



Snapshot Torah



GUIDE TO THE WEEKLY PARSHA

ISSUE 22

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Kohen - First Aliya:

Chapter 35, verses 1 - 29

- ✚ Moshe assembles B'nai Yisrael together to warn them that they must not work on the Shabbat and the punishments that will be meted out if they transgressed.
- ✚ Moshe pleads with Bnai Yisrael to donate their time, talents and the materials required to the construction of the Mishkan.
- ✚ Bnai Yisrael did not disappoint as they respond with uninhibited enthusiasm to the cause.

Levi - Second Aliya:

Chapter 35, verse 30 – Chapter 37, verse 16

- ✚ Betzalel and Oholiav are appointed as the chief architects and artists for the project.
- ✚ Inspired by Moshe's motivating speech, Bnai Yisrael offered so much materials, they had to be commanded to cease donating.
- ✚ The constituents and measurements used to construct the outer coverings, the inner tapestries and the beams are described in detail.
- ✚ The Measurements and the material used to build the Aron Ha Kodesh (the Holy Ark) and the Shulchan (Table) is defined here.

Sh'lishi - Third Aliya:

Chapter 37, verses 17 - 29

- ✚ The design of how the Golden Menorah and the wooden altar covered in gold for which the incense will be burned upon are described in detail.

R'VI' - Fourth Aliya:

Chapter 38, verse 1 – Chapter 39 verse 1

- ✚ The Main Mizbayah (Altar), Laver (copper washstand) and the Mishkan's surrounding enclosure are detailed next, completing the sedra of Vayakhel.
- ✚ Parsha Pekudei begins with a reckoning of all the materials used in the Mishkan's construction.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya:

Chapter 39, verses 2 - 21

- ✚ Turquoise, purple and scarlet wool will be woven together to make the vestments in which the Kohen Gadol will wear whilst serving in the Mishkan
- ✚ The Ephod, Breastplate are described in detail.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya:

Chapter 39, verses 22 - 42

- ✚ The remaining garments worn by the Kohen Gadol and all the other Kohanim are defined next.
- ✚ Moshe inspects all the entire Mishkan's construction and gives his approval that everything had been made to Hashem's exact specifications.
- ✚ Moshe blesses all the workers for their efforts.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya:

Chapter 40 verses 1 - 38

- ✚ The completed Mishkan was assembled on the New moon, corresponding to the 1st day of Nissan 2449.
- ✚ Once all the vessels were properly installed in their rightful places, Hashem's Shechina (Divine Presence) descended in a cloud and rested in the Mishkan.
- ✚ Chazak! Chazak Venischazeik! (Be Strong, Be Strong and be Strengthened) for completing the book of Shemot.

Maftir – PARSHAS PARAH, Bamidbar, Chapter 19 Verses 1 - 22

- ✚ The Maftir discusses the necessary steps that have to be followed to remove all the impurities caused by being in contact with a deceased person.
- ✚ This process involved a seven day period during which the Tamei (impure) person underwent a process involving the Kohen sprinkling ashes from a Red Heifer, enabling them to become Tahor (Pure) once more.

Haftorah – PARSHAS PARAH, Yehezkel, Chapter 36 Verse 16 - 38

OVERVIEW:

- ✚ Yehezkel, the Navi, reprimands the Jewish people for defying Hashem, rendering them unfit to remain in the land of Israel; Meaning they had to be exiled and dispersed among the nations as a punishment.
- ✚ All the suffering caused whilst in exile would serve as part of their purification process, enabling them to become eligible enough to return back to their rightful home and to serve Hashem as they had before.

LINK TO SEDRA READING:

- ✚ The Maftir teach the laws and importance surrounding purity.
- ✚ The same theme is illustrated in the Haftorah, where although we as Jews are and have been experiencing hardships and persecution during our time in Golus (Exile); Hashem will make us pure once more and will ultimately renew His covenant with us and return us back to where we belong. In Eretz Yisrael. (The land of Israel)

WEEKLY DISCUSSION:

Shabbat Parah marks the beginning of formal preparations for getting ready for Pesach. This special reading which discusses the purification ritual involving a Parah Adumah (Red Heifer) was chosen to remind us of the purification process that was traditionally a part of the Pesach Pilgrimage preparations to Jerusalem during the time when the Beis Hamigdosh's (Temple) stood in all of its glory. This is because one who was impure was not only forbidden from entering the Beit Hamikdash but was even forbidden from partaking in the Korban Pesach, as well.

Many Rabbi's speak of the ritual of Parah Adumah as being the greatest of all life's mysteries; as it makes the impure pure, and makes the pure impure. Yet I'm sure if you discuss this with anyone who is heavily involved in their Pesach Cleaning right now, they would claim it's no mystery at all. Everyone knows that when you clean a house, you start with a clean sponge and a dirty house and you end up with a dirty sponge and a sparkling clean house. So surely the same logic can be applied to the Parah Adumah.

What I do find interesting however, is despite being a Torah law which in truth, only applies to the Kohanim (as they were the ones who would prepare the Para Adumah), the consensus of most authorities is that the requirement to hear Parsha Para is only rabbinical in nature.

Originally the Para Adumah ritual was intended to serve as an atonement for the sin of the Heter Eigel (Golden Calf) as a result of having toiled in the service of a cow designated for idolatry. The reason why our sages obligated all of us to hear this reading of Parsha Para today is because it serves to recall the sin of the Eigel which is a mitzvah in its own right. In fact, there are actually six events that one is required by Torah law to always remember and the incident of the Eigel happens to be one of them.

May all your Pesach preparations go well so we can all be ready for the coming of Moshiach so we can all live the dream of Celebrating the festival 'NEXT YEAR IN JERUSDALEM!'

