



Parshas Ki Savo

For the week ending 16 Elul 5756
30 & 31 August 1996

Overview

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.

Insights

"I'M SORRY TO WAKE YOU UP, BUT..."

"Then you shall call out with a loud voice..." (26:5)

It's three o'clock in the morning. Your wife has just gone into labor. The doctor is looking concerned. You grab the phone and ring an *adam gadol* (great Torah scholar) and ask him to *daven* (pray) for your wife. He tells you not to worry. He gets up and davens for your wife.

After a difficult labor your wife presents you with a beautiful baby boy. Mother and baby are fine. It's now Tuesday morning.

On Friday night you see the *adam gadol* in *shul* and invite him to the *Shalom Zocher* (traditional welcoming of the baby boy). He says to you "When your wife went into labor, you called me at three in the morning to tell me. But when she gave birth you wait till the *Shalom Zocher*..."

A farmer understands that without rain and sun his crops will fail. Thus, he prays to Hashem for the success of his produce; he prays fervently and with great motivation.

When all is harvested, he brings the *Bikkurim* (first fruits) to the *Beis Hamikdash* in Jerusalem. He then makes a declaration — a brief sketch of Jewish history — outlining the unfailing kindness of Hashem to His people. Rashi, quoting the Talmud (*Sotah* 32b), writes that this declaration must be made in 'a loud voice.'

With that same fervor and intensity that we seek help and assistance, we must offer thanks and recognition. If we put a heart-felt three-in-the-morning call to the Master of the World for urgent help, let us thank Him with that same urgency and depth of feeling.

In the name of Rabbi Yosef Tzeinvort, heard from Rabbi Yehoshua Bertram

CURSES AND BLESSINGS

"And it will be that if you will not listen...."

There are 98 curses in the *Tochacha* (rebuke) in this week's parsha, which detail what will happen to the Jewish People if they stray from the Torah.

After a wedding, we make a week of *Sheva Berachos* (festive meals) for the newly-married couple. Why specifically a week?

During the week of *Sheva Berachos*, there are two meals a day, and at each meal seven blessings are recited. Seven multiplied by two, multiplied by seven is ... 98!

May it be through the *blessings* of the establishment of a new Jewish home that all the *curses* and suffering of our long night of exile will come to an end! That again we will hear in the cities of Yehuda and the suburbs of Yerushalayim the voice of joy, the voice of happiness, the voice of the groom and the voice of the bride!

Based on Chidushei HaRim in the Gnizei HaChasidim in Iturei Torah

Prepared by Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem, Israel
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Production Design: Lev Seltzer

HANDS UP!

“And the Kohen shall take the basket from your hands...” (26:4)

The hands are different from all the other limbs. All the other limbs of the body are fixed and static, whereas the hands may be lowered below the feet or raised higher than the head.

The same is true on an allegorical/ethical level. Man can lower his hands, he can perform all the greatest sins possible. He can murder, steal. Everything can be done with the hands. We talk of having ‘blood on our hands’ and ‘dirty hands’.

On the other hand, the hands, when raised up, can perform the holiest acts. When the *Kohen* blesses the people he raises his hands. The hand gives *tzedaka*

(charity). The hand puts on tefillin. We extend ‘the hand’ of friendship and assistance.

The handiwork of a person is symbolized by the acquisitions that the labor of his hands have brought him. For this reason, the first of his fruits must be made holy as *Bikkurim*.

Because the beginning always influences what follows it. Thus, every beginning needs to be made holy, because when the beginning is holy, everything that follows it will also be holy.

When the hands are raised above the head, when their direction is heavenwards, then the head and the body will inevitably follow after them.

Adapted from Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin

Haftorah: Isaiah 60:1-22

In this, the last of the seven Haftoros of Consolation, the prophet Isaiah calls on Jerusalem to arise from the pain of darkness and shadow, and to shine to the world in her full glory. The light of redemption, both physical and spiritual, is being radiated on her. Her long-banished children are returning, and in their wake are the nations of the world who have acknowledged Hashem, and that the Jewish People are his emissaries. This redemption, unlike those that have preceded it, will be the final and complete one. *“Never again will your sun set, nor your moon be withdrawn, for Hashem shall be unto you an eternal light, and ended will be your days of mourning.”*

WALLS OF PROTECTION

“The sons of strangers will build your city walls...” (60:10)

As far as the Jewish People are concerned, they really didn’t need city walls at all. For no man would dare to wage war on them, and thus they did not need fortresses and strongholds.

However, the ‘sons of strangers’ — non-Jews who had accepted upon themselves the seven Noachide laws — they certainly needed the walls. For according to the Rambam, the law of the *ger toshav* (non-Jew who has accepted the seven Noachide laws) is only applicable during that time when the custom was to have city walls.

Therefore “the sons of strangers” built the city-walls so that they would have the status of *gerim toshavim*. For once they achieved this status, the Jewish People have a mitzva to provide for their sustenance and welfare.

A wall can be more than just a protection against enemies...



INSIGHTS INTO THE ZEMIROS
SUNG AT THE SHABBOS TABLE
THROUGHOUT THE GENERATIONS.

KOL MEKADESH - asenkf
“WHOEVER KEEPS SHABBOS...”

His (the Shabbos observer) reward is great in accordance with his deed.
Each man to his camp, each man to his banner.

שָׂרָה הַרְבַּיח מ'וֹד אֶל פִּי פִּעֵלוֹ
אִישׁ עַל מַחֲנֵהוּ וְאִישׁ עַל דִּגְלוֹ

*scharo harbayh m'od al pi fo-olo,
ish al machanayhu v'ish al diglo*

One who honors Shabbos through enjoying it, say our Sages (Shabbos 118a), will be rewarded with an inheritance without boundaries. This reward is measure for measure. Just as he did not set limits on his enjoyment of the holy day, and even defied the restriction of time by adding on time to the Shabbos, so will his “reward be great in accordance with his deed” and will be without limits.

Such a boundless reward will render it unnecessary for any Shabbos observer to in any way impose on the domain of another. Each will have all he requires and will be content to be “in his camp with his banner.”

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