

Snapshot Torah



GUIDE TO THE WEEKLY PARSHAH ISSUE 21

15th February 2014

KE TESA

15th Adar 5774

Kohen - First Aliya:

Chapter 30, verses 11 – Chapter 31, verse 17

- ✚ Hashem commands Moshe to take a half shekel coin from every male over the age of twenty in order to count them. The money taken will be used for the upkeep of the Mishkan.
- ✚ Hashem asks Moshe to build a Keyor (A copper washbasin with a copper base), to be used by Aaron and his sons to wash their hands and feet with, before entering the Ohel Moed (Tent of Meeting) or when approaching the Mizbayah (Altar).
- ✚ Moshe is told the formula by Hashem of how to make the Shemen Hamishha (The anointing oil), which must not be used or copied by anyone except the Kohanim.
- ✚ Hashem bestows great wisdom and understanding upon Betzalel, who is to become the architect in the construction of the Mishkan, with aid from his assistant Oholiav
- ✚ Bnai Yisrael are instructed to keep the Shabbat as a sign between them and Hashem.

Levi - Second Aliya:

Chapter 31, verse 18 – Chapter 33, verse 11

- ✚ Moshe had ascended Mount Sinai in order to receive the Luchot (two stone tablets which the Ten statements (Ten Commandments) were inscribed upon by Hashem himself.) but the people waiting at the foot of the mountain were getting anxious that Moshe had yet to return back to them.
- ✚ They demand and force Aaron to create for them an idol, to replace Moshe as their leader.
- ✚ All the Golden Jewellery which was gathered up by the people to make the idol was thrown into a furnace, where the image of a calf was miraculously formed and came out of the flames.
- ✚ Aaron declares that the following day will be a festival to Hashem. In response the people arose up early and began to offer up sacrifices in front of the idol.
- ✚ Hashem is angry and wishes to destroy the people for their acts of desecration, and to begin afresh, creating a new nation from Moshe's descendants. However Moshe pleads on their behalf not to wipe them out and reminds Hashem of the Promises he had made with Avraham, Yitzhak and Yaacov that he will personally lead them to the land of Israel.
- ✚ Acquiescing to Moshe, Hashem backs down and lets the people live.
- ✚ Moshe descends the Mountain carrying the two Luchot, but upon seeing the people rejoicing around the idol. He throws down and shatters the Luchot into pieces.
- ✚ The idol is destroyed and Moshe re-ascends Mount Sinai to ask Hashem to forgive the people for their sins.
- ✚ Hashem does so but decides not to lead Bnai Yisrael to the land of Israel personally but will send down an angel to lead them in his stead.

Sh'lishi - Third Aliya:

Chapter 33, verses 12- 16 and

R'VI' - Fourth Aliya:

Chapter 33, verses 17 - 23

- ✚ Moshe asks Hashem to reveal his true essence to him. Hashem replies no one has ever seen me and lived. Instead Hashem places Moshe in a cleft of a rock and shows him a vision.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya:

Chapter 34, verses 1 - 9

- ✚ Hashem tells Moshe that he must ascend the mountain once more and carve for himself a second set of Luchot.
- ✚ Hashem then reveals to Moshe the thirteen attributes of mercy.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya:

Chapter 34, verses 10 -26

- ✚ Moshe is given additional instructions by Hashem, concerning what Bnai Yisrael must do, upon reaching and dwelling in the land of Israel.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya:

Chapter 34, verses 27 - 35

- ✚ Moshe descends the mountain but Bnai Yisrael are afraid to approach him because the radiance of Hashem is shining through on Moshe's face.

- ✚ Moshe puts on a veil to cover his face up and only removes it when he is speaking to Hashem directly.

Haftorah –

1st BOOK OF KINGS Chapter 18 verses 1 to 39

OVERVIEW:

- ✚ King Achav and his wife Ezevel ruled the 10 Tribes with an iron fist advancing the worship of idols throughout the kingdom.
- ✚ The prophet Eliyahu (Elijah), challenges Achav's hold over his people by demanding a showdown on Mount. Carmel between himself and the false prophets of the idol Ba'al.
- ✚ The confrontation takes place, proving to everyone that there is only the one true god, Hashem himself.

LINK TO SEDRA READING:

- ✚ Just as Moshe's proved the falsehood of the Golden Calf, in this week's sedra; so too, 600 years later, Eliyahu proved the falsehood of the belief and worshiping of Ba'al.

WEEKLY DISCUSSION: The role Aaron played in the sin of the golden calf

The episode concerning Aaron and the golden calf in this week's Parsha, comes as quite a shock. Only a few weeks before, Bnai Yisrael were reciting 'Naaseh Vnishma' (We will do and we will listen.), pledging their allegiance to Hashem, yet now we find them involved in gross idolatry.

An entire volume of books would be required in order to begin to understand the complexity of what went wrong and all the ongoing suffering, we as a Jewish nation have and are enduring, right up to this present day because of it. However I would to concentrate on the part Aaron had in the Chait ha Eigel, (sin of the golden calf).

Personally I feel, he cannot be held accountable for this despicable event. (If he was guilty, then a more problematic question arises of how he was able to keep his high position of being the Kohen Gadol.) Aaron was in a predicament. Knowing he was being bullied and coerced against his will and better judgment, to the point of death, he finally caved in, allowing the idol's construction. However Aaron did not give up entirely. He tried to delay their plans, long enough for the people to witness Moshe's return. (Which was the fundamental reason of why they wanted to build a conduit between themselves and Hashem in the first place.) Unfortunately Aaron still failed. The people were not deterred, and because they enthusiastically donated an abundance of gold. The Eigel's construction came into being.

The concept that Aaron was pushed into this action comes from Moshe's response upon his return, after the two stone tablets of the covenant were destroyed. In disbelief, Moshe asks Aaron "what has the people done to you, that you have brought a catastrophe of sins upon them." In his defence Aaron could only reply with a feeble excuse of blaming the others "You know your people as well as I do. I could do no more to prevent it."

Aaron was in many ways on an equal spiritual level with Moshe. Having made the Eigel and erecting an altar, Aaron tried to regain control by putting off any worship of it by proclaiming that 'tomorrow we be a feast day to Hashem' knowing that in the future, The punishment for the Chait ha Eigel, will come to an end and that Hashem in his divine mercy will forgive us for the sin entirely. Allowing us to praise, glorify and exalt Hashem the way we meant to have done before this tragic episode ever took place.

שבת שלום
S h a b b a t S h a l o m !