

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.

Introduction

The book of *Devarim*, the last of the five *Chumashim*, is referred to as *Mishneh Torah*, a repetition of the Torah. There are 11 *parshiyot* in the Book of *Devarim*. Throughout the 11 *parshiyot* you will only find the words: And Hashem spoke to *Moshe* twice. This was when it pertained to *Moshe* personally and not to *Am Yisrael*. Since the Torah was already given to everyone on *Har Sinai*, *Moshe* took it upon himself to explain the laws to *Bnei Yisrael* and it therefore says: These are the words which *Moshe* spoke...Everything that *Moshe* said to *Bnei Yisrael* was done in the 36 days before his demise, beginning on the first of *Shevat* in the fortieth year after leaving Egypt until the seventh day of *Adar*.

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 – “*Tishbi yetareitz kushi’ot ve’abayot*” – *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*)

Why did *Moshe* teach *Bnei Yisrael* the Torah in the seventy languages of the world? There were people who said that the Torah is only applicable in the desert. Once *Bnei Yisrael* would enter *Eretz Yisrael*, their land, they would no longer need the Torah; they would be able to create their own laws and regulations. Others said that the Torah is only necessary when *Bnei Yisrael* were living together in *Eretz Yisrael*. However, when *Bnei Yisrael* is dispersed among other nations, they can

follow those nations' laws. To counter those false nations, *Moshe* taught *Bnei Yisrael* the Torah in all of the seventy languages as they were preparing to establish themselves in *Eretz Yisrael*. This way it would be known that the Torah is unrelated to a specific place or time. Even when *Klal Yisrael* is dispersed throughout the world among nations of foreign tongue, the Torah is still relevant.

(Ksav Sofer)

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 they 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 Pshetl)

ויצא האמרי...וירדפו אתכם כאשר תעשינה הדברים
“The Amorites came out...and pursued you like bees...” (1:44)

Rashi explains this simile to mean that just as a bee falls dead immediately upon stinging a person, so too the Amorites died instantly upon attacking the Jewish nation. The Torah is telling us that in the future there will be enemies of the Jewish people who will be willing to die like bees as long as Jews are maimed or killed. These people are called suicide bombers. (ימ"צ)

SHABBAT SHALOM!

This week's Divrei Torah are sponsored by Dr. Paul & Drora Brody and the BrodyBrunch, in memory of Paul's dear mother, Mrs. Bea Brody, ביילע בת הרב יעקב אריה ז"ל, on her 11th Yartzheit, 8th of Av, Erev Tisha B'Av. May her neshama have an Aliyah. 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.