

Parsha Points to Ponder

by Rabbi Dov Lipman

EIKEV

- ① Why does Moshe add the extra words TO YOU (L'CHA) when telling the Jewish people that G-D will keep what He promised (7:12)? He is talking to them, so of course, it is to them?
- ② What is the meaning of the seemingly repetitious phrases A LAND WHERE YOU WILL EAT BREAD WITHOUT POVERTY and YOU WILL LACK NOTHING THERE (8:9)?
- ③ Why does the Torah emphasize that the tablets containing the Ten Commandments were made out of stone (LUCHOT HA'AVANIM - 9:9)? What difference does this make?

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

Parsha Points to Ponder Suggested answers

- ① The Kli Yakar answers that this word comes to emphasize that G-D is going to fulfill his promise no matter what but it could be to a different generation. Moshe is telling the people that if they observe G-D's commandments they will merit that the covenant will be fulfilled TO THEM.
- ② The Ohr HaChayim teaches that there are people who are wealthy who still eat as if they are poor either out of fear that they could use up what they have or out of compassion for those around them who are not as blessed. Moshe is telling the people that in Israel they will be able to eat like the wealthy without regard for these reasons (YOU WILL EAT BREAD WITHOUT POVERTY) since the land itself is lacking nothing (YOU WILL LACK NOTHING THERE) and, therefore, there is no fear of running out and no one else around them is not as blessed.
- ③ The Da'at Zekainim MiBaalei HaTosfot explains that this comes to remind us of the seriousness of sinning, with most capital sins punishable via stoning.

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R'EI

- ① Why does the Torah mention that refraining from eating blood will be good for you AND FOR YOUR CHILDREN AFTER YOU (12:25)?
- ② Why does the Torah repeat the command to count the seven weeks of the Omer twice in the same verse (16:9)?
- ③ Why does the Torah repeat the command to rejoice three times regarding the holiday of Sukkot (16:14, 16:15, and once in Parshat Emor) while it only mentions happiness once regarding Shavuot (16:11) and never with regard to Pesach?

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- ① The Kli Yakar teaches that the prohibition not to eat blood is based on the idea that doing so generates negative character traits inside people which are then transferred to their children. Therefore, the Torah emphasizes that refraining from eating blood will be good for one's children.
- ② The Ohr HaChayim explains that the repetition of this command teaches either that one should count even if there are no crops that have grown one should still count or that one should count even when there is no Temple and no Omer sacrifice being offered.
- ③ The Da'at Zekainim MiBaalei HaTosfot answer that the happiness in these verses refers to joy over the blessings that G-D has given us. On Pesach, none of the crops of that year are ready and, therefore, it is not yet the time for this happiness. On Shavuot, the crops of the field can be harvested so there is a basis for one mention of happiness. On Sukkot, both the crops of the field and the fruits of the trees have been harvested, and they have been gathered into the homes - providing a basis for threefold happiness.