

## Connection Between Asorah B'Teves and Shabbos – Avi Friedwald

יב כסלו תשע"ח – 30<sup>th</sup> December 2017 – שבת פ' ויחי

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This past Thursday, we observed Asorah B'Teves. It is the only one of the four Churban related fasts which can fall on a Friday (as last happened in 5774). According to the *BeHaG* and *Abudraham*, our fixed calendar has also been designed so that it never falls on a Shabbos, because if it did – we'd need to fast on it (unlike the other fasts).

The question is, what is it about Asorah B'Teves that requires us to fast both on Erev Shabbos and on Shabbos?

The *Chasam Sofer* (*Toras Moshe, Vayechi, Drosha for 5<sup>th</sup> Teves*) asks why Nebuchadnezar thought he would succeed in conquering Yerushalayim, considering Sancheirev tried and failed? Why wasn't he concerned that even if he did succeed in destroying its occupants, that he wouldn't be able to re-populate it with people with abominable practices, as the land would reject them the same way as it rejected the Jewish people as a result of their transgressions?

He explains that they relied on the fact that there were people transgressing Shabbos (and this was included in Yirmiyahu's warning to the Jewish people). Observance of Shabbos is something which is unique to the Jewish people, and actually forbidden for everyone else.

Nebuchadnezar was confident that Eretz Yisrael would reject the Jewish people for this transgression, and it would not reject other people to whom the observance of Shabbos is not applicable. He specifically started the siege on Shabbos itself – "*B'Etzem Hayom Haze*" (Yechezkel 24:2) in order to ensure there would be Jewish people transgressing Shabbos and he would therefore succeed.

It is therefore understandable why specifically Asorah B'Teves can fall on an Erev Shabbos (and theoretically on Shabbos), in order to provide specific atonement for the sin that allowed the siege to be successful.

The *Maharsha* (17<sup>th</sup> Century CE) on Shabbos (119b) explains the reasons for the Churban in detail and highlights the fact that a lot of the Aveiros in the time of the Churban were still prevalent in his time. One of the Aveiros he stresses is Chillul Shabbos, as he explained that it is easy to transgress if one doesn't know all the Halachos. He therefore encouraged all communities to strengthen their knowledge of Shabbos by setting up shiurim to learn the Halachos. (This is something our community is blessed with, as we have weekly shiurim with the Rov going through these Halachos).

May we take the message of Asorah B'Teves and strengthen our observance in Hilchos Shabbos and merit seeing the rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash *Bimheirah Beyomeinu*.

***This Dvar Torah is based on a shiur by the late Mashgiach and Menahel Ruchani of Yeshivas Mercaz HaTorah (Talpiot, Yerushalayim) - Rav Aryeh Rottman ZT"L who was Niftar on 26 Kislev 5778, and dedicated Leilui Nishmoso.***

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