

Parshas Netzavim

This week's parsha is the 4th last parsha of all 5 books of the Torah. The parsha begins powerfully, with you are standing here today, and Moshe lists out the different "classes" of people, who we would delineate into classes. But the Torah's reference of them shows that all people are gathered in front of Hashem equally.

Netzavim is always read before Rosh Hashana, and for good reason. This day, and gathering marks the final hours of Moshe Rabbeinu, where he is relaying the final messages to the Jews before entering the land of Israel. Rashi explains this gathering concretized the Jews as a nation.

Rashi explains on 29:12 that the oath of Hashem is upheld not to replace the Jews with any other nation. Offering further evidence to the narratives from Bereishis that Yakov was worried that the Jews could be replaced by his twin brother, and no matter how many incidences and blessings, Yakov kept requiring reassurances of the success of his offspring.

Rashi dives deeper into the juxtaposition of Netzavin to Ki Savo where the Jews heard all the curses, (in addition to the curses heard in Vaykira). The Jews were in a state of despair, yet Moshe offered them consolation, that Hashem hasn't abandoned them thus far, regardless of the activities that may have prompted their destruction.

What if you were the Jew living at that time, and to you the decisions made were the best of the moment? The Rebbe's approach was to reimagine the narratives, to show their spiritually positive quality, even though the methods may have been inappropriate. To guide us in our way of practice.

This was one of Moshe's final messages to the Jews. To not forget, to not despair, the world is run by Hashem, and everything happens for a reason (whether we like the reason or not, and whether there remains suffering and hardship in the world). As well, we cannot forget our purpose, which is to serve Hashem in our fullest capacity. Rashi's conclusion of "hayom" is that there will be subsequent leaders for generations, and the mantel of leadership needs to be passed from generation to generation. In this way, we are directly connected to the creation of the world, culminating all the event to time to this exact moment where we exist, which is one moment closer to the coming of Mashiach.

How appropriate then before we rebirth in the new year, and the final Shabbos of the year, and the final Shabbos of Elul, we are told this message. When we enter the new year, we need to remain steadfast to the purpose of us as a nation, and as Jews. In the mamer Ani Ledodi from 1966, by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, on the mamer titled the same thing from the Alter Rebbe in Lekutei Torah, we are enlightened to the fact that the entire month of Elul is to get closer to Hashem, in preparation for Rosh Hashana. The way to get close to Hashem is achievable as the Rebbe explains. The message of Moshe is real and raw and speaks to us on a practical level.

In chapter 30 posuk 11, Moshe reminds us of the attainability of the mitzvos, and that they are not hidden from us.

Cleaving to Hashem and doing what is required of is entirely possible. We should enter Rosh Hashana knowing that everything is possible in our service to Hashem.

Through this let us expedite the coming of Mashiach. Good Shabbos