

Snapshot Torah



GUIDE TO THE WEEKLY PARSHA

ISSUE 12

26th December 2015

VAYECHI

14th Teveth 5776

Kohen - First Aliya:

Chapter 37, verse 28 – Chapter 38, verse 9

- ✚ Seventeen years have passed since Yaacov moved down to Mitzraim and the age of 147 he realises he is soon coming to the end of his life.
- ✚ Yaacov summons Yosef to him and makes him swear that when he dies, Yosef will not bury him in Mitzraim, but in the cave of Machpelah alongside his wife Leah and his other forefathers and Mothers.
- ✚ Yosef recognises how ill Yaacov has become and brings his two sons, Menashe and Ephraim to him for a blessing.

Levi - Second Aliya:

Chapter 38, verses 10 - 16

- ✚ Yaacov blesses Yosef first.
- ✚ Yaacov crosses his arms in order to place his right hand on the head of Ephraim, who was standing on Yaacov's left hand side and his left hand on the head of Menashe who was standing on Yaacov's right, before blessing them both.

Sh'lishi - Third Aliya:

Chapter 38, verses 17 - 22

- ✚ Watching this, Yosef attempts to straighten Yaacov's hands but he resisted.
- ✚ Yaacov told Yosef that Menashe was destined for greatness, but Ephraim would be even greater.

R'Vi'i - Fourth Aliya:

Chapter 39, verses 1 - 18

- ✚ Yaacov gathers the rest of his sons together around his bedside. in order to bless them
- ✚ Yaacov tells Reuven even though usually a first born is honoured with a double portion of his father's belongings, because of Reuven's sins he will get nothing. However Hashem in his mercy has forgiven him.
- ✚ As Shimon and Levi destroyed Shechem and instigated the killing of Yosef. Yaacov told them they are too dangerous to be together so their portion share of the land of Israel will be scattered across the whole country.
- ✚ Yehuda is compared to a lion and hence blessed with future leaders emanating from his tribe.
- ✚ Zevulun was blessed with great business acumen enabling him to support the tribe of Yissachar while they excel in torah study.
- ✚ Compared to a snake, Dan's descendants will become almighty warriors who will attack their enemies with unexpected manoeuvres.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya:

Chapter 39, verses 19 - 36

- ✚ Gad has told that his tribe will also become great fighters and even though they will return back in peace, they will always be in a state of constant threat from their other surrounding enemies.
- ✚ Asher was blessed with plenty of olive trees which its produce will you in the future temples.
- ✚ Compared to a deer, Naftali is blessed with light-footed messengers who will swiftly deliver the latest news to the other tribes.
- ✚ Yosef is blessed with two portions through his sons Ephraim and Menashe.
- ✚ Benjamin is told that the Beis Hamikdash will be built in his portion of land.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya:

Chapter 39, verse 27- Chapter 40, verse 20

- ✚ Yaacov passes away and Mitzraim mourn for him for seventy days.
- ✚ With Pharaoh's permission, Yosef and his brothers buried Yaacov next to his first wife Leah in the land of Canaan, in the cave of Machpelah.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya:

Chapter 40, verses 21 - 26

- ✚ Yosef gets his brothers to promise him that at the time of the Exodus from Mitzraim, his bones would be transported for reburial in the land of Canaan.
- ✚ Yosef dies at the age of one hundred and ten

Haftorah – MELACHIM (1ST BOOK OF Kings) Chapter 2, verses 1 to 12

OVERVIEW:

- ✚ Shlomo (Solomon) is standing by his dying father's bedside to receive King David's final message to him.
- ✚ King David encourages Shlomo to be strong and remain steadfast in his belief of Hashem, to ensure that his reign as the successor of the Davidic Dynasty will be a prosperous one. This includes rewarding and punishing various people for their actions during David's reign.
- ✚ Upon his death, Shlomo takes his father's place as King and his sovereignty is firmly established in the land of Israel.

GEMATRIA LINKED TO THE SEDRA:

- ✚ When Yaacov blesses Shimon and Levi he uses the words 'אִישׁ הָרָגוּ בָאֶפֶס כִּי' ki biapam hargu ish' (for in their fury they killed a man.) who was the person they killed?
- ✚ The clue is in Gematria as the numerical value of 678 both equals the phrase above and the words 'בֶּן שַׁכֵּם זֶה חַמּוֹר' ze Shechem ben Chamor' (This is Shechem the son of Chamor) whom as we read in an earlier Parsha was the one who defiled the brother's sister, Dinah.

WEEKLY DISCUSSION:

As the book of Berashis is read to its completion this week, I'll like to do a quick overview of some of the main lessons we can glean from it. Firstly, there is the main foundation on which all future revelation rests upon. From the very beginning, we learn from the verses about the origin of the heavens and earth and all the life that Hashem created for our benefit including the importance of Shabbat when Hashem rested from all his work. Of creating the world.

Next we have the narration of Adam and Chava (Eve) and Cain and Abel which teaches us, despite what you may think; you can't get away from anything because Hashem sees all and eventually makes us pay the consequences of our actions, when we've disobeyed him.

Then comes the major event of the great flood, where Hashem was ready to wipe us all off the face of the earth because of our sins; however, since one man (Noach) and his family stood out because their righteousness and served Hashem whole- heartedly. Mankind was saved and was allowed to become fruitful and multiply once more.

The remaining chapters of Berashis we learn about four great men who became the pillars of our Jewish Faith. Firstly, we have Avraham who epitomized our true core of Emunah and Bitachon showing us the need to trust Hashem implicitly and realize that even if we do not understand why Hashem wants us to do certain things we should still adhere to his commands with the knowledge that ultimately, he knows best!

Secondly there is Yitzchak, who embodied and encapsulated the power and belief of tefillos (Prayers) demonstrating that if we are obedient to Hashem's will and pray sincerely; He will find favor in our eyes, forgive our sins and fulfill our truest desires.

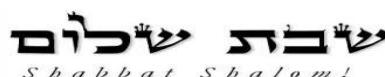
Next we have Yaacov whom although Conflict and strife were associated with him even before he was born (with his mother, Rivkah, being told by Hashem that she was carrying twins and that they represented two nations destined to struggle with each other.) Yaacov remained loyal to Hashem and was in due course rewarded in having all of his twelve sons becoming the Nucleus of our Jewish Nation which is still strong even today. The main lessons I gleaned from Yaacov's life is how careful we should treat others because they may end up treating you the same way, if not worse in some instances and even though we may sin from time to time we can still, be considered righteous before Hashem by doing Teshuva, repenting and striving to do better in the future.

And finally there's Yosef whom has we've seen from reading the past few sedra's bestows what I believe to be the most fundamental and valuable lessons of them all as it encompasses all the other messages mentioned previously and more. Which is the lesson of 'Divine Providence' teaching us that Hashem is in control and even when we are at our lowest point, he is still with us and working things out for the better.

To summarize the book of Breishit is not just a history of man but is also a book of obedient faith in which everyone of us has the duty to uphold. If we can place all our trust and faith in Hashem, then Hashem will never forsake us but will always take care of us until the end of days.

CHAZAK! CHAZAK! VENISCHAZIEK!

BE STRONG! BE STRONG! AND MAY WE BE STRENGTHENED!



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