

INSIGHTS from the SEDRA

Insights from the Sedra is a project of the Scholar's Kollel of Great Neck. It aims to provide several questions and answers about the Sedra, culled from various commentaries, including the following: Baal Haturim, Darash Moshe, Vedibarta Bam by Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky, Torah Treasures by Dov Furer, Wellsprings of Torah by Alexander Friedman, and Kol Dodi by Rabbi Dovid Feinstein, Great Torah Lights by Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Goodman, Something To Say by Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser, The Vilna Gaon, Growth Through Torah by Zelig Pliskin and The Call of the Torah.

הואיל משה באר את התורה הזאת

“Moshe began explaining this Torah...” (1:5)

QUESTION: The word “*ho'il*” – “began” – is superfluous. It could have just said “*bei'ir Moshe et haTorah hazot*” – *Moshe explained this Torah?*

ANSWER: In Torah study there are many difficulties and questions which remain unanswered. In many such cases, the Talmud concludes a discussion with the word “*teiku*” – תיקו – תשבי יתרץ קושיות ואבעיות – *Eliyahu the Tishbi* will resolve all difficulties and questions. Eventually when *Eliyahu* comes to herald the revelation of *Mashiach*, he will also explain and clarify all the unanswered difficulties and unresolved Torah issues.

The letters in the word “*ho'il*” – הואיל can be rearranged to read אליהו. While *Moshe* explained the Torah very clearly, he knew that in future generations difficulties would arise in comprehending Torah subjects, and therefore he alluded that any lack of clarity will ultimately be elucidated through the prophet *Eliyahu*. (Vedebarta Bam)

QUESTION: Why did *Moshe* explain the Torah in seventy languages if the Jews only spoke *lashon hakodesh* anyway?

ANSWER: Before *Moshe* passed away, he reviewed the Torah with *Bnei Yisrael* with great clarity to prevent any confusion or mistakes. Amazingly, he taught the Torah in seventy different languages! This was done to: 1) help some Jews who did not know Hebrew as well as their ancestors did, and 2) to show *Klal Yisrael* that wherever you end up in *Galut*, and no matter the language you speak, the Torah is speaking to you, too! Some commentators say that the seventy explanations that *Moshe* spoke were really the seventy ways that the Torah can be understood. (Ksav Sofer, HaKsav V'hakabala & Seforno)

איכה אשא לבדי טרחתם ומשאכם וריבכם

“How can I carry your troubles, your burdens, and your controversies all by myself.” (1:12)

The *Medrash Yalkut (Devarim, 801)* states that three people said “*Eikhah*” – How: *Moshe*, *Yeshayahu* and *Yirmiyahu*. *Moshe* saw the Jews at their greatest height, *Yeshayahu* saw them as they were falling and *Yirmiyahu* saw them at their lowest point.

Moshe perceived the difficulties in inculcating the Jewish people with a true sense of justice. Though he established a system of judges and courts, he knew well the problems of sustaining such a system and lamented, “*Eikhah?*” How can I carry your troubles all by myself?

Yeshayahu observed the Jews after their sense of justice had been corrupted and exclaimed, “*Eikhah?*” How is it possible that the city of justice (*Yerushalayim*) has become a harlot? (*Yeshayahu* 1:21) for a perverse sense of justice leads to immorality. Justice continued to deteriorate until the Temple was destroyed, causing *Yirmiyahu* to lament “*Eikhah?*” How the city that was so full of people sits alone! (*Eicha* 1:1). The rectification of the destroyed Temple and, by extension, our sense of justice, will take place upon the coming of *Mashiach*, who will judge righteously.

(*Likutei Halachot*)

לא תכירו פנים במשפט כקטן כגדל תשמעון לא תגורו מפני איש כי המשפט לאלקים הוא
“Do not show favoritism in judgment. Listen to both small and great. Do not fear any man, because judgment belongs to G-d.” (1:17)

G-d is the only One who knows how to judge each individual for his deeds, in the context of his intentions and circumstances. We must take great care never to judge others, for we do not know everything there is to know about a person’s reason for his deeds. (*Likutei Maharam*)

Perhaps now we can understand why *Parshat Devarim* is read before *Tisha B’Av*. *Mishne Torah* means a review of the Torah. The *Beit HaMikdash* was destroyed because *Klal Yisrael* did not have a solid connection with Hashem. If one has a close relationship with Hashem, he will behave accordingly, with *middot tovot* and with proper respect towards his fellow Jew. The way to forge this strong bond to Hashem is through learning and reviewing the Torah and with love. Learning and reviewing is not necessarily easy, but doing so demonstrates one’s love of Torah, which in turn demonstrates one’s love for Hashem. We read *Parshat Devarim* before *Tisha B’Av* to remind us that the way to rebuild what was destroyed is through our learning of Torah and constantly reviewing it. May we be *zoche* to see the rebuilding of the *Beit HaMikdash bim’heirah biyameinu, amen!*

(*Parsha Pshet!*)

SHABBAT SHALOM!

This week’s Divrei Torah are dedicated in memory of Mrs. Bea Brody, ביילע בת הרב יעקב, אריה ז”ל, on her 10th Yartzheit, Erev Tisha B’Av, by her children, Dr. Paul & Drora Brody, and her grandchildren, the Brody Bunch. For future sponsorship opportunities or to receive this publication, please call Steve Zuckerman at 516 652 5266 or email zkster@aol.com or Rabbi Lichter at ilichter@gns.org. Sponsorships in memory of or in honor of someone are \$50.00 per issue.