

Parsha Points to Ponder

by **Rabbi Dov Lipman**

PiNCHAS

1) Why does the Torah state that the census is to include everyone twenty years and older AS G-D COMMANDED MOSHE AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL LEAVING EGYPT (26:4) when in fact the command to count those ages was made just a few verse before (26:2) and not when they left Egypt?

2) Why did the daughters of Tz'lafchad tell Moshe that their father DIED IN HIS SIN (27:3)? What does this add to their request to inherit their father's portion in Israel?

3) Why doesn't the Torah state the goat offered on the holiday of Shavuot (28:30) is "A SIN OFFERING" (L'CHATAT) as it does regarding the other holidays (see 28:22, 29:5, 29:11, 29:16)?

Rabbi Lipman is an educator, author, and community activist in Bet Shemesh. He was a member of the 19th Knesset

ddlipman@gmail.com

The suggested answers are elsewhere
Ponder the questions first, then see further

Parsha Points to Ponder

Suggested answers

1) The Meshech Chochma answers that the words about the command when they left Egypt do not refer to the age of the census but to how they should do the census. G-D was commanding them not to actually count the people but to use something like the half-shekel to count them as He commanded when they left Egypt.

2) The S'forno explains that they were telling Moshe that he should not think that perhaps their father needs to be punished by losing his portion in Israel. They were saying that his death should serve as an atonement for any of his sins and, therefore, he should agree to their request.

3) Rabbeinu Bechaya teaches that this omission comes to remind us that Shavuot is the date on which the Jewish people received the Torah and at that time they were like newborns with no sins.