

The Weekly Haftorah

by Reuben Ebrahimoff - The Haftorahman

The Haftorah for Shemini Atzeret

The Haftorah is read from the book of Melachim Aleph or Kings I.

Sephardim read 8: 54-56. Ashkenazim read 8: 54-9:1.



King Solomon Dedicating the Holy Temple

Drawing: The Temple Institute

The Storyline of this week's Haftorah: The Haftorah begins with the dedication service by King Shlomo (Solomon) for the Beit HaMikdash. When he finished offering his prayer to Hashem, a fire came down and consumed the sacrifices on the altar, which indicated that his prayers had been accepted. It was known that from then forward Hashem's presence would envelop the Temple. Shlomo then rose from kneeling before Hashem's alter with his palms still open to the heavens. Standing, he then blessed the entire nation of Israel in a loud voice. "Blessed be Hashem, who gave peace to his people Israel, as he promised not a single word of all the good promises which he made through his servant Moses has

failed." King Shlomo continues with the Famous Passuk that we say before taking out the Torah from the Ark. "Yehee Hashem Elokainu emanu ka'asher haya im avotainu, Al ya'azvainu v'al yetshainu" "May Hashem our Lord be with us, as he was with our ancestors. May he never abandon or forsake us. May he turn our hearts to him that we may follow in his ways and keep his commandments, as he commanded our ancestors," (8:57-58). King Shlomo wishes for all his prayers to be accepted and to be held close to Hashem's heart. He requests of Hashem to grant him and the Jewish people justice so that all the people of the world will know that Hashem is the Lord and no other. He tells the Jewish people to keep all the mitzvot. The dedication service lasted two weeks, and the second week was Sukkot. On the eighth day, Shmini Atzeret, King Shlomo sent everyone home. Bnei Yisroel first blessed the King and then returned home, happy and joyous for Hashem had bestowed on His servant David and his people much goodness.

The connection of the Parsha to the Haftorah: This Haftorah was selected because King Shlomo's dedication of the Beit HaMikdash took place on Shmini Atzeret.



Queen of Sheba Visiting King Solomon

King Shlomo's Biography: The meaning of his name is "peace" or "prosperity." He had seven names, Shlomo, Yediyah, Kohelet, Agur, Yakeh, Lemuel, and Ithiel. His father was King David. It is said that he was the smartest man to ever live. Shlomo was made king at the age of twelve. He was extremely wealthy. By some estimations his wealth increased by \$250 million dollars a year. Shlomo was famous for his stables that housed 40,000 horses and 12,000 horsemen. Shlomo was able to give 3,000 explanations to every Pasuk in the Torah. He knew all 70 languages spoken in the world at that time as well as he was able to communicate with all the living creatures in the animal kingdom. He was the builder of 3 cities; Megiddo, Hazor and Gezer in the north of Israel. King Shlomo had 700 wives and 300 concubines. Once the Queen of Sheba traveled 7 years by caravan just to meet him and quiz him with regards to his wisdom. After their first meeting, the Queen of Sheba remarked that the King was much wiser than his reputation had suggested. Two of the mitzvot that King Shlomo instituted were the Eruv and Netilat Yadyim. The Eruv, a string surrounding an outer perimeter of an area designating it as that you can carry things on Shabbat. He also made it customary for people to wash their hands before eating bread. As King, he led the building of the Beit HaMikdash, starting at 16 years of age, It was completed 7 years later. He ruled for 40 years and passed away at the age of 52. There were 3 books written by him 1) Kohelet - Ecclesiastes 2) Mishlei - Proverbs, which concludes with the song Aishet Chayil sung on Erev Shabbat. 3) Shir Hashirim - Song of Songs.

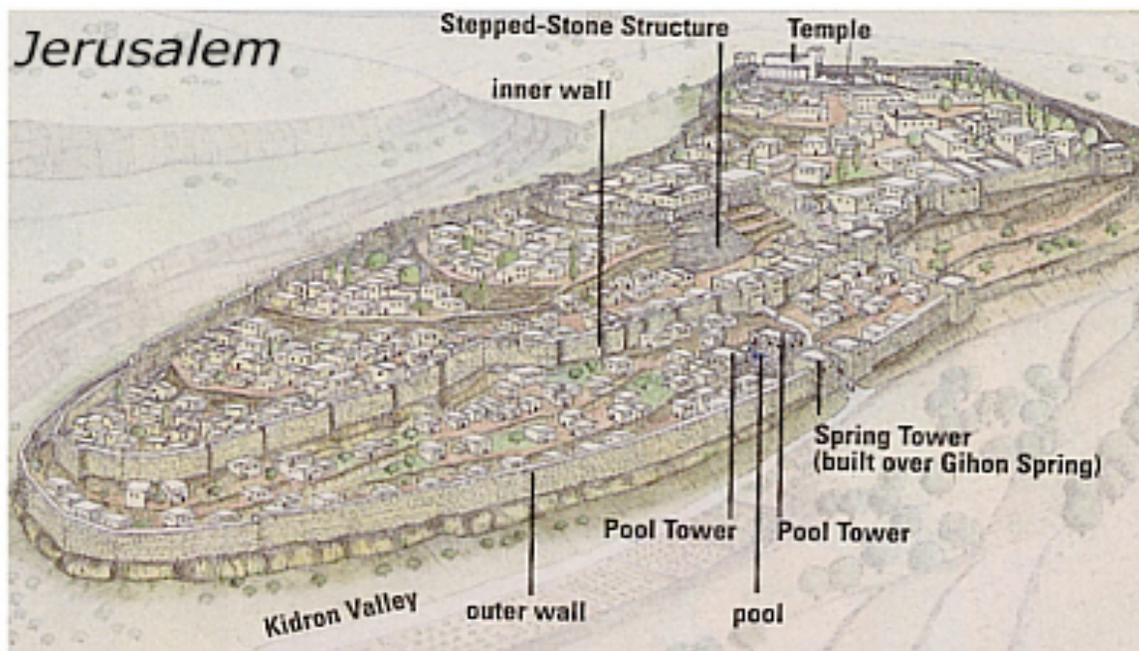


Oil Lamp with Menorah, Etrog and Lulav
From: The Shlomo Moussaieff Collection
Photo: Ardon Barhama

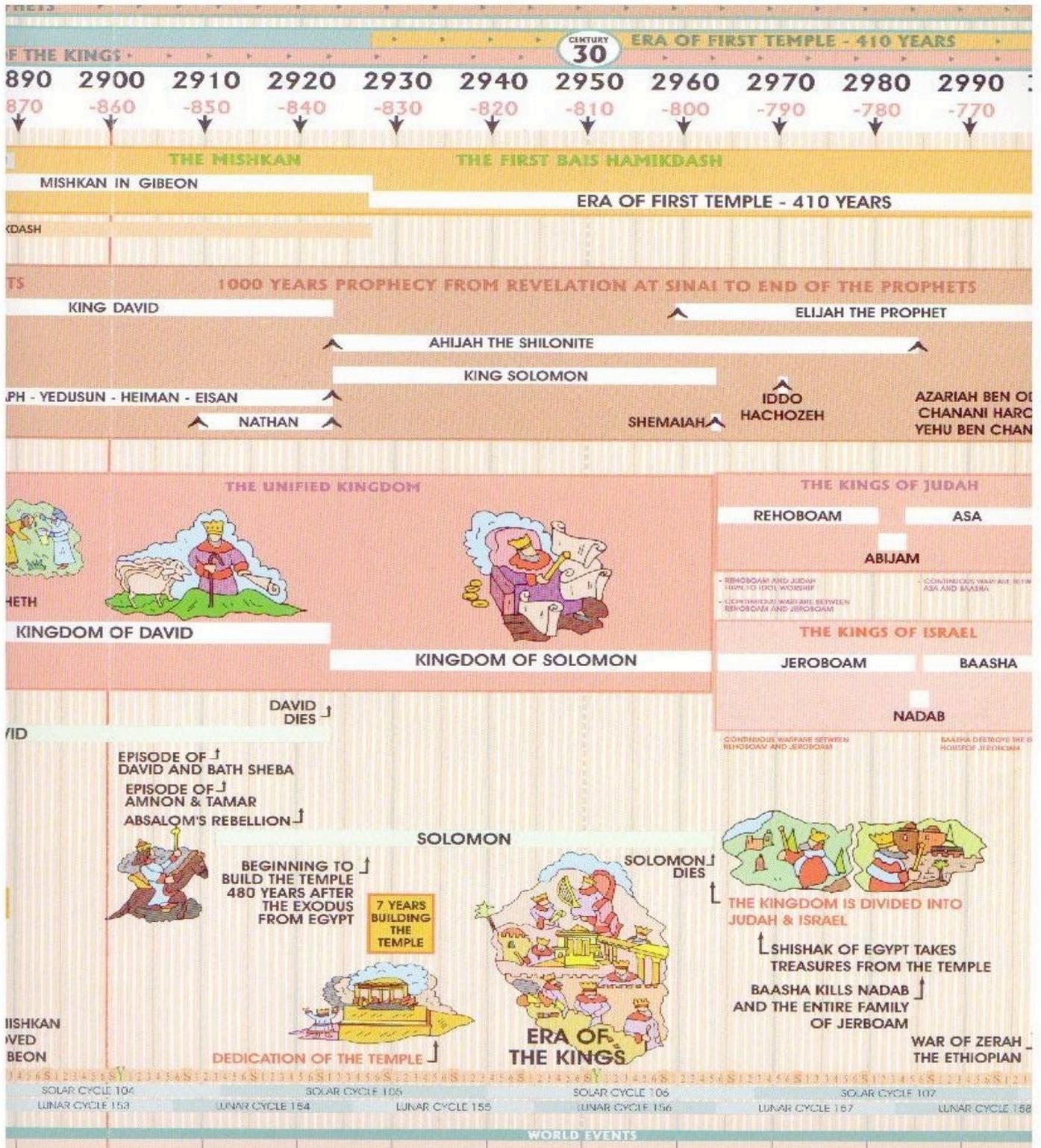
Haftorahman's lesson of the week: We must remember what Hashem says, "Build me a House of Prayer and you will always find me there". We have our Shuls (synagogues), but they are empty. We have those "Houses of prayer," but are they being filled with such? There are too few taking advantage of the tremendous gift that Hashem has given Klal Yisroel (the Jewish people). He will dwell in the place we build for Him, yet there are many who hardly step through the door. Or, if one is a constant visitor, how many other visitors are you bringing with you? It is important to invite people to go with you to Shul. There are two main objectives in life, improving oneself and enhancing the surrounding families and communities. It is not enough just to take care of oneself; there are others who need care. The concept in Judaism is to be mechazek harabim (strengthen the masses); we need to look out for one another. Encourage your family and friends to go to Shul. Invite members of the community over for lunch and get to know your fellow Jews. Utilize the gift given by Hashem by offering a gift of your own.

Famous Phrases from the Book of Melachim Aleph: 8:57-58 Before taking the Torah out of the Ark, we say: "Yehee Hashem Elokainu emanu ka'asher haya im avotainu, Al ya'azvainu v'al yetshainu" "May Hashem our Lord be with us, as he was with our ancestors. May he never abandon or forsake us. May he turn our hearts to him that we may follow in his ways and keep his commandments, as he commanded our ancestors."

Map: This story took place in Jerusalem.



Timeline: This story took place about 2831 years ago



Written by: Reuven Gavriel ben Nissim Ebrahimoff 5773 - 2012

E-mail: haftorahman@haftorahman.com