

**Parshas Re'ei
in a Nutshell**

(Deuteronomy 11:26–16:17)

*By the grace of Hashem,
following all CDC
Guidelines, our Shul is now
able to offer Minyanim.
See schedule to the left, or
contact one of the rabbi for
details.*

Anshei Lubavitch Congregation

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

Adult education:

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

Youth Outreach:

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

Shabbos Schedule

Erev Shabbos – Aug 14 / Men.Av 24

Candle Lighting 7:38 pm

Mincha 7:30 pm

Shabbos Day – Aug 15 / Men.Av 25

Shacharis 10:00 am*

Torah Reading 10:55 am

Rabbi Neubort's Drasha 11:30 am

Kiddush Postponed

Mincha 7:40 pm

Rabbi's Drasha 7:55 pm

Shabbos Ends 8:38 pm

**Latest morning Shema is now 9:31 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

Weekday Schedule (not on a holiday):

Minyan

Shacharis (Mon-Fri) 6:15 am

Shacharis (Sunday) 9:00 am

Mincha / Maariv 8:15 pm

Classes

Chassidus, Mon-Fri Postponed

Halachah, Mon-Fri Postponed

Monday Torah Studies.... Online only

Tuesday Talmud..... Online only

Wednesday Mishna Online only

Thursday B'lyun 9:30-10:00 pm

“See,” says Moses to the people of Israel, “I place before you today a blessing and a curse”—the blessing that will come when they fulfill G-d's commandments, and the curse if they abandon them. These should be proclaimed on Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal when the people cross over into the Holy Land.

A Temple should be established in “the place that G-d will choose to make dwell His name there,” where the people should bring their sacrifices to Him; it is forbidden to make offerings to G-d in any other place. It is permitted to slaughter animals elsewhere, not as a sacrifice but to eat their meat; the blood (which in the Temple is poured upon the altar), however, may not be eaten.

A false prophet, or one who entices others to worship idols, should be put to death; an idolatrous city must be destroyed. The identifying signs for kosher animals and fish, and the list of non-kosher birds (first given in Leviticus 11), are repeated.

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תהלים

Tehillim - Psalms

**Join us this Shabbos morning
August 15 at 8:30 am for
Shabbos Mevorchim Tehillim.**

**This week's Tehillim reading is
dedicated to
a refuah sh'laima
for
Avraham Yankel ben Fayge.**

A tenth of all produce is to be eaten in Jerusalem, or else exchanged for money with which food is purchased and eaten there. In certain years this tithe is given to the poor instead. Firstborn cattle and sheep are to be offered in the Temple, and their meat eaten by the kohanim (priests).

The mitzvah of charity obligates a Jew to aid a needy fellow with a gift or loan. On the Sabbatical year (occurring every seventh year), all loans are to be forgiven. All indentured servants are to be set free after six years of service.

Our Parshah concludes with the laws of the three pilgrimage festivals—Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot—when all should go to “see and be seen” before G-d in the Holy Temple. ❖

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**Halachic Zmanim
Shabbos, August 15
Eastern Daylight Time**

Earliest Tallis 5:05 AM
Latest Morning Shema 9:31 AM
Earliest Mincha (Gedola).. 1:36 PM
Plag Hamincha 6:32 PM
Earliest Evening Shema 8:24 PM

Chassidic Masters

The Legalities of Destruction

*Based on the teachings of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe
Courtesy of MeaningfulLife.com*

One who smashes a single stone of the Altar or the Temple or the Temple courtyard in a destructive manner [violates a biblical prohibition] as it written (Deuteronomy 12:4): "[You shall smash their altars...] You shall not do the same to the L-rd your G-d."

-- Mishneh Torah,

-- Laws of the Holy Temple 1:17

"G-d's way is not like the way of flesh and blood," the Midrash assures us. "The way of flesh and blood is that he instructs others to do, but does not do so himself; G-d, however, what He Himself does, that is what He tells Israel to do and observe" (Midrash Rabbah, Shemot 30:6). The laws which He decreed to govern our lives also delineate His own "conduct" in relating to His creation.

But each year, on the ninth day of the month of Av, we mourn an act of G-d that was not only tragic but seemingly illegal as well— a Divine act which, at first glance, seems to violate laws He set down in His Torah.

On that day, in the year 3338 from creation (423 bce), the Holy Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. (The Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans on the very same date, 490 years later.) The actual burning

of the Temple was done by the armies of the Babylonian emperor Nebuchadnezzar, but G-d takes full responsibility for the deed. In the years before the destruction, the Almighty had warned: "Behold, I shall dispatch the nations of the north... and Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylonia, My servant, and I shall bring them upon this land and its inhabitants..." "I shall deliver this city into the hands of the king of Babylonia..." "I shall do to the House upon which My name is called... what I have done to Shiloh" (Jeremiah 25:9, 32:3 and 7:14).

G-d's destruction of the Holy Temple seems a violation of two halachic prohibitions. The first is Lo Tashchit (also Bal Tashchit) the prohibition to destroy anything of value. The source of this law is Deuteronomy 20:19, where the Torah prohibits the cutting down of a fruit tree in the course of war; Halachah interprets this as a prohibition against all wanton destruction:

One who breaks vessels, tears clothes, demolishes a building, stops a spring or disposes of food in a ruinous manner, transgresses the prohibition of Lo Tashchit.

Regarding the Holy Temple, there is an additional law that would seem to proscribe G-d's devastation of His home. In Deuteronomy 12:3-4 we read:

Destroy all the places in which the nations [of Canaan] served their gods... Tear down their altars, break their monuments, burn their asheirah trees and smash their

idols... You shall not do the same to the L-rd your G-d.

From this, the halachic codifiers derive that it is a biblical prohibition to "smash a single stone of the Altar or the Temple or the Temple courtyard in a destructive manner... as it says, 'You shall not do so to the L-rd your G-d'" (Mishneh Torah, Laws of the Holy Temple 1:17).

How, then, could G-d destroy the Holy Temple without transgressing laws which He had commanded and committed Himself to?

Constructive Mayhem

The legality of G-d's action, at least in regard to the Lo Tashchit law, can be explained on the basis of another law, this from the laws of Shabbat.

There are 39 categories of "work" forbidden on Shabbat. A basic legal requisite for an action to be considered "work" is that it be constructive. Thus, while the list of 39 forbidden labors includes categories such as "demolishing" and "tearing," these are strictly of the constructive sort, such as breaking down a wall in order to renovate a building or tearing a seam in order to make alterations to a garment: one who destructively rips or demolishes has not violated the prohibition to do work on Shabbat. Nevertheless, the law is that "one who tears something apart out of rage, or [grief] over the death [of a loved one], violates the Shabbat, for he is soothed by this and his temper is relaxed.

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Since his rage is abated by this [act], it is considered a constructive deed" (Ibid., Laws of Shabbat 1:17, 10:10).

The same could be said of G-d's destruction of the Holy Temple. Noting that Psalm 79 — which describes how "alien nations have entered Your estate, they have defiled Your Holy Temple, they have laid Jerusalem in ruins" — carries the caption "A song to Asaf," the Midrash asks:

Should not the verse have said "A weeping to Asaf," "A wail to Asaf," "A lament to Asaf"? Why does it say "A song to Asaf"?

But this is analogous to a king who built a nuptial home for his son, and had it beautifully plastered, inlaid and decorated. Then this son strayed off to an evil life. So the king came to the nuptial canopy, tore down the tapestries and broke the rails. Upon which the prince's tutor took a flute and began to play. Those who saw him asked: "The king is overturning the nuptial canopy of his son, and you sit and sing?" Said he to them: "I am singing because the king overturned his son's nuptial canopy, and did not vent his wrath upon his son."

So, too, was asked of Asaf: "G-d destroyed the Temple and Sanctuary, and you sit and sing?" Replied he: "I am singing because G-d vented His wrath upon wood and stone, and did not vent his wrath upon Israel" (Midrash Rabbah on Lamentations 4:15).

The destruction of the Temple, then, was a constructive deed. Our sins had threatened our relationship with the Almighty; by "venting His wrath" upon the wood and stone of the Temple, G-d deflected the damage to the physical "nuptial home" of the relationship, preserving the integrity of the relationship itself. In the words of the prophet Jeremiah, "G-d has spent His wrath, He poured out His fury; He set fire to Zion and consumed its foundations."

This, however, still does not explain why G-d's destruction of the Temple did not violate the specific prohibition to destroy "even a single stone" of the Holy Temple. The fact that the Temple's destruction is a means toward a worthy end would not mitigate this prohibition, which specifically forbids inflicting damage on the Temple, even if one has a constructive purpose in mind.

Unless the destruction of the Temple were to somehow be constructive to the Temple itself. As quoted above from Maimonides' Mishneh Torah, the prohibition is to demolish any part of the Temple "in a destructive manner"; "to demolish in order to improve," explain the commentaries, "is obviously permitted." Indeed, the Talmud relates how the sages advised and encouraged Herod to demolish the Holy Temple in order to rebuild it in greater splendor. In other words, while it is forbidden to demolish any part of the Holy Temple even for a constructive purpose, it is permitted to do so for the Temple's betterment.

This distinction can also be seen in the manner in which this law is applied to the "minor sanctuary" of today, the synagogue, which has assumed the Temple's role of housing the Jew's service of his Creator. It is forbidden to demolish a synagogue, or any part thereof, even for a most positive and G-dly purpose — unless the purpose is to rebuild or improve the synagogue itself, in which case "the demolition is itself an act of building" (Mordechai on Talmud, Megillah, section 826; Shulchan Aruch and Ramah, Orach Chaim 152; Tzemach Tzedek Responsa, Orach Chaim, Responsa 20; Torat Chessed Responsa, Orach Chaim, Responsa 4.)

And so it was with G-d's destruction of the Temple — the demolition was itself an act of building.

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The first two Temples, says the Zohar, were edifices built by human hands, and thus subject to the mortality of everything human. G-d came to dwell in the work of man; but the work of man can be corrupted by the deeds of man, driving the Divine presence from its earthly abode.

The two mortal Temples were destroyed in order that the eternal Third Temple may be built. Indeed, the Temple was originally designed to be a Divinely-constructed edifice — Moses described it as "The base for Your dwelling that You, G-d, have made; the Sanctuary, O L-rd, that Your hands have established" (Exodus 15:17). If this was preceded by the Temples built by Solomon and Ezra, these were but stages in the construction of the Third Temple, the Divine edifice which shall descend from heaven with the advent of Moshiach, speedily in our day.

Sighting The End

The law that allows tearing down a house of worship in order to rebuild it is most stringent: the new building must be superior (in size, beauty, etc.) to the one being torn down; if the circumstances are such that the old building must be demolished before the new one is built, the new building's construction must begin immediately and must be pursued "day and night, lest difficulties arise that will cause it to remain desolate — even for a time." The Talmud relates that when the deteriorating synagogue in Matta Mechasia had to be torn down, Rav Ashi "moved his bed" into the construction site and did not leave the site "until the gutter-pipes were affixed." (Shulchan Aruch and Taz commentary, Orach Chaim 152. Talmud, Bava Batra 3b)

In keeping with this law, G-d began His reconstruction of the Temple immediately upon its destruction. As the Talmud relates:

On the day that the Holy Temple was destroyed, a Jew was plowing his field when his cow suddenly called out. An Arab was passing by and heard the low of the cow. Said the Arab to the Jew: "Son of Judah! Unyoke your cow, free the stake of your plow, for your Holy Temple has now been destroyed."

The cow then lowed a second time. Said the Arab to the Jew: "Son of Judah! Yoke your cow, reset the stake of your plow, for the Redeemer has now been born..."

Said Rabbi Bon: "Do we need to learn this from an Arab? The Torah itself says so. The verse (Isaiah 10:34) predicts, "And the cedar of Lebanon shall be felled by the mighty one." And what is written in the very next verse? "There shall come forth a shoot out of the stem of Yishai" (Jerusalem Talmud, Berachos 2:4)

As the Temple ruins lay smoldering, the process of rebuilding was already underway. Moshiach, the Divine emissary empowered to bring redemption to the world and the eternal Sanctuary to Jerusalem, was born on the Ninth of Av.

[This is in keeping with the teachings of our sages that, "In every generation is born a descendent of Judah who is worthy to become Israel's Moshiach" (Bartinoro on Ruth); "When the time will come, G-d will reveal Himself to him and send him, and then the spirit of Moshiach, which is hidden and secreted on high, will be revealed in him" (Chasam Sofer).]

This explains a curious phenomenon in the history of our exile: many of our sages (including such prodigious figures as Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, Rabbi Saadiah Gaon, Maimonides, Nachmanides, Rabbeinu BeChaye and Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi) predicted various dates for the revelation of Moshiach and the rebuilding of the Holy Temple, despite the Talmud's admonishment of those who "calculate deadlines" for the Redemption.

For these great visionaries had a view of history that penetrated beyond the surface mayhem of the Destruction. They understood that G-d could not have destroyed the Temple if the very moment of the destruction was not also the moment which commenced its reconstruction in its greater, eternal form.

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They understood that galus is not a "void" or "hiatus" in G-d's presence in our world, but an integral part of the process of redemption. To them, the Ninth of Av was, above all, the birthday of Moshiach.

They saw, beneath the veneer of galus, the eternal abode of G-d rising from the rubble. They saw the opportunity, which has existed from the day of the Temple's destruction, growing more realizable with each passing generation. Seize the moment, they urged us, the climax of history is in ready reach. ❖

From Our Sages

See, I give you today a blessing and a curse (Deuteronomy 11:26)

"See"—Moses is giving the children of Israel the power of sight—to perceive that the true nature of evil is nothing more than a transmutation and distortion of the divine good. When evil is thus seen, it can be transformed into the good that it essentially is.

-- (The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

Haftorah in a Nutshell – 3rd Shabbos of Consolation

Isaiah 54:11-55:5

This week's haftorah is the third of a series of seven "Haftaros of Consolation." These seven haftaros commence on the Shabbat following Tisha b'Av and continue until Rosh Hashanah.

G-d addresses the "afflicted and storm-tossed" Jerusalem "who has not been comforted," assuring her that she, and her people, will be restored to full glory. The foundation, walls and ground of Jerusalem will be laid with precious stones. Her children will be "disciples of the L-rd," and will enjoy abundant peace. Any weapon engineered against her will fail.

The prophet then invites the thirsty to acquire "water," namely those who are thirsty for spirituality should study the quenching words of Torah. He promises the nation an everlasting covenant similar to that made with King David. This is also an allusion to the Messiah, David's descendant, who will be revered by all of the nations of the world. ❖

Good Shabbos to all!

שבת שלום גוט שבת!

