

Parsha Q&A



Parshas Vayeshev

For the week ending 23 Kislev 5756
15 & 16 December 1995

Parsha Questions

1. How old is Yosef at the beginning of the Parsha?
2. Yaakov rebuked Yosef for telling his brothers the dreams. Why?
3. Verse 37:14 states that Yaakov sent Yosef out of the deep part of Hebron. What is the deep part of Hebron?
4. How did Reuven plan to save Yosef?
5. Why does the Torah tell us what the Ishmaelite camels were carrying?
6. Who brought Yosef down to Egypt?
7. Where was Reuven when Yosef was sold?
8. In addition to the brothers, who else knew that Yosef was alive?
9. For how long did Yaakov mourn the loss of Yosef?
10. Verse 37:35 states "his father wept." To whom does this refer?
11. Who was the father of Tamar?
12. Why did Tamar not tell Yehuda that she was pregnant with his child?
13. In what merit did Tamar deserve to have kings as her descendants?
14. Why is the word "hand" mentioned four times in connection to the birth of Zerach?
15. Why is the portion of the Torah that teaches about Yehuda and Tamar juxtaposed to the portion of the Torah that deals with Yosef and Potiphar's wife?
16. In what way was Hashem "with" Yosef?
17. Why were the butler and the baker imprisoned?
18. For how long were the butler and the baker in prison?
19. How did the baker know that Yosef had correctly interpreted the butler's dream? (40:16)
20. How was Yosef punished for asking the butler for help?

BONUS
Q:

The Torah states that Yaakov favored Yosef since he was his "ben zekunim." Rashi explains "ben zekunim" to mean a child that was born in the parents' old age. Binyamin was born after Yosef. According to Rashi why was Binyamin not called the "ben zekunim"?

I Did Not Know That!

Yosef interpreted the butler's dream in a positive way since it contained a cup of wine that is drunk on occasions of salvation. The baker's dream was interpreted in a negative way since it did not contain any element that alluded to salvation.

Kli Yakar

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Production Design: Lev Seltzer

Recommended Reading List

Ramban

37:2	The Evil Report
37:10	The Moon
38:24	Tamar's Punishment

Sforno

37:2	The Evil Report
37:3	Yosef's Coat
37:18	The Brothers' Concern
38:1	Yehuda's Punishment
39:19	Why Yosef was Imprisoned

Answers to this Week's Questions

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

1. 37:2 - Seventeen.
2. 37:10 - Because Yosef aroused the hatred of his brothers.
3. 37:14 - It is the deep profound message Hashem related to Avraham, who was buried in Hebron, that his descendants would be strangers in a foreign land.
4. 37:22 - He intended to return to the pit and pull Yosef out of it.
5. 37:25 - To teach us about the reward of the righteous, that for Yosef it was arranged that the camels would carry fragrant smelling spices so that he should not suffer.
6. 37:28 - A caravan of Midianites.
7. 37:29 - He was attending to Yaakov.
8. 37:33 - Yitzchak.
9. 37:34 - Twenty-two years.
10. 37:35 - Yitzchak, who wept because of Yaakov's suffering.
11. 38:24 - Shem.
12. 38:25 - She did not want to embarrass him in public.
13. 38:26 - In the merit of her modesty.
14. 38:30 - To allude to his descendent, Achan, who sinned with his hand by taking four things from the spoils of Jericho.
15. 39:1 - To teach us that just as Tamar acted with pure motives, so did Potiphar's wife.
16. 39:3 - Yosef mentioned Hashem's name frequently in his speech.
17. 40:1 - The butler was imprisoned because a fly was found in the king's goblet, and the baker was imprisoned because a pebble was found in the king's bread.
18. 40:4 - Twelve months.
19. 40:5 - The baker dreamed the interpretation of the butler's dream.
20. 40:23 - He remained in prison an additional two years.

Bonus

A:

Between the birth of Yosef and Binyamin a long time elapsed. After Yosef was born, people thought that Rachel would not bear Yaakov any more children. They started calling Yosef the "ben zekunim." Since people had become accustomed to calling Yosef the "ben zekunim" he remained with this title even after Binyamin was born.

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