



ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY

RABBI REUVEN TRADBURKS
RCA ISRAEL REGION

PARSHAT PINCHAS



1ST ALIYA (BAMIDBAR 25:10-26:4)

Pinchas, son of Elazar, son of Aharon halted the plague. He will merit the covenant of peace, of priesthood. Those killed by him were Zimri, the prince of a family of Shimon and Kozbi, the daughter of a prince of a family of Midian. Harass the Midianites due to this enticement. G-d instructs Moshe and Elazar to take a census of the men over the age of 20.

The parsha begins half way through a story. A Jewish man and a Midianite woman engaged in illicit relations apparently in a rather public fashion at the end of last week's parsha. And not just any man and woman but the prince of a tribe with the daughter of a prince of Midian. Royalty. Leaders. Pinchas grabbed a spear and killed them.

Our parsha begins with praise of Pinchas for that act. The opening section of a parsha always gets outsized attention. The praise of Pinchas grabs our attention.

But the violence is unsettling.

There are two aspects to this story. Moral outrage. And violence. For which one is Pinchas praised? The moral outrage? Or the violence? The message or the method?

This is not the first story in the Torah of moral outrage over the union of a Jew and non-Jew that resulted in violence.

The story of Dinah and Shechem is a parallel to this story. In that story it was a Jewish woman Dina and a non-Jewish man

Shechem; here a Jewish man and non-Jewish woman. In that story Shimon and Levi slew the males of the city; in this Pinchas does. There Yaakov watched, as the next generation acted. In this, Moshe stood by as Pinchas acted. In that story Yaakov was not happy, for that was not his way. And here? Moshe does not respond.

Both stories are the stories of the new generation settling scores with violence. There it was the sons of Yaakov. Here it is Pinchas, the son of the new Kohen Gadol, Elazar.

The stories are of moral outrage. "Can our sister be treated such?" the brothers said to Yaakov. But Yaakov was not happy with the method, the violence.

Here too Pinchas is outraged. Perhaps he is concerned that this act of a leader sets a very bad example; it destroys the needed aversion to the lure of non-Jewish women that will be ever so prevalent once we enter the Land.

Moral outrage is desirable. Especially standing up to power. We don't want those in power to be above the law, beyond reproach.

The method, though, is unsettling. Violence? Killing? In the verse stating Pinchas was rewarded with a covenant of peace there is a "vav" in the word peace that is broken in the middle. The Talmud states as well that taking the law into one's own hands in the manner Pinchas did is "halacha v'ain morin ken", may be the law but don't publicize it. Don't teach it. Don't follow it.

Violence in the name of religion is dangerous. We know it in our own time.

We can feel outrage at times. And feel like we should act, even with violence. But don't do it. Violence is not for us.



2ND ALIYA (26:5-51)

The census of each tribe is done, listing the families and the census count of each tribe. The census total is 601,730 men over the age of 20.

Though my summary of this aliya is rather terse, it is in fact a lengthy aliya of 47 verses. The purpose of this count is to prepare for the dividing of the Land, instructions for which are in the next aliya. The census is preparing for the imminent conquest and division of the Land.



3RD ALIYA (26:52-27:5)

The Land is to be divided according to this census; those with more, receive more. The plots are given by lottery. The tribe of Levi is enumerated, though they will not receive land allocations. None of those of the census of Moshe and Aharon are alive for this census, save Yehoshua and Calev. The 5 daughters of Zelophchad question Moshe and Elazar: though our father left Egypt, he has no male heirs to enter the Land. Why should his name be forgotten? Let us claim his portion. Moshe brought their query before G-d.

The claim of these daughters is a legitimate claim. We ought to have a family portion in the Land. In the narrative of transition of leadership, Elazar is getting his first lesson from Moshe: we don't know it all. Nothing wrong with a leader, even Moshe, saying "I don't know".

And perhaps this is an introduction to governance in the Land. Pay attention to the aggrieved. However insignificant their number. We just made a census of over 600,000 people, all of whom are part of the division of the Land. And then 5 women come with a claim? No matter that they are just 5 people.

Pay attention to them. Society will be judged on its attention to all of its people.



4TH ALIYA (27:6-23)

Moshe is told that the daughters of Tzelophchad are correct; their father's portion will be allotted to them. Moshe is told to ascend the mountain and gaze at the Land of Israel for he will not enter it. Moshe asks for a successor. G-d instructs him to transfer his leadership to Yehoshua in front of all the people. He did so in front of Elazar and all the people.

Moshe, the humblest of all, when reminded that he will not enter the Land, initiates the transition, the one to take his place. *He* initiates the search for the new leader. A self-serving leader will never pursue a successor when his ego convinces him that no one could possibly fill his shoes.

However, when the leader is altruistic, serving not himself but his people, well, then it's different; they can be served mighty fine by me or by someone else. Moshe initiates the topic of succession. For in his service of the people, he wants their success whether through him or his successor.



5TH ALIYA (28:1-15)

The Communal Offerings.

There are specific offerings for specific occasions that are My bread, My pleasant aroma. **Daily:** 2 lambs, one in the morning, one in the evening, accompanied by flour with oil and wine. Like was brought at Sinai. **Shabbat** Mussaf: 2 additional lambs with their flour, oil and wine. **Rosh Chodesh** Mussaf: 2 bulls, 1 ram, 7 lambs, with their flour, oil and wine and 1 goat sin offering.

Every day there is an offering done in the Temple, the daily offering of a lamb in the morning and in the afternoon. Very simple. On special occasions there is an additional

offering, the Mussaf. The special occasions include Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh and in the upcoming aliyot, all the holidays of the year. At the end of the parsha, I have appended a chart of these offerings, to make the patterns easier to see, visually.



6TH ALIYA (28:16-29:11)

Pesach is on the 14th of the 1st month. On the 15th begins the 7-day holiday of Matza. The first day is a holiday. The Mussaf for each day of Pesach: 2 bulls, 1 ram, 7 lambs, with their flour, oil and wine and 1 goat sin offering. The 7th day is a holiday. **Shavuot**: the new grain offering is brought. Mussaf: same as Pesach. **Rosh Hashana**: is a holiday, a day of Teruah. Mussaf: the same as the others except only 1 bull, not 2. **Yom Kippur**: is a holiday, a day of affliction. Mussaf: same as Rosh Hashana.

The daily tamid and the Mussaf offerings

are communal; brought on behalf of the entire nation of Israel. But the placement of these communal sacrifices here seems out of place. Didn't we have a pretty exhaustive description of the sacrifices in Sefer Vayikra? Why is this section about sacrifices out of place, delayed until here?

These offerings are the offerings of our people, as a people. We approach G-d as a people. In the march to the Land, the covenant that the Jewish people will inhabit the Land is a covenant with the Jewish people as an entity, Am Yisrael.

We live in two worlds. Our private life. And as a part of a glorious nation, the Jewish people, Am Yisrael. The holiness of the holidays was emphasized in Vayikra. Holiness is a personal experience. The holidays are also communal, national, moments of approaching G-d as a people. Hence, this parsha belongs here as part of the march of the nation to the Land of Israel.



7TH ALIYA (29:12-30:1)

Sukkot: the first day is a holiday. Mussaf: 13 bulls, 2 rams, 7 lambs with their flour, oil and wine and 1 goat sin offering. The 2nd day of the holiday has the same Mussaf except only 12 bulls. The 3rd day is 11 bulls. Each of the 7 days has one less bull, with all the other offerings the same. **Shemini Atzeret**: is a holiday. Mussaf: the same as Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur.

Immediately apparent from this chart are the groupings: Pesach and Shavuot, the uniqueness of the extra offerings of Sukkot, and the pairing of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur.

But Shmini Atzeret is odd. Its offering is not the same as Pesach and Shavuot. It is the same as Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. Shmini Atzeret has an element of the gravity, the weightiness of the high holidays, unlike the normal yom tov days.



Every stage has its magic.

Marc F. Photography
FAMILY & EVENTS

Book your summer session now:
marcfphotography.com ☎ +972 548106621

DAY	OLAH OFFERING			CHATAT SIN OFFERING
	BULLS	RAMS	LAMBS	GOAT
WEEKDAY DAILY NOT MUSSAF	0	0	1 morning 1 evening	0
SHABBAT	0	0	2	0
ROSH CHODESH	2	1	7	1
PESACH (ALL DAYS)	2	1	7	1
SHAVUOT	2	1	7	1
ROSH HASHANA	1	1	7	1
YOM KIPPUR	1	1	7	1
SUKKOT DAY 1	13	2	14	1
SUKKOT-2	12	2	14	1
SUKKOT-3	11	2	14	1
SUKKOT-4	10	2	14	1
SUKKOT-5	9	2	14	1
SUKKOT-6	8	2	14	1
SUKKOT-7	7	2	14	1
SHMINI ATZERET	1	1	7	1

HAFTORAH YIRMIYAHU 1: 1-2:3

This week's *haftorah* is the first of a series of three "*haftorot* of affliction." These three *haftarot* are read during the Three Weeks of mourning for Yerushalayim, between the fasts of 17 Tammuz and 9 Av.

Yirmiyahu speaks of how Hashem appointed him as prophet — despite his initial reluctance to accept the task — and tells of the encouragement Hashem gave him to fulfill his crucial mission.

He then describes two prophetic visions he was shown. The first featured an almond tree branch. Hashem explained that just like an almond tree is very quick to blossom, so too Hashem will carry out his plan — to punish the Jews for their sins — in due haste.

The second vision was that of a boiling pot

whose foam was directed northward. Hashem explained that this was an allusion to the afflictions the Jewish people would suffer at the hands of the people from the north of the Holy Land, namely Babylon. Hashem will cause the kingdoms of the north to lay siege on Yerushalyim and Judea and He will pass judgment on the Jewish people due to their abandonment of His ways and their idol worship.

Hashem then encouraged Yirmiyahu to deliver the prophecy and not to fear the Jewish populace who would certainly not take kindly to such harsh words.

The haftorah ends with a reassuring prophecy to the people: "Go and call out in the ears of Jerusalem, saying: so said G-d: 'I remember to you the loving-kindness of your youth, the love of your nuptials, your following Me in the desert, in a land not sown. Israel is holy to G-d, the first of His grain; all who eat him shall be guilty, evil shall befall them, says G-d.'" ■

STATS

41st of the 54 sedras;

8th of 10 in Bamidbar.

Written on 280 lines (rank: 2nd).

35 Parshiyot; 10p 25s (2nd most).

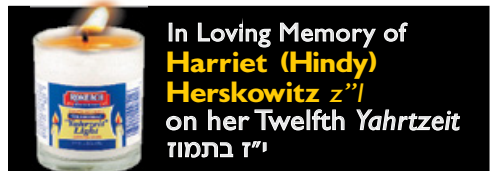
168 psukim 2nd (2nd in Bemidbar).

1887 words 9th (2nd in Bemidbar).

7853 letters 4th (2nd in Bemidbar).

MITZVOT

Contains 6 of the 613 mitzvot, all positive. One of only six sedras that have only positive mitzvot.



In Loving Memory of
**Harriet (Hindy)
Herskowitz z"l**
on her Twelfth Yahrzeit
ת"ז בתמוז