4J 5V3, Canada

1-905-886-5730

fax: 1-905-886-6065

Somayach@MSN.com

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Written and Compiled by Rabbi Eliyahu Kane

General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman

Production Design: Lev Seltzer

Recommended Reading List

Ramban

- 32:1 Biblical Witnesses
32:16 The Rebuke of Ha'azinu
32:40 The Testimony of Ha'azinu

Sforno

- 32:2 Waters of the Torah
32:13 Purpose of Eretz Yisrael
32:19 Purpose of Galus
32:27 Salvation of Dispersion

Answers to this Week's Questions

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

1. 32:1 - They endure forever.
2. 32:2 - Just as rain gives life and promotes growth, so too does the Torah.
3. 32:4 - He is "faithful" and rewards the righteous, and He is "without injustice" and rewards even the wicked for any good deeds.
4. 32:4 - Everyone will agree that his judgments are righteous.
5. 32:7 - Two. The first was in the generation of Enosh the grandson of Adam, and the second was in the time of Noach.
6. 32:7 - The Prophets are called "fathers". When Eliyahu was leaving this world, his student Elisha called after him, "My father, my father" (*Melachim II* 2:12).
7. 32:8 - Corresponding to the 70 Bnei Yisrael who entered Egypt.
8. 32:9 - Their merit is "woven from" the merits of the *Avos*.
9. 32:12 - He is merciful by waking them gently, hovering over them, and carrying them on His wings.
10. 32:23 - "The arrows will be spent" implies that the supply of arrows will come to an end, but the Jewish People will not.
11. 32:27 - The nations would attribute their success to their own might and to the might of their own gods. Hashem would not allow His name to be desecrated through the complete annihilation of His people.
12. 32:35 - They will eventually be punished.
13. 32:41 - His attribute of Justice.
14. 32:42 - For their own sins, and the sins of their ancestors.
15. 32:43 - They will view the Jewish People as praiseworthy for cleaving to Hashem.
16. 32:44 - The Shabbos on which Moshe died, and Yehoshua took over as leader.
17. 32:44 - To indicate that although he was the leader of the Jewish People, he still maintained a humble bearing.
18. 32:47 - That you will receive reward for studying Torah, and that there is nothing meaningless in the Torah.
19. 32:50 - Because Moshe wanted this.
20. 32:51 - If the rock had produced water without being struck, then the Jewish People would have reasoned that if a rock, which receives no reward or punishment, obeys Hashem's commands, all the more so they should too.

Bonus

A:

The mitzvos performed by a righteous person reflect his essence, while his sins are secondary. The sins of a wicked person reflect his essence, while his good deeds are secondary. Hashem rewards or punishes a person for his essence in the World to Come, and for what is secondary, He rewards or punishes in this world.

Gur Aryeh