

Snapshot Torah



GUIDE TO THE WEEKLY PARSHA
ISSUE 29

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ACHAREI MOT

12th Nissan 5774

Kohen - First Aliya:

Chapter 16, verses 1 - 17

- ✚ After the death of Nadav and Avihu, Hashem tells Moshe to instruct Aaron about the four special white garments he must wear only for Yom Kippur and the duties he must perform on that day.
- ✚ Firstly Aaron has to offer up one bull as a Korban Hatat (Sin offering) and one Ram as a Korban Olah (Burnt offering).
- ✚ Next he must take from the nation and offer up, two male goats as a Korban Hatat and a ram for a Korban Olah. These sacrifices will atone for all the aveiros (sins), committed in the past year by Aaron himself, his family and the entire nation.

Levi - Second Aliya:

Chapter 16, verses 18 - 24

- ✚ Aaron is then instructed to bring two goats to the entrance of the Ohel Moed where he would draw lots. On one lot, the words 'For Hashem' are written, meaning that if drawn, the first goat is to be sacrificed as a Korban Hatat. The other lot contain the words 'For Azazel' meaning that if chosen, this goat will provide atonement for the people and is escorted out of the camp and into the desert to die of natural causes.
- ✚ Once all the Korbonos (sacrifices) are completed, Aaron is to collect the hot coals from the Mizbayah (altar) along with some incense and enter the holy of holies with them. Aaron then places the incense on to the coals so that it engulfs the Aron (ark) with incense smoke. Ending the Yom Kippur service.

Sh'lisi - Third Aliya:

Chapter 16, verses 25 - 34

- ✚ Yom Kippur is to be observed each year on the 10th of Tishrei even if it happens to fall on a Shabbat.
- ✚ To be able to concentrate fully on seeking atonement from Hashem and to be able to purify oneself of aveiros, everyone must abstain from doing any work and afflict themselves by fasting.

R'Vi'i - Fourth Aliya:

Chapter 17, verses 1 - 6

- ✚ Hashem tells Moshe, to inform Aaron, his sons and all of Bnai Yisrael that it is totally forbidden to offer up sacrifices to other deities as Hashem himself is the one and only true G-d.
- ✚ Hashem sets an eternal decree that apart from the Mishkan and the future Beis Hamikdash (Temple). No one is allowed to offer up any Korbonos, however much they desire to do so.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya:

Chapter 17, verse - Chapter 18, verse 5

- ✚ As Blood is the major life-force of all living flesh and is used solely as a means of atonement; we are warned that anyone found drinking it, will be personally punished by Hashem himself.
- ✚ If anyone traps a kosher animal or bird, they must drain the blood onto the ground and cover it. If the animal has been hunted down and killed or has died of natural causes, it is now classed as forbidden and should not be consumed.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya:

Chapter 18, verses 6 - 21

- ✚ A list of prohibited sexual relationships, including adultery, incest and co-habiting with a menstruating female, etc. are discussed here.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya:

Chapter 18, verses 22 – 30

- ✚ Anyone found engaging in the above forbidden relationships including the prohibitions against homosexuality and bestiality will be expelled from the land of Israel because it is a 'Holy Land' and cannot tolerate any immoral behaviour.

Haftorah – SHABBAT HA GADOL: MALACHI, Chapter 3 verses 4 - 24

OVERVIEW:

- ✚ Malachi proclaims to the nation that the ultimate redemption awaits.
- ✚ He condemns the people for neglecting to pay their tithes to the Kohanim and Levi'im; expressing to them that had they honoured their obligations, Hashem would shower his blessings over them and the land of Israel would always yield abundant crops.
- ✚ Malachi finishes off his prophesy by saying the time will come when the evil and the arrogant will be destroyed and the patience of the righteous will prevail and ultimately be rewarded.

LINK TO SEDRA READING:

- ✚ The relationship of the Haftorah to this week is because it is the Shabbos before Pesach. Just as the nation was redeemed from Mitzraim over 3300 years ago, so too, Eliyahu Hanavi's imminent arrival will herald the coming of Moshiach.

WEEKLY DISCUSSION:

This week we celebrate Shabbat Ha Gadol (The Great Sabbath). What is it that makes this Shabbat especially big or great compared to our regular Shabbat?

Is it because this is the last Shabbat we can enjoy eating our soft tasty challah before dry, hard Matzor will be gracing our Shabbat Table next week, due to the fact we are celebrating the festival of Pesach. Possibly, to some people; but the real reason is, we are commemorating the fact, that it was our ancestors final Shabbat spent in Mitzraim (Egypt), before their redemption.

In fact to compound the reason further, this was the day, 10th Nissan when Bnai Yisrael chose the lambs to be prepared and offered for the Korban Pesach (Passover sacrifice), defying Mitzraim as the Lamb was considered to be one of their Gods and what was more miraculous the Egyptians were powerless to stop them.

Naturally the upshot was that for Bnai Yisrael to openly treat their former masters' god with such contempt took tremendous courage. Proving that they had put their complete faith and trust in Hashem, in order to keep them from being killed for their treacherous acts. Keeping this so called god tied to a bed-post for four days was a continuous challenge to Mitzraim; it demanded far more dedication than a single impetuous act of bravery in a moment of excitement.

Although Shabbat Ha Gadol commemorates the miracles and wonders which occurred on that day, other events which also took place on the tenth of Nissan are forever associated with Shabbat Ha Gadol and should be remembered also to mark the occasion.

After thirty nine years in the desert the virtuous Miriam died on the 10th Nissan depriving Israel of one of the three benefactors who helped sustain Bnai Yisrael during their time in the Midbar (desert). Moshe and Aaron being the other two. A year later, the 10th of Nissan was again marked by a significant event. However, this time it was a joyous one. Joshua led the people across the river Jordan into the land of Israel for the first time as a Jewish Nation. The waters rose up as if they were a wall and as our ancestors emerged from the Jordan River to take possession of the Chosen Land, they trod for the first time on Israel's sacred soil.

Our sages teach us that if all of Am Yisrael (The People of Israel) fully observe just two Shabbats we will merit in the Navi's Malachi prophesy coming into fruition. The first is this Shabbat 'Shabbat Ha Gadol' which contains within it the secret of our redemption. The other Shabbat is the one which falls between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, which teaches man how to return back to Hashem.

If we can make a start today by mastering both of these important Shabbatim then with Hashem's help we will be able to merit our true redemption speedily in our days.

שבת שלום
S h a b b a t S h a l o m !