



Snapshot Torah



GUIDE TO THE WEEKLY PARSHA

ISSUE 39

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PINCHAS

24th Tammuz 5775

Kohen - First Aliya:

Chapter 25, verse 10 - Chapter 11, verse 4

- ✚ Hashem rewards Pinchas with his covenant of peace, zealously avenging Hashem by killing Zimri (A Prince from the tribe of Shimon) and Kozbi (A Princess of the Midianites).
- ✚ Since Pinchas had atoned for Bnai Yisrael's short comings, Hashem proclaimed that Pinchas and his descendants will be all be classed as Kohanim.
- ✚ As punishment, Hashem commands Moshe to smite and destroy the Midianites at every opportunity.
- ✚ Hashem then asks Moshe and Elazar to take a new census of all the men from 20 years upwards who were left, now the plague had come to an end.

Levi - Second Aliya:

Chapter 26, verses 5 – 51

- ✚ The totals are recorded here for each of the twelve tribes, (discounting the Levi'im).
- ✚ The grand total of all the tribes combined is 601,730.

Sh'lishi - Third Aliya:

Chapter 26, verse 52 - Chapter 27, verse 5

- ✚ 23,000 Levi'im males from one month old and upwards were counted separately.
- ✚ Hashem explains to Moshe how the land of Israel will be divided up accordingly by using the results from the Census. Larger families would receive greater portions than the small families.
- ✚ A special lottery was set up to determine which area of land in Israel will be designated to each tribe.
- ✚ The daughters of Tzelofhad approached and asked Moshe, if they would be eligible to receive their father's inheritance of land as he had died leaving behind no male offspring.
- ✚ Moshe relays their request to Hashem.

R'VI'I - Fourth Aliya:

Chapter 27, verses 6 - 22

- ✚ Hashem agrees, allowing Tzelofhad daughters to inherit their father's estate and goes on to instruct Moshe on the laws relating to inheritance.
- ✚ Hashem asks Moshe to climb up to the top of Mount Avarim, enabling him to see the promised land for himself before he dies.
- ✚ Moshe appeals to Hashem to appoint a worthy individual as his successor.
- ✚ Hashem tells him to publically place some of his spiritual greatness on Yehoshua (Joshua) and pronounce him as his replacement to lead Bnai Yisrael.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya:

Chapter 28, verses 1 - 15

- ✚ Details of the various Korbonos (sacrifices) offered up twice daily as well as additional korbonos given to honour Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh are discussed here.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya:

Chapter 28, verse 16 - Chapter 29, verse 11

- ✚ The korbonos offered and the laws relating to Pesach, Shavu'ous, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are explained.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya:

Chapter 29, verse 12 - Chapter 30, verse 1

- ✚ To finish off the Korbonos given at Succot and Shemini Atzeret are mentioned here.

Haftorah – Yermeyahu (Jeremiah) Chapter 1 verse 1 to Chapter 2 verse 3

OVERVIEW:

- ✚ Yermeyahu recounts how Hashem appointed him as prophet and his initial reluctance to accept the task.
- ✚ He describes two prophetic visions shown to him. The first featured an almond tree branch which is interpreted as that just like an almond tree is very quick to blossom, so too Hashem will carry out his plan of punishing his people for any sins they have committed.
- ✚ The second vision was that of a boiling pot whose foam was directed northward. Hashem explains, this is an allusion to the afflictions the Jewish people who will suffer at the hands of their enemies, the Babylonians because they abandoned Hashem and worshiped idols instead.
- ✚ Yermeyahu is encouraged to deliver the prophecy and not to fear the Jewish populace who would certainly not take kindly to such harsh words because Hashem reassures him that because of Bnai Yisrael's commitment and devotion at the time of Matan Torah he will eventually forgive them and return them back to the land of Israel where they belong.

LINK TO SEDRA READING:

- ✚ As we are now in the period between the 17th of Tamuz and the 9th of Av, the regular Haftorah is replaced with three different prophecies relating to affliction of our people and our first two beis Hamigdosh's ultimate destruction.
- ✚ This first Haftorah is read as a reminder of why we are in a state of mourning and why we have to fast on the seventeenth of Tamuz and the ninth of Av

WEEKLY DISCUSSION:

At the end of last week's sedra, we read that Pinchas, in an act of zealotry took his spear, charged into a tent, and, with one thrust, dispatched a sinning Israelite man and his Midianite companion becoming a honored hero and as a reward in this week's Parsha, Pinchas receives from Hashem the covenant of peace and everlasting priesthood.

What is zealotry? In our modern times, many mistake the word zealousness as an act of jealousy, denoting eagerness, ardor and passion, yet Pinchas exhibited more than that. The word jealousy implies elements of suspicion and intolerance, but the biblical translation goes deeper. Clearly, there is something else involved behind this particular zealous act, primarily the emotion of anger which drove Pinchas to do what he did.

I remember a Rabbi from the JLE once say that Zealotry based on anger or passion is not necessarily bad: It can also be a good thing because it can motivate a person into action. Nevertheless; in order to be a true zealot, a person must utilize their anger in a way that will clarify their thoughts or refine their focus. More often than not, we hear about the angry zealot who acts irrationally or immorally, without weighing the relative consequences of their actions. It's very rare to find an individual who can articulate his or her position through anger; Yet Pinchas was one of those few people who achieved it.

Looking back over the past few weeks and months there has been much to be angry about. Injustice, baseless hatred and reckless atrocities on innocent lives. In order to curb the situation and try to solve what's occurring all around us and around the world, Some Governments, Religious leaders and other Men of power are urging everyone not to bury our heads in the sand but to aspire in becoming zealots for 'THE CAUSE' and to focus our anger and grief to help eradicate the problem at hand.

Even though I know the threat of extremism, antisemitism, racism and violence is escalating out of control at an alarming rate; I feel there is a danger to this way of thinking and although their motives and intentions may seem pure, to fight hatred and anger with zealousness' it is the wrong approach and would only end up adding more fuel to the fire than extinguishing it.

The Talmud says that how we handle anger provides a major insight into our personalities and how others around us will perceive and respond to us. Anger is exhausting work. Anger held too long is transformed into bitterness, isolation and hatred culminating into suffering and remorse No-one can be zealous all the time. Although Pinchas acted in a burst of fervor and anger, his rage dissipated and died away almost immediately.

Anger is a powerful emotion, and we have to be careful how, where, when and who we direct it to. Yes. I believe that we can and should be passionate and fight for our beliefs, ethnic and moral codes. We can even be angry about what we witness in the world. But, if you are moved to performing a zealous act, be careful! Our words and deeds must be steered more by our moral compass than by our unchecked emotions that are grounded in anger or passion. Not only would you cause great hurt to others, especially the ones you love if you didn't, you could also hurt yourself irreparably too in the process. However I strongly believe, all we need to do is show the whole world and set the example of fulfilling the mitzvah of love your neighbour as yourself, reciting Tehilim and praying to Hashem for his help and guidance is a good start to help resolve our current situation. This perfect solution is easy and effortless to do and with Hashem's help could change our game plan entirely for the better.

שבת שלום