

KMS Family Parsha Sheet

בס"ד

By Rabbi Aaron & Elisheva Levitt

Chukat - חֻקַּת

Parsha Questions

(Answers on the back)

- 1) In this parsha, which 2 places is the color red mentioned? Where is the 1st time the Torah mentions the color red? Where is the 2nd time?
- 2) In this parsha, which process requires the burning of 3 items: cedar wood, hyssop and crimson wool? What other purification process requires the same 3 items? Where else in Torah was a hyssop used?
- 3) What is a Parah Adumah? Who did the Parah Adumah make Tahor?
- 4) What do Chazal learn from the pasuk (19:14) "זאת התורה אדם כי ימות באהל"?
- 5) In this parsha, Moshe produced water from a stone. Where else in the Torah does Moshe produce water from a stone? What is the difference between the ways the 2 stones are called?
- 6) What punishment did Moshe receive for hitting the rock instead of speaking to it?
- 7) Which 2 righteous people died in this week's parsha? What miracles in the desert happened in their zechut?
- 8) What did Moshe do with Aharon's garments prior to his death?
- 9) Moshe set up a copper statue of a snake. How long did this remain in existence?
- 10) What did the Bnei Yisrael ask from the king of the Amorites? What did he answer?



Words of Wisdom

Rambam Hilchot De'ot 1:4

הדרך הישרה היא מדה בינונית שבכל דעה ודעה מכל הדעות שיש לו לאדם. והיא הדעה שהיא רחוקה משתי הקצוות רחוק שוה ואינה קרובה לא לזו ולא לזו

The straight path is the mean disposition found in every human trait. It is equally distant from both extremes and is not nearer to one than to the other.

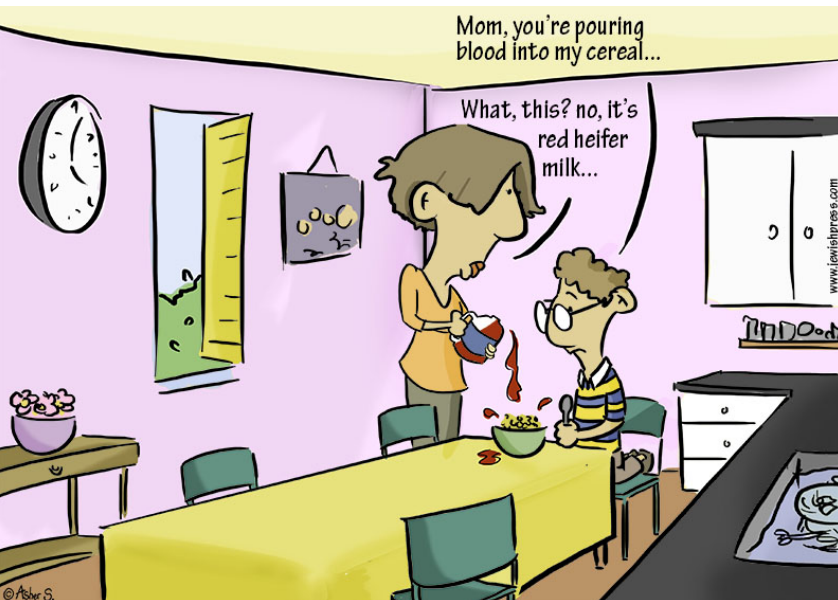
Did You Know?

Talmudic Burnings (Aish.com)

Magen Avraham writes (Orach Chaim 580:9) that it is the custom of pious individuals to fast on the Erev Shabbos preceding Parshas Chukas in observance of a tragic event which occurred on that day. On this day in the year 1244, 24 cartloads of the Talmud and other holy books were publicly burned in France due to allegations of heretical and rebellious teachings contained therein. Rabbi Hillel of Verona, a student of Rabbeinu Yonah, writes that his illustrious teacher noted that just 40 days prior to this episode, the Jews had publicly burned in that very spot a number of copies of the controversial philosophical writings of Maimonides. Rabbeinu Yonah saw in this tragedy Divine punishment being meted out for their actions, and he viewed it as a Heavenly message supporting the legitimacy of the teachings of Maimonides. The Jews of the time repented their actions and prayed for Divine forgiveness, thus ending the bitter controversy over the philosophical views of Maimonides. Although fasts commemorating historical events are normally established on the calendar date on which they occurred - in this case 9 Tammuz - the rabbis of the time mystically inquired regarding the nature of the decree, and received the cryptic reply- "this is the decree of the Torah." This expression is taken from Onkelos' Aramaic translation of the second verse in Parshas Chukas (Numbers 19:2). They interpreted this message as alluding that the decree was connected to the day's proximity to the reading of Parshas Chukas, so they established the fast specifically on the Erev Shabbos preceding the reading of Parshas Chukas. Magen Avraham concludes by noting that in the terrible pogroms that occurred in the years Tach V'Tat (1648-9), two entire Jewish communities were brutally destroyed on the Erev Shabbos preceding Parshas Chukas.

Mom, you're pouring blood into my cereal...

What, this? no, it's red heifer milk...





Parsha Answers:

- 1) The parsha begins with the laws of the red heifer. Later Moshe asks the king of Edom ("red") for permission to pass through his land. The first time the Torah mentions the color red is in Parshat Toldot, where the newborn Esav is described as "red" - admoni. A few verses later, Yaakov cooks a dish of red-colored food.
- 2) These 3 items were burned along with the red heifer, as part of the purification from contact with the dead. In Parshat Metzora, the purification from Tzara'at requires these same ingredients. In Parshat Bo, the Jews are commanded to smear the blood of the Passover offering on their doorposts, using a bundle of hyssop.
- 3) A Parah Admuh is a red cow (that has never worked and has nothing wrong with it). It purifies someone who was Tameh L'Met (who touched or was in a house with a dead body).
- 4) Berachot 63b - "אין דברי תורה מתקיימין אלא במי שממית עצמו עליה" - "Torah has a lasting effect only on one who kills himself for it."
- 5) In Parshat Beshalach, Moshe also produced water from a stone (Shemot 17:6). In Parshat Beshalach the stone is called a tzur; in this parsha is called a sela (BaMidbar 20:11).
- 6) He had to die in the Midbar and did not get to enter Eretz Yisrael.
- 7) Miriam (The Well) and Aharon (The Clouds of Glory).
- 8) He placed them on Elazar who succeeded his father as Kohen Gadol.
- 9) Pesachim 56a - King Chizkiya instituted 6 things. For 3 of these actions the Sages criticized him, while they agreed to the other 3. One of the agreed upon actions was to destroy the copper snake statue set up by Moshe. The reason was that the Jews were coming to believe that the statue had the power to heal, instead of attributing this power to Hashem.
- 10) They asked to pass through his land, but he said no and threatened them.



Tefilla Insights

Mizmor Shiur Chanukat Habayit LeDovid
(outorah.org)

The opening prayer in the pesukei dezimra- section of our morning prayers is Mizmor Shiur Chanukat Habayit LeDovid - King David's song of Temple inauguration. Rashi explains in Tehillim that this psalm was recited by the Levites in King Solomon's Temple. It is fascinating to note that the recitation of this prayer at this point is not alluded to or found in the Talmud, Shulchan Aruch, or in any of the early Siddurim. The first mention of it seems to be in the seventeenth century based on a Kabbalistic custom revealed by the Ari Hakadosh. Therefore, our Siddur commentators offer insights to account for the insertion of this psalm. The Tikkun Tefilla explains that since the Talmud Megillah 29a maintains that all synagogues and study halls must be considered "a mikdash miatmini Temple sanctuaries". It is appropriate to begin our tefilla with a psalm of Temple inauguration. Our daily prayers in shul take the place of the sacrifices offered by our ancestors. The thrill, excitement, and importance that accompanied a visit to the Beit Hamikdash should resonate in the synagogue every Shabbat morning (no matter how good the kiddush is).



This Week In Jewish History

Tammuz 16


(Aish.com)

In 2000, Senator Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut was nominated as Al Gore's running mate in the presidential election, becoming the first Jew nominated for this post by a major party. Lieberman, an observant Jew, upended the conventional wisdom that to get ahead in secular society, one had to tone down his Jewishness. Indeed, Lieberman was chosen largely because of his Jewish observance, which earned him the appellation, "moral conscience of the Senate." (Lieberman helped to register black voters in the South during the 1960s, and attended Martin Luther King's historic 1963 march on Washington.) In the November 2000 presidential election, the Gore-Lieberman ticket won the popular vote but lost the Electoral College count, as the Supreme Court stepped in to decide the disputed Florida butterfly ballots. Yet the publicity surrounding Lieberman succeeded in communicating Jewish pride to millions of Americans.

Key Number or Word In The Parsha

Chok - חוק

(thejc.com)



A chok is a law. It is related to the word chakak, that means to engrave in stone, which in ancient times was how one promulgated laws. Chok also means boundary, as in Proverbs (8:29), "When He assigned the sea its limits [chuko]." The rabbis understood chok as referring to a specific type of commandment: one that does not appear to have a rational reason... The Talmud describes an ideal manner of worship in which one fulfills every commandment, including those with an obvious rationale, simply because God commanded us to do so and not because it is the reasonable thing to do. Chok, then, is a theological concept, one that demands complete faith in the righteousness of God and the commandments and leaves little room for human insights. As with almost every concept in Judaism, it has its counterpoise: the paradigms of Abraham, Abimelech, Moses and others who question God and seek to understand God's ways. Knowing when each approach is appropriate is a lifelong task.