

Snapshot Torah



GUIDE TO THE WEEKLY PARSHA

ISSUE 41

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DEVARIM

9th AV 5775

Kohen - First Aliya:

Chapter 1, verses 1 - 10

- ✚ On the first day of the eleventh month in the fortieth year, wandering through the midbar (desert), Bnai Israel were encamped on the eastern bank of the Jordan River on the verge of entering the land of Canaan.
- ✚ Knowing his death was imminent Moshe begins his final monologue as their leader.
- ✚ Cleverly disguised by recalling all the places Bnai Yisrael had been to over the past thirty nine years, Moshe delivers a harsh rebuke towards his people for their past misdemeanours which prevented them all from conquering the land much sooner, after Matan Torah (The giving of the Torah) itself.

Levi - Second Aliya:

Chapter 1, verses 11 - 21

- ✚ At that time Moshe felt he could no longer lead them single handed, which was why he decided to appoint judges to help ease his burdens. Moshe implored the judges not to show any favouritism or be afraid of anyone as he needed them to judge righteously; but if they felt that any case would be too difficult for whatever reason, then the case had to be presented to him, to decide upon the final verdict.
- ✚ Upon leaving Horev and reaching Kadesh Barnea (Canaan's Southern Border), disaster occurred.

Sh'lishi - Third Aliya:

Chapter 1, verses 22 - 35

- ✚ Moshe told his beloved people to remain brave and not to lose heart but instead they requested that one man from each tribe should go and spy out the Promised Land first.
- ✚ Even though they came back with glowing reports about the fertility of the land, Bnai Yisrael rebelled against Moshe because they listened to all the negatively relating to how the land could never be conquered, because the current inhabitants dwelling in Canaan were too strong.
- ✚ Hashem became angry and swore that none of that generation apart from Caleb and Yehoshua (Joshua) will enter the land.

R'Vi'i - Fourth Aliya:

Chapter 1, verse 36 - Chapter 2, verse 1

- ✚ When the people heard this and although they were warned by Hashem from doing so, a group of them rebelled once more and rushed into the land, only to be defeated and killed by the Amorites.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya:

Chapter 2, verses 2 - 30

- ✚ Moshe recounts how thirty eight years later the next generation were being instructed by Hashem not to provoke the Edomites as they crossed the land of Seir in order to get to Israel because Hashem had given Seir to Esav as an inheritance. However Bnai Yisrael were given permission to buy provisions of water and food from them.
- ✚ Since Lot was also given the land where the nations of Moab and Ammon dwelt as an inheritance from Hashem. Bnai Yisrael were not permitted to conquer their land either.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya:

Chapter 2, verse 31 – Chapter 3, verse 14

- ✚ Moshe recalls how both the Amorite King 'Sihon' and the King of Bashan 'Og' refused Bnai Yisrael entry into their lands and instead led their men into battle only to be defeated by Bnai Yisrael's army.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya:

Chapter 3, verses 15 - 22

- ✚ These lands were then given and split up between the tribes of Reuven, Gad and half of Menashe's tribe to dwell; on the condition they would assist in conquering the rest of the land of Israel first.

Haftorah – Yishayah (Isaiah) Chapter 1 verses 1 to 27

OVERVIEW:

- ✚ Yishayah relives his vision he experienced to the Jewish nation, chastising the residents of Judah and Jerusalem for having rebelled against Hashem and not abandoning their sinful ways.
- ✚ Yishayah, attempts to encourage the people to repent sincerely and to perform acts of kindness especially towards the needy; promising them the best of the land in return for their obedience, making them ready for the Messianic era.

LINK TO SEDRA READING:

- ✚ This is the third and final prophecy which is always read the Shabbat before the ninth of Av, commemorating the destruction of both the first and second Beis Hamikdashim (temples).
- ✚ The Haftorah is fitting for this sad occasion as it clearly shows what is expected of us and to how low we have sunk.
- ✚ The first word of the *Haftorah* is "*Chazon*" (vision), teaching us not to be disheartened because Hashem will once again reestablish peace in Israel and that the third Holy Temple will one day be rebuilt.

WEEKLY DISCUSSION:

Today in the Hebrew calendar is Tisha B'Av (the ninth Av) a fast day set aside for mourning our losses over the destruction of both of our Beis Hamikdashim (Temples). However as today is also Shabbat where any form of mourning is strictly forbidden, it's basically business as usual: Making Kiddush, eating our three Shabbat meals and singing Zemiros (Sabbath songs) and the fast itself is deferred over to the Sunday.

This does not mean Tisha B'Av is forgotten entirely. Even though Shabbat postpones the negative factors associated with Tisha B'Av nevertheless, it enhances, amplifies and maximises the date's positive influences to the full. Our sages teach us that once a week, on every Shabbat, we all get a microcosmic glimpse of what living in the messianic era will feel and be like. The fact that Tisha B'Av this year has fallen on Shabbat is neither here or there. The only difference is that instead of fasting we are obligated to take pleasure in the foods and beverages we consume as it alludes to our Final Redemption.

Another unique aspect of the observance of Tisha B'Av this year is that it has a closer resemblance to Yom Kippur. In regard to Yom Kippur, Chazal say, "whoever eats and drinks on the ninth of Tishrei is considered as if he or she has fasted on both the ninth and tenth." This concept can also be borrowed in regard to the ninth and tenth of Av this year, for we eat on the ninth of the month in preparation to fast on the tenth.

As I referred to earlier, the imminence of our forthcoming redemption is yet another link that connects Tisha B'Av with Yom Kippur. During the time of the dedication of the first Beis Hamikdash, even though it was Yom Kippur, The Jews at that time were instructed to forgo their fast and eat and drink instead in celebration to the fact they were given a unique merit of being the first people to bring and offer up their Korbonos (sacrifices) to Hashem.

For that reason, when a fast day falls on Shabbat there must be an additional stress on happiness. Although it is commonly known as the *suedah hamafseket*, the meal associated with certain mourning rites, this year, the meal must be comparable to a feast of Kings.

Since we are awaiting the Moshiach's arrival imminently, Our sages predict that there is a strong possibility that the tenth of Av will be the date when the holy third Beis Hamikdash will descend down from the spiritual realms and dedicated for the use of serving Hashem once again in Jerusalem as it was meant to be. Were it to happen, then the parallel between Tisha B'Av and Yom Kippur would be complete in the most positive sense.

We should all pray that this year our hopes and dreams will become our reality.

