

KRIYAT HATORAH COMPANION

EVERY ALIYA. A QUESTION (OR TWO).

BEHA'ALOTCHA

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Aliya 1 | 8:1-14

Examine verse 8:2.

What is the purpose of the Menorah in the Temple? What are the lasting messages of the centrality of the Menorah to the Temple service?

The **Sforno** identifies that it is critical the wicks of each lamp be centered towards the middle. In creating the image of the lamps on the left/right facing center, one begins to realize that both those pursuing spiritual goals (the right) and those heavily involved physical sustenance (the left lamps), are critical to fulfilling humanities goals on this earth. The **Rashbam** points out that the Menorah needed to be cleaned and resupplied every day, meaning, the work of building the Temple was never complete (maybe until the miracle of Chanukah?).

Aliya 2 | 8:15-26

Examine verses 8:15-17.

Why were the firstborn ideal for the service and why was it taken away from them?

Rashi suggests that since God had saved them from the plague of the firstborn in Egypt, their status had changes and they became distinct from the people. Their sin with the Golden Calf had disqualified them from serving in the Temple. The **Sforno** suggests that the firstborn is generally the most distinguished member of the family who thus is most appropriate to represent the family in its spiritual service.

Aliya 3 | 9:1-14

Examine verses 9:1-2.

Why is this instruction placed here? What is its connection with the previous instructions regarding the replacement of the firstborn?

Rashi suggests that this is a proof that the Torah is not presented in a chronological order & is not a story book. There are deeper messages with the recording of each incident. **Rashi** suggests that this section is offered now, and not at the beginning of the book of Bamidbar because it is disparaging of the Jewish people that they only offered one Paschal sacrifice in 40 years in the desert. The **Ba'al HaTurim** connects this section to the sanctity of the Levi'im.

Aliya 4 | 9:15-10:10

Examine verse 9:15.

What is the connection to the Cloud of Glory resting on the *Mishkan* to the rest of the context of this *Parsha*?

The **Ramban** suggests that these Clouds of Glory covered only the *Mishkan*, not the courtyard that around it. The **Tur HaAruch** suggests that since the Torah will now return to the travels of the Jewish people it reminds us what GPS system they had in place i.e. They would travel when the clouds lifted up from the *Mishkan*. The **Chizkuni** suggests that this Cloud was different from the clouds that protected the encampment. This cloud covered the sanctified sections of the encampment including the Levites.

Aliya 5 | 10:11-34

Examine verse 10:11.

What is this verse adding to our knowledge of the Jewish people's journeys? Why is the date recorded?

Rashi suggests that this information shows us how long the Jewish people were encamped at Mt. Sinai (10 days short of a year). The **Chizkuni (Vayikra 7:38)** writes that since this is the beginning of the journey of the Jewish people, and since they didn't bring any sacrifices once they began journeying, the date was recorded. The **Ohr HaChaim** suggests that the year is said first and date is stated second so that the action of raising the cloud is next to the specific date perhaps to bolster the significance of the miracle.

Aliya 6 | 10:35-11:29

Examine the famous verse, 10:35 placing close attention to all the peculiar details of it.

Why does the Torah place a special symbol surrounding this verse and why is this symbol an upside down Hebrew letter 'nun'?

Rashi states that the symbol illustrate that this verse shouldn't really belong here but is placed here to separate between two negative narratives about the Jewish people. **Rabbeinu Bahya** suggests that the traveling of the Jewish people was having a deleterious effect on their morale and therefore this verse is placed here to create a break and chance to improve the general disposition towards these travels.

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Shabbat
Shalom

Aliya 7 | 11:30-12:16

Examine verse 12:1.

Why does the Torah include the hebrew letter 'bet' in front of Moshe's name here? Why is Miriam's name mentioned first? What was Miriam & Aharon's concern?

The **Ibn Ezra** suggests that this reflects the negative nature of the content of what Aharon and Miriam were discussing about Moshe. The **Da'at Zkenim** says that Miriam's name is mentioned first here because she lead the discussion. The **Netziv** suggests that they thought Moshe had separated from his wife because of her questionable lineage. They were concerned that this was unfair to his wife since Moshe had known that he was marrying outside of the Jewish family (**Netziv** notes that Moshe's wife converted to Judaism).