

Snapshot Torah



GUIDE TO THE WEEKLY PARSHA

ISSUE 36

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NASSO

2nd Sivan 5774

Kohen - First Aliya: Chapter 4, verses 21 – 37 and

Levi - Second Aliya: Chapter 4, verses 38 - 49

- ✚ Hashem asks Moshe and Aaron to Count all the males of the Levi'im families of Gershon and Merari who were between the ages of thirty and fifty years old.
- ✚ As this was the time frame a Levite was allowed to work in the Mishkan, the torah next describes the duties and roles each family has to carry out.
- ✚ The total number of Levi'im who were eligible to work added up to 8,580

Sh'lishi - Third Aliya: Chapter 5, verses 1 - 10

- ✚ As not to contaminate the place in which Hashem's shekinah (divine presence) is residing, Hashem explains the importance of purity within the camps and orders him to expel anyone who has either been infected with Tzara'at, (a supernatural disease which looks very similar to leprosy), a Zav (a person whose been diagnosed with either a sexual disease or an unnatural seminal discharge) or has been in contact with a human corpse in order to keep the camp Tahor (Pure).
- ✚ Hashem tells Moshe that if a thief has denied and lied under oath regarding his / her crime. They have committed treason against Hashem. In order to be forgiven the thief has to confess to his / her guilt and return back what was stolen plus an additional one-fifth of the value of what was taken.

R'VI'I - Fourth Aliya: Chapter 5, verses 11 - 27

- ✚ Hashem teaches Moshe the laws regarding a Sota (A wife who has been seen by witnesses, willingly going with another man into a secluded place) If the Husband has previously warned his wife not to do such a thing and becomes jealous, plus the witnesses can't testify what happened next; The Husband has to take his wife to a Kohen along with a Korban of barley flour.
- ✚ The Kohen escorts the wife into the Mishkan, and prepares what is known as the 'bitter waters'. He then uncovers the woman's hair and places the jealous husband's Korban into her hands. The woman has to swear that she will accept the consequences of whatever happens to her.
- ✚ The Kohen explains to her that if she is guilty of having intimate relations with the other man then she will be cursed. He then writes the curse onto a piece of parchment and erases the letters in the water mixture and makes her drink. If she had been unfaithful to her husband the curse will come to fruition. If however she is innocent, she will be blessed with bearing a child.
- ✚ Hashem next tells Moshe the laws regarding someone who proclaims they want to be a Nazir (A person who makes a vow in order to be closer to Hashem. Firstly a Nazir must not cut his hair, Secondly they must refrain from drinking wine and thirdly they must come near a human corpse).
- ✚ Upon concluding their allotted time of being a Nazir, they must then offer up both a sin and a peace offering to Hashem, shave their hair and throw it into the flames.
- ✚ Hashem recites to Moshe and Aaron three beracha's which the Kohanim must bless the rest of Bnai Yisrael with. 1/ May Hashem bless and safeguard you. 2/ May Hashem shine his face and be gracious unto you. 3/ May Hashem turn his face to you and establish peace for you.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya: Chapter 6, verse 1 – 41,

Shishi - Sixth Aliya: Chapter 6, verses 42 – 71 and

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya: Chapter 6, verses 72 - 89

- ✚ On the day the Mishkan was erected, the princes of each tribe brought and presented korbanos before Hashem. Over the course of the next twelve days, one prince each day offered up their korbanos. All the korbanos were identical.
- ✚ Moshe enters the Mishkan and hears Hashem's voice speaking to him from the top of the ark cover between the two cherubim.

Haftorah – Shoftim (Judges), Chapter 13, Verses 2 - 25

OVERVIEW:

- ✚ Manoah and his wife, who belonged to the Tribe of Dan, were childless. One day an angel appeared to Manoah's wife, informing her that she will give birth to a child. This child, the angel instructed, was to be a lifetime Nazirite.
- ✚ In addition, the angel instructed her from the moment of her conception, she must abstain from drinking wine and all foods forbidden to a nazirite. The angel further informed Manoah's wife that her son will save the Jewish people from the Philistine oppression they were enduring at that time.
- ✚ Upon hearing the good news that they were going to be blessed with a son, Manoah and his wife then invited the messenger to partake of a special meal they would prepare, but he declined. Instead the angel encouraged Manoah to offer the goat he wished to slaughter for the meal as a sacrifice to Hashem. The angel then ascended to the heavens in the flame that devoured the sacrifice.
- ✚ The Haftorah ends with the birth of Samson and that Hashem blessed him.

LINK TO SEDRA READING:

- ✚ This week's Sedra discusses all the Laws regarding a Nazirite.
- ✚ The Haftorah describes the birth of the most well-known one Shimson (Samson), who was Nazir throughout his whole life.

WEEKLY DISCUSSION:

It's a fact that the Torah is very careful not to insert any extra words in its text which is deemed unnecessary and without relevance; and yet it seems, towards the end of this week's Parsha, when discussing what the heads of each tribe bought as an offering to commemorate the Mishkan's consecration, although every tribe bought exactly the same Korbonos, the Torah describes each one individually in great detail. Why?

Our Rabbi's taught that in fact there is two other times when this questions arises. The first is the narration when Eliezer is sent by Avraham to find a suitable wife for Yitzchak and the second time is to do with the Mishkan's actual construction. The Torah describes all the details of what was needed to be created from the various materials donated and then repeats everything at length for a second time, once the Mishkan had been built. Is there a connection regarding these three things?

The Chafetz Chaim says yes. They correspond to the three pillars of our Jewish faith and therefore merit such lengthy discussions. The choosing of a spouse is the ground work for building a family that will follow in Hashem's path by adhering to all of his 613 mitzvahs; which is why Eliezer's experience is recounted twice.

The Mishkan is the sanctuary in which we can best serve Hashem. The torah wants us to see how much happiness and joy it was for Bnai Yisrael actually building a place to house Hashem's Shekinah (his spirit), enabling to dwell amongst them, from the initial planning stage to its final completion.

The Torah also wants to emphasise how proud each and every prince was to be given the great honour of offering up their korbonos on behalf of their tribes, hence the reason why it went out of its way to express the elation being felt by each one whilst performing this most holy and sacred act.

I've come to learn that these three separate elements make up the essence of what our community should strive to be. The first seeing ourselves as part of an extension of being one big happy and caring family. The second is our Jewish religion itself and last but not least is being proud of being a member of our Jewish nationality keeping our heritage alive. May Hashem continue to shower us with his blessings, in order to make our community grow from strength to strength.

