



CHAYAT HASHAVUA: SHEEP

CAN ANYONE GUESS HOW MANY HEBREW NAMES FOR SHEEP THERE ARE IN TANAKH?

- But first, can anyone teach us what Tanakh is? (Tanakh is the name for the Hebrew Bible—it's spelled תנ"ך; the Hebrew letters stand for Torah, the five Books of Moses; Nevi'im, the Hebrew name for the prophets and their writings; and Ketuvim, all the rest of the writings in the Bible.)
- So how many names for sheep can we find in Tanakh—one to three, four to six, or seven to nine? (Nine)
- The names most familiar to us are: *seh* (שֶׁה), which refers both to a sheep or goat; *keves* (כֶּבֶשׂ) for a lamb; *kesev* (כֶּשֶׁב), also for a lamb; and *tzon* (צֹאן), which refers not only to sheep but any flock of small cattle, such as goats.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT SHEEP?

- They're gentle.
- Their wool makes beautiful clothes.
- Their meat is very good to eat.

IS THERE ANYTHING WE MIGHT NOT LIKE ABOUT SHEEP?

- They're very passive—which means what?
- They can be led anywhere, even to their own destruction.

CAN ANYONE TELL US WHAT HAD SHEEP HAD TO DO WITH GOD PICKING MOSES AS THE LEADER OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE?

- He was a shepherd and once he led his flock to the end of the wilderness.
- One of his sheep strayed far away from the flock to a brook for water.
- Moses told the sheep, "Had I known you were thirsty, I would have carried you to the water."
- God rewarded Moses for his kindness by making him the leader of the Jewish people.
- Why do you think that God would especially want a leader of the people to be kind?

SHEEP WERE, OF COURSE, ONE OF THE ANIMALS SACRIFICED IN ANCIENT ISRAEL.

- Can anyone teach us when it is that many Jews nowadays offer a lamb as a sacrifice?

- Where do we put the lamb's shank bone on Passover?

INCIDENTALLY, IS A SHEEP KOSHER?

- Yes—but why?
- It has a split hoof and chews its cud.

IT'S TIME FOR THE SHEEP QUIZ.

- How many things do we get from sheep? (Wool, leather, meat, and milk; and byproducts including: glue, tallow [fat used to make leather dressing, soap, etc.], suet [fat used in cooking and to make tallow], soap, fertilizer, cosmetics, and catgut [for racquets and musical instruments].)
- How much do the largest rams and ewes, male and female sheep, weigh? (350 and 225 pounds.)
- How long do sheep live? (Seven to 13 years.)
- How many varieties of sheep are there in the world? (About 800.)
- What are the worst enemies of sheep? (Parasites and predators, such as coyotes and dogs.)

THERE'S A PROVERB ABOUT SHEEP AND WOLVES.

- First, the Talmud says: “This is the way of the world: wolves kill sheep.” (Baba Batra 16)
- The *proverb* says: “Whoever behaves as a sheep is devoured by the wolf.” (Mincha Chadasha 4:2)
- What do you think that means?



Gather the People

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