

DEVARIM דְּבָרִים



In loving memory of Harav Yitzchak Yoel ben Shlomo Halevi

Volume 32 | #44

25 July 2020
4 Av 5780

Shabbat Chazon

Shabbat ends:

London 9.58pm
Sheffield 10.22pm
Glasgow 10.49pm
Edinburgh 10.45pm
Birmingham 10.10pm
Jerusalem 8.21pm

**Tisha B'Av begins on
Wednesday 29th July**

Please look regularly at the social media and websites of the US, Tribe and your community for ongoing updates relating to Coronavirus as well as educational programming and community support.

You do not need to sign into Facebook to access the US Facebook page. The US Coronavirus Helpline is on 020 8343 5696.

May God bless us and the whole world.

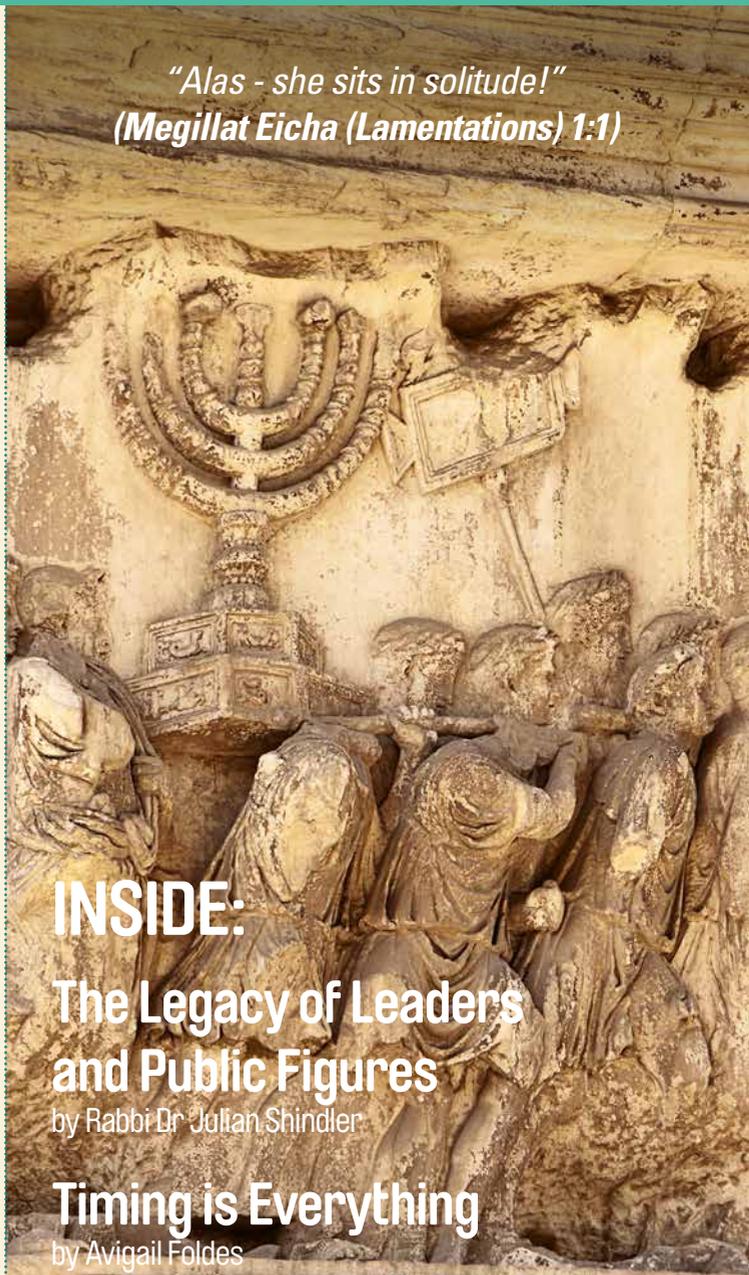
Artscroll p.938
Haftarah p.1195

Hertz p.735
Haftarah p.750

Soncino p.989
Haftarah p.1004

Daf Hashavua

"Alas - she sits in solitude!"
(Megillat Eicha (Lamentations) 1:1)



INSIDE:

**The Legacy of Leaders
and Public Figures**

by Rabbi Dr Julian Shindler

Timing is Everything

by Avigail Foldes

Sidra breakdown

דְּבָרִים

Devarim

1st Sidra in:

דְּבָרִים

Devarim

By Numbers:

105 verses

1,548 words

5,972 letters

Headlines:

Beginning of Moses' final speeches



United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

Produced by US Living & Learning together with the Rabbinical Council of the United Synagogue

Editor-in-Chief: Rabbi Baruch Davis

Editorial and Production Team:

Rabbi Daniel Sturgess,
Rabbi Michael Laitner,
Rebbetzen Nechama Davis,
Joanna Rose

Available also via email US website
www.theus.org.uk ©United Synagogue

To sponsor Daf Hashavua please contact Danielle Fox on **020 8343 6261**, or dfox@theus.org.uk

If you have any comments or questions regarding Daf Hashavua please email landl@theus.org.uk

The Legacy of Leaders and Public Figures

by Rabbi Dr Julian Shindler, Office of the Chief Rabbi

These are the words which Moshe spoke to all of Israel. (Devarim 1:1)



The sidra of Devarim introduces a series of long speeches delivered by Moshe

Rabbeinu on a number of occasions towards the end of his life. They are, in effect, his last will and testament to the Jewish people and they are conveyed eloquently and with evident passion and conviction. The Midrash Tanchuma (teachings of the Talmudic Sages on the Torah) notes that this is the same Moshe who, when chosen by God to lead

the Jewish People, was initially hesitant, and pleaded with God saying: (Shemot 4:10)

'I am not a man of words... for I am heavy of mouth and heavy of speech.

Moshe lacked the confidence for oratory and had a speech impediment. And yet, having grown in stature through the trials and tribulations of leadership, and with God's help, by the end of his life's mission, the Torah (Devarim 1:5) records that:

In loving memory of Chaya Rachel bat Moshe Ben-tzion

Sidra Summary

1st Aliya (Kohen) – Devarim 1:1-10

In the 40th year after leaving Egypt, towards the end of his life, Moshe gathers the nation together and rebukes them, alluding to the many places where they made mistakes since leaving Egypt (Rashi). Moshe recalls the time spent at Mount Sinai after receiving the Torah, and that the nation could have gone from Sinai straight into the Land of Canaan. At that stage, Moshe realised that he needed assistance to lead such a big nation.

2nd Aliya (Levi) – 1:11-21

Moshe therefore told the people to appoint judges over sub-groups of 1000, 100, 50 and 10 men. He told those judges to be fair and brave in their work, and that any dispute too difficult to resolve should be brought to Moshe himself.

'Moshe began explaining this Torah', which, according to the Midrash Tanchuma as quoted by Rashi, he accomplished in 70 languages.

Moshe's speeches include a restatement of many of the mitzvot and contain frequent exhortations for the people to remain faithful to God and to obey His laws. He recounts the historical trajectory of the people from the time of the Patriarchs, through their period of enslavement and subsequent redemption from Egypt, the revelation at Mount Sinai and their 40 year journey in the wilderness. Interestingly, in so doing, Moshe also pointedly recalls the places and events where the people went astray or rebelled against his leadership. There is no

historical revisionism as regards to this. The good and the bad are all part of the Jewish journey to the Promised Land.

Recently, questions about some of the most famous figures in British history have assumed greater prominence in our national debate. Notwithstanding the generous philanthropy, military and cultural contributions to British life of major British public figures, such as Lord Nelson and Winston Churchill, especially during the centuries of Britain's colonialist ambitions, their unacceptable tolerance of slavery and/or association with racist views has led to demands for the re-naming of public buildings in their honour and the dismantling of monuments to them. It would be

wrong to airbrush out the misdeeds or character faults of these notables, but nor should we forget their incredible achievements and self-sacrifice for this country.

By contrast, as Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808 - 1888) points out, when Moses departed from us, no monument, no commemorative column, no earthly commemorative token was left behind. The whole earthly personality of Moses disappeared with his death. Only the place on Earth where the last of his faithful words were heard by his people is handed down with the greatest possible precision, so that if his descendants come to this place, it may engender in them an echo of the Word of Moses and inspire them to be faithful Jews.



3rd Aliya (Shlishi) – 1:22-28

Moshe recalls the sin of the spies. The people had approached Moshe 38 years earlier, wanting to send a mission to inspect the Land. Moshe agreed and selected 12 leading men, one from each tribe. Upon their return, Yehoshua and Calev spoke positively, but the other spies persuaded the people that going into the Land was impossible, due to the giants and the strongly fortified cities. Moshe's attempts to reassure the people of God's protection when they would enter the Land were rejected. God then decreed that the generation who had accepted the negative report of the ten spies would die in the wilderness and not enter the Land.

Point to Consider: *Why did Moshe agree to sending spies, if he would later rebuke them for the mission? (see Rashi to 1:23)*

4th Aliya (Revi'i) – 1:39-2:1

Those aged under 20 at the time of the sin of the spies would be allowed to enter the Land. Despite Moshe's discouragement, some of the people then attempted to enter the Land, despite Moshe's warning that God would not now allow them to enter. They refused to listen and were brutally crushed by the Emorites. The nation wept and then turned back towards the Sea of Reeds.

Eicha How Did It Happen?

by Rabbi Baruch Davis, Chigwell & Hainault United Synagogue



Many writers and artists have tried to capture the paradise that was the Garden of Eden.

Adam and Eve were in a state of total harmony, with each other, with nature, and with God. But then they ate from the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge and found themselves banished from the Garden.

God cried out to Adam, "ayeka" – meaning "where are you?" (Bereishit 3:9) God of course knew perfectly well where Adam was. Yet He was asking a spiritual question: "How did you get yourself into such a situation?"

The question aycha (lit. how), which has the same letters as the word ayeka, was asked of us by three of our bestknown prophets, Moshe, Yeshaya (Isaiah) and Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah).

In today's sidra, Moshe says: "For how long (aycha) can I put up with your squabbles, accusations and fights?" (Devarim 1:12) This can also be understood as a demand by Moshe for the people to reflect upon what their squabbling had led to.

We do not simply mourn our disasters; we reflect upon how they came about. According to one opinion

cited by the Haemek Davar (authored by Rabbi Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin d. 1893), Moshe was referring to the bickering recorded in Parashat Beha'alotecha, just at the point when the Israelites were poised to enter the Land of Israel. Their complaints prevented their entry and were followed by the sin of the spies (in Parashat Shelach). That generation was condemned to die in the desert exile.

In today's haftarah, we read another aycha, the disturbing words of Yeshaya: "How (aycha) has the city which was faithful become a harlot?" (1:21)

Yeshaya uttered these words in a time of peace during the first Temple period, describing the deterioration of society even before the destruction commemorated on 9 Av (Tisha B'Av). He was warning the nation of the consequences of their unfaithful ways, begging them to change course. The image of the harlot is one of betrayal.

Yeshaya's opening words compare us unfavourably with the ox and donkey: "An ox knows its owner, and a donkey (knows) the feeding trough of its master; but Israel does not know.

My people does not consider" (1:3).

Rashi explains the comparisons: 'The owner directs its ox in ploughing, and so it comes to know its owner, but the donkey does not know its owner until he feeds it. Israel has not behaved like the ox, despite My [God] saving the nation from Egypt, nor even like the donkey, despite the manna which she enjoyed' (ibid).

There is a thread which runs through from the ayeka of God to Adam and Eve, to the aycha of Moshe and of Yeshaya. Each one asks the listener to reflect on how disaster can and could have been avoided.

The unheeded pleas reached their logical conclusion in the Megillah of Eicha – Lamentations, which we read on Tisha B'Av. It was written by Yirmiyahu, who lived through the destruction of the First Temple. It opens with the haunting words:

"How (aycha) does she [Jerusalem] sit alone, the city which was once full of people?" (Megillat Eicha 1:1)

Notwithstanding these sombre messages, the sidra, haftarah and megilla all conclude on positive notes respectively. Moshe tells Yehoshua that God will fight on the Nation's behalf (Devarim 1:38). Yeshaya prophesises that Zion will be redeemed with justice (Yeshaya 1:27). Finally, Yirmiyahu prays to God that "... we shall return: renew our days, as of old" (Megillat Eicha 5:21).

In memory of Yisrael Shmuel ben Yirmaya Yehoshuah

5th Aliya (Chamishi) – 2:2-30

Moshe then recalls that 38 years later, the Israelites turned northwards and passed by the descendants of Esav in Seir, making sure not to start a war with them, nor to take any provisions without payment. The nation then headed towards the Moabite desert. God instructed Moshe not to start a conflict with Moab. Conversely, on their march towards the Land, God instructed them to pass through the land of Sichon, the king of Cheshbon, albeit this might lead to a war.

6th Aliya (Shishi) – 2:31-3:14

Sichon came out to wage war. The Israelites destroyed him and his nation, taking his entire land, with the exception of Ammon. The nation then successfully defeated the other Emorite king, the mighty Og, king of Bashan, conquering his territory.

7th Aliya (Shevi'i) – 3:15-3:22

Moshe apportioned the land taken from Sichon and Og to the tribes of Gad and Reuven and some of the tribe of Menashe (as detailed in parashat Matot – see Bemidbar 32). However, the men of these tribes were still required

Timing is Everything

by Avigail Foldes, Participant in the Chief Rabbi's Maayan Programme



The division of sidrot through the Jewish calendar ensures that Tisha B'Av always falls between the sidrot of Devarim and Vaetchanan. It is deliberately engineered to be this way, despite the lapse between solar and lunar cycles, and is often achieved by combining pairs of sidrot in the preceding weeks. What is the significance of coordinating these particular sidrot around Tisha B'Av?

In Devarim, Moshe begins his final speeches to Bnei Yisrael before his death. This continues into Vaetchanan where Moshe describes that in the future the Jewish people will be scattered amongst the nations. He further foretells that while in exile they will engage in idol worship although eventually they will repent and turn to God. This raises a second question, which links to our original question. How were these predictions relevant to the Jews at that time who were just emerging from exile?

In his collection of essays entitled *Michtav Me'elياهو*, Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler (1892-1953), who founded the Gateshead Kollel during World War Two, explains that one purpose of suffering and exile is to inspire people to reflect and change

We all have seeds of goodness within us, even if they are only a small part of the whole.



their ways for the better. In the same passage, Rabbi Dessler expands on his point by noting the significance of an apparent contradiction in a Talmudic teaching (Shabbat 32a), which states:

'... Only great lawyers can get one acquitted. What are great lawyers? Repentance and good deeds.'

The Talmud elaborates on the importance of repentance and good deeds, noting that ... Even if there are 999 accusers and only one in his defence he will be saved, and even if that one angel in defence has 999 points of guilt and one in his favour, he

will be saved'.

Rabbi Dessler explains that if people respond to small warning signs, which are sent to prompt them to return to the correct path, then tiny merits can help save them from harm, but if they wait until later then much more drastic measures may be necessary.

This perhaps clarifies why Moshe prophesied future disasters and can explain the careful timing in the Jewish calendar to ensure that Tisha B'Av falls between Devarim and Vaetchanan. We all have seeds of goodness within us, even if they are only a small part of the whole. During the course of history we have been called upon to focus inwards and improve our connection to this good. Moshe's message might have reminded the people that they could pre-empt the worst repercussions of future transgressions. They could avoid harsh measures of suffering and exile by seeking out and developing those righteous sparks at an early stage. Nowadays, on Tisha B'Av, the national day of mourning that commemorates so many calamities that have befallen the Jewish people through the millennia, we can again reflect on the importance of a timely response to warning signs.

In memory of Yehuda ben Yaakov HaCohen

to enter the Land of Canaan to fight with the rest of the nation. Moshe told his successor Yehoshua that just as God had helped them to defeat Sichon and Og, so too He would help them in their conquest of the Land.

Haftarah

This haftarah, taken from the beginning of Yeshaya (Isaiah), is the third of the three 'haftarot of tribulation' and is always

read on the Shabbat before Tisha B'Av. The prophet relates God's rebuke of the nation for rebelling against Him and bringing animal offerings without actually addressing their sinful ways. The verses of rebuke are traditionally read to the tune of Megillat Eicha (Lamentations), which is recited on Tisha B'Av. Yet the haftarah ends with the hopeful message that Zion "will be redeemed with justice".

Judaism and Art part 2

'Let There Be Light'

by Rabbi David Lister, Edgware United Synagogue



Thus began God's interaction with His universe (Genesis chapter 1 verse 1). But we are not to understand this light as being merely physical.

Proverbs 6:23 famously equates Torah study with light. In the Priestly Blessing, the Cohanim say, "May God cause His face to shine upon you." (Numbers 6:25). Psalm 89:15 says that the people who hear the sound of the shofar will walk in the light of God's face. Light is shorthand for a spiritual gift of vision from God.

The eighteenth century painter William Turner has been dubbed "the painter of light". Turner had an avowedly religious approach to his painting. Inspired by Biblical metaphor, he associated light with sanctity and tried to use it to express God's presence in the world. Turner concentrated on the depiction of light to such an extent that solid objects lose their definition in his work. His later pictures especially can be thought of as great pools of shimmering light dotted with faint fixed points.

The development of Turner's preoccupation with light is clearly demonstrated in a series of paintings of Norham Castle. His early



Turner, Norham Castle (1806)



Turner, Norham Castle (1840)

Light is shorthand for a spiritual gift of vision from God.

paintings show clear definition and are reminiscent of John Constable's honest and straightforward depiction of the world as it is. The castle's silhouette is sharply defined against a clear sky and its precise reflection in the River Tweed below

offers a neat symmetry. In later paintings of the same subject from a similar vantage point, the castle has almost faded from view, visible only as a purple smudge on the horizon. Clearly what interested the mature Turner as he painted this work was the radiance of the sun, which dominates the sky. While the castle is an insignificant detail, the sun casts great shafts of light across the river.

In the magnificent radiance of these later pictures, we can perhaps find an attempt to depict the end of days when God's light will dominate all else.

As the prophet (30:26) Isaiah writes: *The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that God binds up the hurt of His people, and heals the stroke of their wound.*

The eclipsing of physical objects can also remind us that God's presence will be the only thing that holds our attention, with everything else paling into insignificance. We recall this thrice daily with the words of the prophet Zechariah (14:9) at the end of Aleynu: *On that day, God will be one and His name will be one.*

TISHA B'AV

5780

with the United Synagogue

Wednesday 29 July 2020

8:53^{pm}

Fast Begins

9:00^{pm}

Maariv & Eicha (Book of Lamentations) Live

with Rabbi Dr Yoni Birnbaum of Hadley Wood Jewish Community

Thursday 30 July 2020

9:00^{am}

Kinnot – an in depth study

with Rabbi Daniel Roselaar of Alei Tzion

5:00^{pm}

Destruction & Renewal: Jerusalem Live

with South Hampstead Synagogue & JRoots

7:30^{pm}

Mincha & Maariv Live

from Birmingham Central Synagogue

9:43^{pm}

Fast Ends

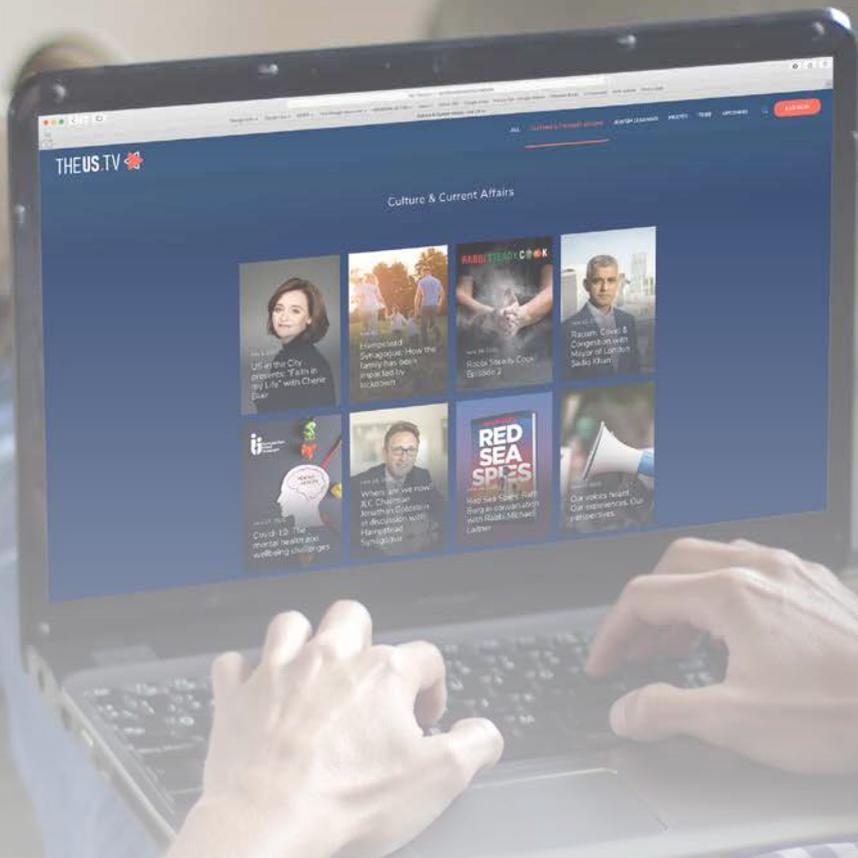
There will also be a variety of thought-provoking programmes available to watch on-demand throughout the day, visit www.theus.tv/tishabav

Highlights will include:

Appreciating the Temple with Rabbi Judah Dardik, Sgan Rosh Yeshivat Orayta, Jerusalem

Ethiopian Jews, Jerusalem and the Temple – Raffi Berg in conversation with Kasa Bainesay-Harbour

All live broadcasts will be available on the
US Facebook page and on TheUS.tv



THEUS.TV

The new on-demand video platform
from the United Synagogue

PRAYER

CURRENT AFFAIRS

JEWISH LEARNING

ENTERTAINMENT

Visit www.theus.tv



THE TRIBE SCRIBE

DEVARIM: REVIEWING THE SITUATION!

IN THIS WEEK'S PARASHA, MOSHE BEGINS REVIEWING THE EVENTS OF THE LAST 40 YEARS IN THE DESERT, REMINDING THE PEOPLE OF THEIR HIGHS AND LOWS.



BUT THAT'S NOT THE ONLY PLACE THE TORAH MENTIONS THE IDEA OF REVIEWING. THE TALMUD SAYS: "YOU CANNOT COMPARE SOMEONE WHO REVIEWS SOMETHING 100 TIMES TO SOMEONE WHO REVIEWS SOMETHING 101 TIMES."

COME ON, IS THERE REALLY A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE 100TH AND 101ST TIME?



YES THERE IS! THE TALMUD IS SHOWING US THAT EVEN WHEN WE THINK WE KNOW SOMETHING INSIDE OUT, IF WE LOOK AT IT JUST ONE MORE TIME, WE MIGHT FIND A COMPLETELY NEW ASPECT THAT WE HADN'T NOTICED BEFORE.

HMMM, THAT MAKES SENSE. I USED TO THINK IT WAS SILLY TO LEARN ABOUT THE SAME PARASHOT AND CHAGIM EACH YEAR.



DEVARIM

BUT THIS YEAR YOU ARE DOING DIFFERENT THINGS WITH YOUR MATHS, YOU ARE GOING FURTHER IN YOUR ENGLISH. YOU ARE ANOTHER YEAR OLDER, HAVE MORE EXPERIENCE AND CAN UNDERSTAND THINGS BETTER.



BUT MISS, WE LEARNED THAT LAST YEAR!

OF COURSE YOU DID! YOU ALSO LEARNED MATHS AND SCIENCE AND ENGLISH AND SO MANY OTHER SUBJECTS YOU ARE ALSO LEARNING THIS YEAR.



SOMETIMES WE THINK "I KNOW THAT ALREADY," AND WE DO, BUT WITH THE UNDERSTANDING OF A 6 YEAR OLD, OR A 10 YEAR OLD, OR HOWEVER OLD WE WERE WHEN WE FIRST LEARNED IT. IT WOULD BE A SHAME IF WE MAXED OUT THERE.



DID YOU KNOW THIS IS OUR 203RD EPISODE? THE MORE YOU PUT IN, THE MORE YOU GET OUT! WHETHER IT'S THE 3RD OR 203RD TIME!



tribe
www.tribeuk.com

Tribe is the Young People's Department of the United Synagogue: Creating a future for our community through engaging, educating and inspiring the next generation.