

★ PARSHIYOS NITZAVIM-VAYEILECH Q&A ★

20 Questions · Every Answer From Rashi! · No. 04

- 1 Moshe gathers the entire nation together for this covenant. Rashi says something specific about exactly when he did this — when was it?**

On the very day of his death, Moshe assembled all of Bnei Yisrael before Hashem to bring them into the covenant.

29:9 · **Rashi** · אתם נצבים

- 2 The pasuk lists “your woodcutters and your water drawers” among those entering the covenant. Who does Rashi say these people actually were?**

Canaanites who came to convert in the days of Moshe, just as the Givonim later did in the days of Yehoshua — Moshe accepted them only as woodcutters and water drawers, not as full converts.

29:10 · **Rashi** · מחטב עציך

- 3 This parsha comes right after the long tochacha (curses) in Ki Savo. Why does Rashi say it was placed there specifically?**

Bnei Yisrael turned pale with fear after hearing all the curses, so Moshe comforted them by pointing out: you have angered Hashem many times, and still, you are standing here before Him today.

29:12 · **Rashi** · אתם נצבים היום

- 4 The covenant is made not only with those standing there that day, but also with someone else. Who?**

Also with every future generation of the Jewish people — the covenant was made with descendants not yet born.

29:14 · **Rashi** · ואת אשר איננו פה

- 5 Right before this, the Torah calls the curses “written in this book” — using two different Hebrew words for “this” in two similar-sounding pesukim. What's the difference?**

In Ki Savo, “this” is feminine (הַזֹּאת) because it describes the Torah; here it is masculine (הַזֶּה) because it describes the scroll — the exact wording of the pesukim themselves tells us which word each “this” is attached to.

29:20 · **Rashi** · הכתובה בספר התורה הזה

- 6 The Torah says hidden sins belong to Hashem, but revealed sins are our responsibility. What is this teaching, and why are dots written over some of the words here?**

We aren't punished as a community for a sin hidden in someone's heart — only Hashem judges that. But sins done openly are our job to address. The dots teach that Klal Yisrael wasn't even held mutually responsible for open sins until they crossed the Yarden and accepted the oath at Har Grizim and Har Eival.

29:28 · **Rashi** · הנסתרת לה' אלקינו

- 7 The pasuk about the future redemption says Hashem “will return” your captivity — using an unusual grammatical form. What does Rashi learn from this?**

The verse could have simply said Hashem will bring back the exiles, but instead it's worded as though Hashem Himself returns. This teaches that the Shechinah goes into exile together with Klal Yisrael, and returns together with them too.

30:3 · **Rashi** · ושב ה' אלקיך את שבותך

- 8 Hashem promises to “circumcise your heart.” What does this unusual phrase actually mean?**

It means Hashem will remove the barrier blocking the heart, so that a person can fully love Hashem with all his heart and soul.

30:6 · **Rashi** · ומל ה' אלקיך את לבבך

- 9 The Torah says the mitzvah “is not in the heavens.” What point is Rashi making with this?**

If the Torah were in the heavens, you would have to climb up after it to learn it — but it isn't, so no one has an excuse for not reaching it.

30:12 · **Rashi** · לא בשמים הוא

- 10 The Torah goes on to say it is “very close to you — in your mouth and in your heart.” What is this referring to?**

That the Torah was given in two forms: in writing, and orally — both the Written Torah and the Oral Torah.

30:14 · **Rashi** · כי קרוב אליך

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11 Moshe tells the people to “choose life.” Rashi compares this to a parable about a father and son — what's the parable?

It's like a father who tells his son, “Choose a good portion of my estate,” then stands him right at the best portion and says, “This one — choose this.” Hashem is directing us toward the good choice, not leaving us to guess.

30:19 · **Rashi** · ובחרת בחיים

12 Moshe says, “Today I am 120 years old.” What is special about the word “today” here?

Moshe's days and years were completed on this exact date — he was born and would die on the very same day of the year.

31:2 · **Rashi** · אנכי היום

13 Moshe says, “I can no longer go out and come in.” The Torah elsewhere says his eyes had not dimmed and his strength hadn't faded — so what does this phrase actually mean?

It doesn't mean his physical strength failed. Rashi explains it means the channels of Torah transmission and the wellsprings of wisdom had been sealed off from him — he was no longer permitted to lead or to receive new understanding in Torah.

31:2 · **Rashi** · לא אוכל עוד לצאת ולבוא

14 Moshe tells Yehoshua he'll lead the people “with” the elders' counsel. But Hashem tells Yehoshua something stronger. What's the difference?

Moshe told Yehoshua the elders would guide him. Hashem told Yehoshua to bring the people in even against their will if necessary — because a generation can only have one true leader, not two.

31:7 · **Rashi** · כי אתה תבוא את העם הזה

15 Once Moshe finished writing the complete Torah, who did he give it to?

He gave it to the members of his own tribe, Levi.

31:9 · **Rashi** · ויכתב משה ויתנה

16 At Hakhel, men, women, and even young children are gathered to hear the Torah read. Why bring the children, who can't really understand it?

So that a reward would be given to the parents who make the effort to bring them.

31:12 · **Rashi** · והטף

17 Hashem tells Moshe to call Yehoshua so that Hashem can do something for him before Moshe dies. What was it?

Hashem would strengthen and encourage Yehoshua for the leadership ahead of him.

31:14 · **Rashi** · ואצוני

18 Hashem tells Moshe that after his passing, He will “hide His face” from the people. What does that mean?

It means Hashem would act as though He does not see their distress — not truly abandoning them, but withdrawing the open closeness they had experienced.

31:17 · **Rashi** · והסתרת פני

19 Hashem commands, “Write this song for yourselves.” Which song is being referred to?

The song of Haazinu — the poem that makes up almost all of next week's parsha.

31:19 · **Rashi** · את השירה הזאת

20 Moshe predicts that “after my death” the people will become corrupt. But the Navi says Klal Yisrael served Hashem faithfully throughout Yehoshua's entire lifetime. How does Rashi resolve this?

A teacher's disciple is as dear to him as himself — so as long as Yehoshua was alive, it was as though Moshe himself was still alive. “After my death” really meant after Yehoshua's death too.

31:29 · **Rashi** · אחרי מותי כי השחת תשחיתון

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