

Snapshot Torah



GUIDE TO THE WEEKLY PARSHA

ISSUE 55

11th October 2014 CHOL HAMOED SUCCOT 17th Tishrei 5775

Shemot Chapter 33, verse 12 - Chapter 34, verse 26

Kohen - First Aliya: Chapter 33, verses 12 - 16

- ✚ The sin of the Heter Eigel (Golden Calf) has taken place, and Moshe is pleading with Hashem to reconsider his declaration of having an angel leading Bnai Yisrael into the land of Israel instead of Himself.
- ✚ Hashem listens to Moshe and agrees to lead them once more.

Levi - Second Aliya: Chapter 33, verses 17 - 19

- ✚ Having now found favour in Hashem's eyes, Moshe puts in a request for Hashem to reveal himself totally in front of Moshe, face to face.

Sh'lishi - Third Aliya: Chapter 33, verses 20 - 23

- ✚ Hashem tells Moshe, he concurs but he will only reveal his back to him because no man would be able to bear seeing Hashem's face and live.

R'VI' - Fourth Aliya: Chapter 34, verses 1 - 3

- ✚ Hashem instructs Moshe to carve out a new set of Luchot (tablets of stone) from a sapphire quarry buried under Moshe's tent.
- ✚ Hashem said he would then re-insert the words which left the first set of Luchot when it was destroyed, onto the new second set.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya: Chapter 34, verses 4 - 10

- ✚ Moshe obeys and hews out a new set of Luchot, He then ascends Mount Sinai once more where Hashem meets him concealed in a cloud and proclaims the thirteen attributes of mercy.
- ✚ Hashem announces he will make a new covenant with Bnai Yisrael and will perform many miracles for them to prove he has indeed forgiven them for creating the Eigel.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya: Chapter 34, verses 11 - 17

- ✚ Hashem promises to drive out all the nations currently living in the Promised Land.
- ✚ Hashem then instructs Bnai Yisrael to destroy all remnants of idolatry left behind and to make sure they don't make any new covenant's with the other nations because it could lead to inter-marriage.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya: Chapter 34, verses 18 - 26

- ✚ Hashem explains the laws on how to observe the three festivals of Pesach, Shavuot and Succot including how Bnai Yisrael must make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem on these three occasions in order to offer up the relevant korbanos (sacrifices)
- ✚ Various other commandments are revealed here also including sanctifying the firstborn, not to work on Shabbat and mixing milk products together with meat etc.

Maftir – Bamidbar Chapter 29, verses 12 to 16

- ✚ The Maftir, , discusses the public offerings brought in the Temple on this day of Sukkot.

Haftorah – Yehezkel (Ezekiel) Chapter 38 verse 18 to Chapter 39 verse 16

OVERVIEW:

- ✚ The Haftorah depicts the final, decisive battle at the end of days, “The War of Gog and Magog that will precede the Final Redemption.
- ✚ Yehezkel describes Gog's war against Israel and how Hashem will retaliate in return by plaguing them with earthquakes, pestilence, great floods, hailstones and fire which would utterly annihilate Gog's armies.
- ✚ After the battle, all the nations will concede to fact that there is indeed one true G-d. Hashem which will culminate in the whole world living in a state of permanent peace forever more.

LINK TO SUKKOT:

- ✚ According to tradition this war will take place during the month of Tishrei, the month when the holiday of Sukkot falls.
- ✚ It is also linked with the Haftorah read on the first day of Sukkot, which concludes by saying that this newly founded 'United Nations will be required to go to Jerusalem every year on the holiday of Sukkot to declare their loyalty and pay homage to Hashem.

WEEKLY DISCUSSION:

The Holiday of Succot is one of the three major festivals we celebrate each year. Pesach and Shavuot being the other two. There are many similarities between them. For example they all share the Mitzvah of raising our level of Simcha (happiness / joy), Hallel is read on each one and in the times of the beis Hamigdosh's everyone had to make a special pilgrimage to Jerusalem to offer up korbonos (sacrifices) to Hashem.

However each of these festivals are distinctive in their own way too and each have a unique characteristic which separates them. Over the past through week's we have been all going through our 'Teshuva Process' beginning with Rosh Hashanah, accepting Hashem as our spiritual king. Having all our aveiros (sins) forgiven on Yom Kippur and busying ourselves in accumulating as many mitzvors as we can so we can all stand united as one Jewish nation holding our lulavim and esrogim proudly in front of Hashem on succot to show we have reaccepted Him in our hearts and will follow his beloved Torah to the letter.

Our Sages ask the following question is it right for the festival of Succot to be part of the 'Shalosh Regalim' (the three festivals) as it should be incorporated as part of the holidays celebrated in the month of Tishrei?

The truth is Sukkot has both of these aspects. Firstly it has an agricultural element to it. While Pesach is considered the time of planting and Shavuot is the time of the first fruits; Succot celebrates the long awaited harvest marking the end of the year and reaping the fruits of our labours.

As I briefly mentioned before Sukkot is also marks the end of our 'Teshuva Process'. We have stopped shedding our tears of sadness and remorse and have now turned them into tears of joy. We can learn from this that the uniqueness of Succot is two-fold. On the one hand we can raise our simcha by thanking Hashem for forgiving our iniquities and allowing us another chance to behave correctly; and at the same time we can also be joyful for the fact that we have been able to finally reap up the rewards from all the effort and hard work we have put in over the past year.

I pray that with Hashem's help, this coming year will be blessed with good health, happiness, simcha and Peace.

Chag Samech!

