

Shabbat Eighth Day of Pesach Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17 **Maftir Numbers 28:19-28:25**

When Pesach begins on Shabbat it, of course, also ends on Shabbat. So we have two different Shabbat Pesach readings to accommodate this circumstance. The first one came from the Book of Exodus, but the second one is from Deuteronomy.

Our reading begins with the laws concerning tithing. The book of Deuteronomy prescribes a central location for worship – the Temple in Jerusalem. Previously, there were several temples and the required tithes could be brought to the nearest one, so the previous references to tithing in Leviticus, Numbers, and Exodus do not assume a central place to deposit the tithe. Once the required tenth of the produce must be transported to Jerusalem, the Torah recognizes that it would be a hardship to transport all that produce, so it allows for converting it into money. Every third year, though, the tithe is given instead to the needy in one's own geographical area: the Levites (who have no land of their own), as well as orphans and widows.

The reading goes on to detail a variety of practices to protect and provide for the disadvantaged. Included in these are the canceling of debts in the *shmita* year, requirement to lend money even though the seventh year is approaching, and the requirement to provide what Robert Alter calls "severance pay" to indentured servants at the end of their servitude – providing for the newly freed servant from "your flock and your threshing floor and your wine press."

The main section of the Torah reading ends with the Deuteronomic summary of the *shalosh regalim* – the three pilgrimage festivals – of which, Pesach is on. The *maftir* comes from the book of Numbers and specifies both the grain and animal sacrifices for Passover.

Haftarah Isaiah 10:32-12:6

The *haftarah* for the eighth day of Pesach comes from Isaiah. It provides a prophecy of a day when the people will no longer be ruled by foreign overlords and the Davidic dynasty will be reestablished. It tells of a time when the messianic ruler – the "stump of Jesse" (David's father) – will have the spirit of G-d upon him, leading him to judge wisely and well. The prophet tells us it will be a magical time when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard lie down with the kid...the cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together, and the lion like the ox shall eat straw." So, not only will the predatory foreign oppressors no longer afflict the people, even animal predators will turn peaceful. All the dispersed Children of Israel will return to the Holy Land from the four corners of the earth.

The *haftarah* contains several lines familiar from our liturgy. Among these is a line included in the Havdalah service. *Ushavtem mayim b'sasson mimainei hayeshuah* - And you will draw

water joyfully from the wellsprings of deliverance. Because of this *haftarah*'s themes of Return to the Land, some communities also recite it on Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel Independence Day.