

EKEV - AS A RESULT

Written by Rabbi Philip Hammond.. Posted in Reconciliation Parashah
Our next teaching comes from parashah EKEV – AS A RESULT.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 7:12 - 11:25; Isaiah/Yeshayahu 49:14-51:3

*“Then it shall come about, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, that the Lord your God will keep with you His covenant and His lovingkindness which He swore to your forefathers. **13** He will love you and bless you and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your new wine and your oil, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock, in the land which He swore to your forefathers to give you. **14** You shall be blessed above all peoples; there will be no male or female barren among you or among your cattle. **15** The Lord will remove from you all sickness; and He will not put on you any of the harmful diseases of Egypt which you have known, but He will lay them on all who hate you. **16** You shall consume all the peoples whom the Lord your God will deliver to you; your eye shall not pity them, nor shall you serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.*

***17** “If you should say in your heart, ‘These nations are greater than I; how can I dispossess them?’ **18** you shall not be afraid of them; you shall well remember what the Lord your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt: **19** the great trials which your eyes saw and the signs and the wonders and the mighty hand and the outstretched arm by which the Lord your God brought you out. So shall the Lord your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid. **20** Moreover, the Lord your God will send the hornet against them, until those who are left and hide themselves from you perish. **21** You shall not dread them, for the Lord your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God. **22** The Lord your God will clear away these nations before you little by little; you will not be able to put an end to them quickly, for the wild beasts would grow too numerous for you. **23** But the Lord your God will deliver them before you, and will [f]throw them into great confusion until they are destroyed. **24** He will deliver their kings into your hand so that you will make their name perish from under heaven; no man will be able to stand before you until you have destroyed them. **25** The graven images of their gods you are to burn with fire; you shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on*

them, nor take it for yourselves, or you will be snared by it, for it is an abomination to the Lord your God. 26 You shall not bring an abomination into your house, and like it come under the ban; you shall utterly detest it and you shall utterly abhor it, for it is something banned. Deuteronomy 7:12-26 [NASB]

We begin today's parashah in a most positive way. We witness that these positive promises were to be community promises. These words were not aimed at the individual but to the nation as a community of peoples. I would like to repeat that these promises made to the nation of Israel, were just that – promises to the whole nation of Israel. They were not promises made to just one particular tribe or Kingdom but to the united nation of Israel. These promises though made in past history are still very relevant today. Our Father, the Holy One of Israel will drive out our enemies, He will bless the nation of Israel, he will bless the Promised Land, and there will be a complete removal of any idols along with those who choose to follow them.

These promises are however, dependent upon Israel actually listening to the Word of HaShem and following His Judgements/ordinances/ Mishpatim.

It is very important that we understand the word **Mishpatim** and how it relates to the experience of living in the Promised

Land.

According to the Etymological Dictionary of Biblical Hebrew this word comes from the root word **shaphat** = Judge, create order and harmony.

If only the Children of Israel would grasp the fact, that the instructions of our Heavenly Father are a blessing and provide the substance for our national life. If only we realized how privileged we are to have such a set of instructions from our Father, and if followed will guarantee order and harmony for our nation, resulting in us actually being a light to the other nations.

It is when all the Children of Israel in complete unity embrace the instructions of HaShem that we will witness the beauty of residing in the Promised Land, a land where order, harmony and life will not only exist but thrive under the protecting Right Hand of HaShem – Yeshua HaMoshiach. Our relationship with HaShem, with Yeshua HaMoshiach will be at its greatest when we reside in the Promised Land as a united people, and praise God, then we will experience complete Shalom.

Now even though all this sounds extremely exciting, and something to yearn for [which it should be] as a nation we continually find ourselves failing to grasp the opportunity and promises of our heavenly Father and are guilty of falling well short of our promised destiny.

A famous professor used to say: “Why is it so?”

Well there are a number of reasons but they are mainly tied up with the same root cause:

*19 It shall come about if you ever forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you will surely **perish**.* Deuteronomy 8:19 [NASB]

*16 Beware that your hearts are not deceived, and that you do not turn away and serve other gods and worship them. 17 Or the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its fruit; and you will **perish** quickly from the good land which the Lord is giving you.* Deuteronomy 11:16-17 [NASB]

There is a word in our English translation that may have caught your attention in the above texts – the word **perish/Avad** = Lose valuable possession; Disappear @ “But you will **perish/avad** among the nations, and your enemies’ land will consume you.” Leviticus 26:38

This takes place because as a people we have often gone after other gods, forgetting HaShem and thus having no authentic strong passion for the ways of our Father. We are a stiff necked people who continually fight against the loving instructions our Father has for us. A successful relationship must have passion, if the passion of a relationship wanes, then it begins to break down. When there are different interests and goals then trouble is often not far away and what was once seen as a close solid relationship begins to break down and disappear. A successful relationship must have the participants walking together as echad/one.

The words found in Amos come to mind.

“Can two walk together, unless they have made an agreement?” Amos 3:3

Walk/Halak = walk, progress step by step toward a goal.

Together/Yachad = bring together, unite, arrange.

Agreed/Ya'ad = Arrange, set specifics, meet together, community.

Surely the nation of Israel is supposed to be in agreement with HaShem, a united community, meeting Him at His appointed times, whereby we walk together with Him [walking in the footsteps of HaMoshiach Yeshua] by following His instructions, instructions that will find us residing in the Promised Land in harmony and unity.

This has not happened and will not happen because we find ourselves following other gods, serving them, having our lives dictated by them, dedicating our lives to everything other than the holy Torah and HaMoshiach Yeshua. This being the case, then surely we are not walking **Yachad** with HaShem. This has resulted in the “Children” of Israel not being welcome or allowed in the Set Apart Land, in fact we have found ourselves **Avad/disappearing** in amongst the goyim, whereby lessons need to be learnt. The lesson we seem to find hard to learn is a simple one – Adhere to the instructions/Torah of HaShem, if we did this then all our challenges and problems would vanish. Moshe failed to fully adhere to HaShem’s instructions and was not allowed to enter the Promised Land, so what makes many of us think that we could and should be able to waltz into the Promised Land, under our own strength, and rejecting the Holy Torah all the way. I would suggest most reading this would not live up to the “greatness” and obedience of Moshe, yet many seem to take for granted their place in Israel, without ever giving thought for the requirement of following the instructions of HaShem – foolishness at best.

Dwelling in the Promised Land is in fact dwelling in the Kings “Palace”. This should not be taken lightly; as it is an absolute privilege to be given a place of residence and asked to dwell in the King’s Palace. This should be the goal of every Israelite and we should actually be ashamed that we are not living within the boundaries of the Promised Land. We should be ashamed that the Promised Land is occupied by our enemies, I say ashamed because we have no-one else to blame but ourselves. HaShem is more than capable and willing to dislodge the idolaters and their gods from the Promised Land, but sadly it is His people, the Children of Israel who seem incapable and unwilling to engage in the Biblical process of this removal.

For those of us who believe we are the Children of Israel, and even though we still reside outside the Promised Land we have an obligation to our Father and our Moshiach Yeshua. That obligation is to prepare for our return, prepare and familiarise ourselves with the “rules” of the Kingdom. We should be busy finding out how we are to act and behave when we eventually find ourselves in the King’s company, in the Promised Land. We should be seeking material and guidance that will help with this process of preparation, of returning as a united people to the Promised Land. Without reservation I suggest Judaic Studies Institute University is a good place to start the search.

The time could be fast approaching when all Israel [Southern and Northern Kingdoms and those who choose to join] will be gathered from the four corners of the earth, through the arm of HaShem, [whom I believe to be HaMashiach Yeshua] and because Yeshua cannot be separated from Torah, and in fact is the living Torah, we should definitely be putting the following into practice.

“You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. And you shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied on the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens remain above the earth.” Deuteronomy 11:18-21[NASB]

One of the reasons we should engage in the above is given in the following verses.

“For if you are careful to keep all this commandment which I am commanding you, to do it, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and hold fast to Him; then the LORD will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you.” Deuteronomy 11:22-23

The cause of HaShem’s blessings upon Israel doesn’t change; the pattern has been set in stone – the Chief corner stone. It will not change, because HaShem cannot and does not change. The Promised Land is our home and the Torah is our constitution.

Let us finish this short study on the following passages of scripture.

*“All the commandments that I am commanding you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live long and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to give to your forefathers. And you shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He may humble you, **testing you, to know what is in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.**”* Deuteronomy 8:1-2 [NASB]

Here we are told that we should make absolutely sure that we carry out all of our Father’s instructions. It is vital that we follow His instructions, because it is upon our response to His Torah that He judges the heart of His people.

*“I, HASHEM, **search the heart, test the motives, to give each person what his conduct and his actions deserve.**”* Jeremiah 17:10 [NJB]

*“.....Lord, you can **read everyone’s heart.....**”* Acts 1:24

*“And God, Who can **read everyone’s heart.....**”* Acts 15:8

How do our “hearts” stand up to the all seeing eyes of HaShem? This is a serious and very valid question. The answer is not in how you feel, but how you respond to His instructions – In other words do you trust in and follow the Holy Torah, or do you discard it for another set of instructions from a god you trust more?

The Psalmist cries out, *“God, create in me a clean heart....”*, is this your cry, are you crying out for HaShem to create in you a clean heart? I pray that this is the case for all the citizens of Biblical Israel, because without a clean heart you will not reside in the Promised Land. How do you receive a clean heart? You receive a clean heart by calling on Yeshua HaMoshiach to be the propitiation for your sin and then engaging in learning the ways of Yeshua and walking in His footsteps through the application of Torah. Yeshua has paid the penalty for your sin, but Torah keeps your heart clean and on the straight and narrow way. Once again please allow me to say that Yeshua HaMoshiach and the Holy Torah cannot and will not be separated.

HaShem is our God, Yeshua is our Moshiach and the Promised Land is our home and Jerusalem is our capital. It is in the Promised Land where the children of Israel are to experience Life, through the wonders and beauty of Yeshua HaMoshiach and Torah.

Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him.7 For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; 8 a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; 9 a land where you will eat food without scarcity, in which you will not lack anything; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. 10 When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you.

*11 “Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today; 12 otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them, 13 and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies,14 then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.15 He led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water; He brought water for you out of the rock of flint. 16 In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end. 17 Otherwise, you may say in your heart, ‘My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.’ 18 But you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. 19 It shall come about if you ever forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you will surely perish. 20 Like the nations that the Lord makes to perish before you, so you shall perish; **because** you would not listen to the voice of the Lord your God.*Deuteronomy 8:6-20 [NASB]

The word **because** in verse 20 is **Ekev/As a result**: The root meaning of this word, according to the Etymological Dictionary of Biblical Hebrew is **–undermine, act deviously, being crooked and uneven.**

People of Israel the only way you will not become deceived and fall into a pit of darkness and sin, whereby you engage in acts of deception and as a result find yourselves out of the will of HaShem, and worshipping foreign gods, is to embrace Yeshua HaMoshiach,

His Torah and have a passion to dwell in the Promised Land. This we can all do, but will we all choose to do so?

We serve a wonderful God, as there is no God like the God of Israel, and no nation like the nation of Israel, and no land like Eretz Yisrael.

Blessings to all citizens of biblical Israel,

Rabbi Philip Hammond.