



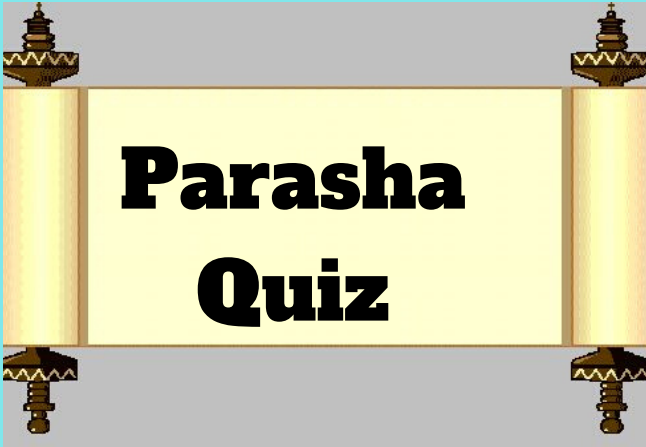
# KMS Family Parasha

LEARN ABOUT THE PARASHA WITH THE KMS YOUTH DEPARTMENT

Compiled by Rabbi Aaron and Elisheva Levitt

Shemini - שְׁמִינִי

4.18.20



## Elementary:

- 1) What were the names of Aharon's 4 sons?
- 2) Which 2 sons of Aharon sinned, what did they do wrong, and what was their punishment?
- 3) What 2 signs does an animal need to be Kosher?
- 4) What 2 signs does a fish need to be kosher?
- 5) How do we know which birds are kosher?

## Middle/High School:

- 1) According to Rashi (9:23) for what 2 reasons did Moshe go into the Ohel Mo'ed with Aharon?
- 2) According to Rashi (10:2) what 2 sins did Nadav and Avihu commit?
- 3) According to Rashi (10:3) what reward did Aharon receive for quietly accepting his sons' death?
- 4) According to Rashi (11:2) why did Hashem choose Moshe, Aharon, Elazar, and Itamar as His messengers to tell the Jewish People the laws of Kashrut?
- 5) According to Rashi (11:19) why is a stork called Chasida in Hebrew?

## What would you do?

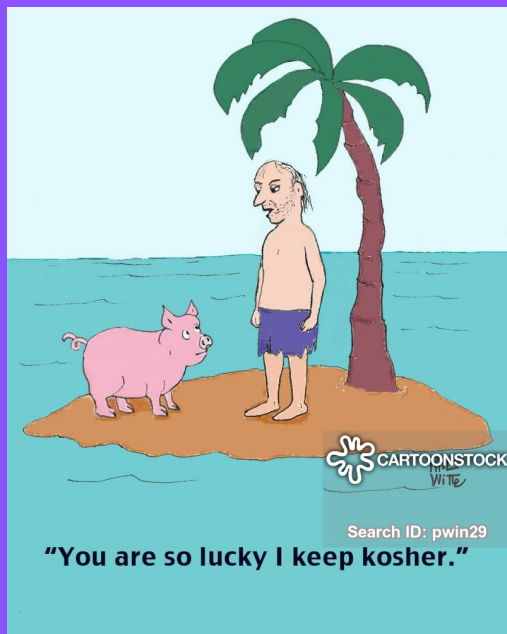
Discussion starter for your Shabbat table..

**If you could create a new App that would help people what kind of App would you create?**

## Did You Know?

[The Middle Letter Of The Torah - Rabbi Ron Jawary \(Aish.com\)](#)

The Talmud teaches us that the middle letter in the Torah is in the Hebrew word "gachon" (Lev. 11:42) "snake" that is found in this week's Torah portion. The snake symbolizes our negativity, cynicism, and indifference, all of those qualities which are the exact opposite of what we should be developing in ourselves. This negativity, this snake, is surrounded on all sides by the Torah -- by optimism, purity, and Godliness. We sometimes have a tendency to focus on the negative in our lives, but in order to embrace the Godliness which surrounds us, we should strive to combat this negativity at every opportunity. In order to be intimate with the Divine, we should approach every day of our lives and every encounter with any person with the attitude that it's all an opportunity to see the beauty that life has to offer. We should view each day as an undeserved gift, and who doesn't love a freebie? Isaiah says it all when he writes, "When you go out in joy, you'll arrive in peace." He is teaching us that the best antidote to help fight negativity is joy. By starting each day of our lives with joy, the negativity in our lives can be eliminated. We will realize just how petty so many of the things that bother us really are, and we'll find that there is room for everyone. Then we will be granted peace and will come to realize what is really important in life. We will see how life was meant to be lived before the snake came into Adam and Eve's lives. We will see "that everything that God made is very good".



The Fins and Scales of Continuity - Rabbi Benji Levy (Aish.com)

According to the great sage Ben Zoma, the definition of Jewish wisdom is to learn from every person (Mishna, Tractate Avot 4:1). The Talmud extends this concept of learning from those around us beyond human beings, to the animal kingdom. It states that had the Torah not been given, we would learn good character traits from animals, such as modesty from a cat and manners from a rooster (Talmud Bavli, Tractate Eruvin 100b). The lesson that there is more to learn from the animal kingdom than initially meets the eye is intrinsic to the spirit of the laws of kosher food, where we are instructed, 'to distinguish between impure and pure, and between creatures that may be eaten and creatures that may not be eaten' (Lev. 11:47). This distinction, according to the Torah, has spiritual ramifications (Lev. 9). Quite simply, you are what you eat – if you eat impure food, by definition some impurity will penetrate (Lev. 11:43). While it is self-evident that what comes out of one's mouth is highly significant, we now begin to understand that an awareness of what goes into it is of equal importance.

When it comes to the kashrut of fish there are two criteria that must be present in order for a fish to be deemed kosher – fins and scales (Lev. 11:9). The Talmud points out that while all fish with scales have fins, fish with fins do not necessarily have scales (Talmud Bavli, Tractate Chullin 66b; Tractate Nidda 51b). Therefore, it makes sense that the Torah specifies that a kosher fish must have scales, but it is apparently redundant to mention that it should also have fins. Clearly there is an underlying significance to these features of the kosher fish, beyond the simple fact of their presence or absence.

The Talmud compares the Torah to water and the Jewish people to fish (Talmud Bavli, Tractate Berachot 61b). Just as fish cannot live without water, said Rabbi Akiva, Jews cannot live without Torah. This metaphor can be taken further, with the fins and scales of fish representing specific human characteristics. The scales make up a thick, skin-like layer that helps to protect the fish from external dangers such as predators and environmental changes. Fins act like the rudder of the fish, used to navigate and maneuver it through the streams, rivers and oceans. The Ner Uziel explains that the millennia of trials and tribulations that the Jewish people have endured have necessitated the development of both of these characteristics in order ensure survival and continuity. Our 'thick skin' is made up of the non-negotiable values that protect us from the many negative influences around us, and our 'fins' are that part which enables us to navigate the waters of life and to know when to adapt and swim with the tide, and when to swim against it if anything threatens to breach our 'scales'.

It may be for this reason that Jacob blesses Ephraim and Menashe, the sons of Joseph, that they will 'multiply abundantly like fish' (Gen. 48:16). These brothers are the first Jewish children to be brought up outside the Land of Israel, in a predominantly polytheistic environment. Despite being the sons of the viceroy of Egypt, living in the palaces of a society that runs counter to their core values, Ephraim and Menashe stand true to their faith. In the same way, no matter what our environment, we too should develop a layer of 'scales' to protect and preserve our indispensable ideals, and a set of formidable 'fins', a strong moral compass to guide us up and down the stream of life.