Rosh Chodesh Shebat

Shebat is the eleventh month of the Hebrew year counting from Nisan. Rosh Chodeh Shebat consists always of one day, because the preceding month, Tebet, is always incomplete (29 days). Shebat itself has 30 days. Therefore, the coming Rosh Chodesh Adar, will be a two-days Rosh Chodesh (see more **here**).

On the first day of the month of Shebat, Moshe Rabbenu began to recite the words of the Book of Debarim to the people of Israel. For thirty-seven days Moshe spoke to all Israel. He began on a day like today and ended the seventh of Adar, the day of his death.

Moshe started his series of elocutions by rebuking the people of Israel for their rebellions against HaShem during the forty-year period in the desert. Moshe then, commands them to observe all the Mitzvot of the Tora. He teaches them again the Ten Commandments and the principles of our faith, the Shema Israel. He tells them of the great reward they would receive if they faithfully observe the Tora: they will inherit the beautiful land of Israel and will live there forever in peace. Then, he also warns the people of the terrible punishment they would suffer if they do not observe God's laws: they will be exiled from their land, and live exposed to the whims of their enemies. At the end, Moshe also tells the people of Israel that even when they are exiled among the nations for their sins, if they come back to HaShem with all their hearts, HaShem will bring them back to the land of Israel. Moshe concluded his discourses with blessings to all the tribes.

Many rabbis have compared the first of Shebat with the day of the giving of the Tora. Because on that day they began to receive the Book of Debarim from HaShem Almighty, through Moshe.

(*Adapted from www.ou.org*)

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by Andrew Lustig, from Aish.com