

Torah Weekly



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Parshas Ki Savo

For the week ending 21 Elul 5755
15 & 16 September 1995

Summary

When the *Bnei Yisrael* dwell in the Land of Israel, its first fruits are to be taken to the Temple and given to the Kohen in a ceremony which expresses

recognition that it is Hashem who guides the history of the Jewish People throughout all the ages. This passage forms one of the central parts of the Haggadah that we read at the Seder. On the last day of Pesach of the fourth and the seventh years of the seven-year cycle of tithes, a person must recite a confession that he has indeed distributed the tithes to the appropriate people in the prescribed manner.

With this *mitzvah* Moshe concludes the commandments that Hashem has told him to give to The Jewish People. Moshe exhorts them to walk in Hashem's ways, because they are set aside as a treasured people to Hashem. When the *Bnei Yisrael* cross the Jordan River they are to make a New Commitment to the Torah. Huge stones are to be erected and the Torah written on them in the seventy primary languages of the world, after which they are to be covered over with a thin layer of plaster. Half the tribes will stand on *Mount G'rizim*, and half on *Mount Eval* and the Leviim will stand in a valley between the two mountains and recite twelve commandments and all the people will answer "Amen" to the blessings and the curses. Moshe then details the blessings that will be bestowed on the *Bnei Yisrael*. These blessings are both physical and spiritual. However if the Jewish People do not keep the Torah, Moshe details a chilling picture of destruction, resulting in exile and wandering among the nations.

Commentaries

The parsha of *Ki Savo* is always read prior to the week of *selichos* (penitential prayers). What is the connection? Parshas *Ki Savo* contains the *tochachos* (lit. the rebukes), the dire warnings of what will befall the Jewish People if

they neglect the Torah and follow after foreign ideologies. Just as by learning the *halachos* of bringing offerings it is considered as if we had actually brought those offerings, so too, if, *chas v'shalom*, Yisrael deserves to be punished, then by reading the *tochachos* it is considered as though we had in reality already received the rebukes — 'Let the new year and its curses be ended, and may the new year and its blessings begin.'

(Tiferes Shlomo)

"And it shall be when you come to the Land which Hashem, your G-d is giving to you..." (26:1).

The phrase "And it shall be" connotes *simcha* — to tell you that there is no joy except in settling the Land of Israel, for only "then will our mouths be filled with laughter."

(Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh)

"And it shall be when you come to the land which Hashem, your G-d is giving to you..." (26:1).

The phrase "And it shall be" connotes *simcha*. And although Eretz Yisrael is one of the three good gifts to the Jewish People only to be acquired through hardship, (the other two being Torah and the World to Come) nevertheless, coming to the Land is still cause for *simcha*.

(Admo"r R' Y"l Eiger)

“And we cried out to Hashem, the G-d of our fathers, and Hashem heard our voices...” (26:7).

In time of trouble it is not enough to pray, but one must cry out to Hashem, then one is answered immediately. For notice here that the verse doesn't say that Hashem heard our prayers, but He heard our voices! And even though every prayer is answered, there are prayers which are answered in days and prayers which are answered in years. The essence of one's prayers should always be for the whole community, and the ideal time for those prayers — after one has performed a *miztvah*.

(The Chafetz Chaim)

“And it will be on the day that you will cross over the Yarden to the Land which Hashem your G-d is giving you. And you will erect for yourselves large stones and cover them with plaster....And you will write upon the stones all the words of this Torah with a clear explanation” (27:2-8).

Notice the difference between the culture of the nations of the world, and (*I'havdil*) the Torah of Israel: When the nations of the world wish to immortalize their conquests, they erect large stones as memorials to their military prowess and their dominion. But when the Jews set up large stones it is because they are commanded to write on them “all the words of this Torah.”

(Don Isaac Abarbanel)

Haftorah: Yishaya 60:1-22

“And your people, they are all righteous; forever shall they inherit the Land; a branch of My planting...” (20:21).

If someone does not follow the correct path, he returns time and time again to this world in different re-incarnations, until he finally corrects his spiritual defects and is purified. That is the underlying message of this verse. “And your people, they are all righteous...” And if you should ask: ‘Hang on a moment, it seems to me there are some here who are far from righteous!’ Then comes the reply “a branch of My planting...” They are the branch who are destined to be planted and re-planted over and over again until they are all righteous.

(R' Mhr"m Mizrachi)

Pirkei Avos

Chapter #4

An Inconsolable Mourner

“Do not try to console a man when his dead one lies before him.”

Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar (Avos 4:18)

This rule has a fascinating source. When the *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed, Hashem, as it were, mourned for it. When the angels attempted to console Him, they heard the Heavenly response: “Do not attempt to console Me!” This Midrash teaches us that there is an hour of grief when the mourner is inconsolable and any effort made to console him may even increase his grief.

Rabbi Ovadiah of Bartenura

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Rabbi Dr. D. Gottlieb	
G 1	Yom Kippur
G 15	Rosh Hashana
G 90	Judgment & Joy On Rosh Hashana
Rabbi U. Milevsky, Z'tl	
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M 28	Yom Kippur
Rabbi M. Perlman	
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P 19	Songs of Rosh Hashana
Rabbi N. Schiller	
S 8	The Night of Selichot

ID	Topic
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TZ 75	Rosh Hashana: Three Dimensions
TZ 76	Yom Kippur: Freeing the Soul
TZ 127	Preparing For Rosh Hashana
TZ 128	Rosh Hashana: Reaching the Root
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Rabbi M. Weinbach	
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