

Parshas V'Zos Habracha

In the final parsha, and the final words Moshe spoke, we can see evidence of the intentionality of Yakov and Yosef, and the divine providence throughout.

Each tribe is blessed and given a message to carry forward as they embark on entering the land, under the leadership of Yehoshua. Posuk 13 is the bracha given to Yosef, in posuk 14, we see reference to Yosef's dreams (sun and moon cycles and rashi explains the produce that will result of the optimal location in Israel for Yosef.)

In posuk 16 Moshe refers to the crowing of Yosef by his brothers. In posuk 17 Moshe states *וְיִשְׂרָאֵל בָּרַךְ אֶת יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה אֲנִי הַיּוֹם וְאַתָּה וְאֶתְּנֶנּוּ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶתְּנֶנּוּ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל* which Rashi explains is an expression of greatness. This also ties back to the fact that the younger (like Yakov to Esav) was made into a bechor- first born. This ties back to the prophecy of Shem to Rivka, about the weaker conquering the stronger. Earlier Moshe tells us in posuk 4 *וְאֵתְּנֶנּוּ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶתְּנֶנּוּ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל* and we are called the congregation of Yakov specifically, because it is the inheritance that is handed down from generation to generation (Torah) that is the root of it not being forgotten.

This parsha and Bereishis are ostensibly connected. Ramban on Bereishis explains the "reishis" that is the Jews, and the Torah (and provides the sources for these titles). The culmination of Moshe's life is that he saw divinity through a clear looking glass (Ramban on Bereishis 1:1 and described in Sukka 45b). The ability to see the Divine clearly is a rare attribute ascribed to any one person- Moshe

being a rarity. Since Torah is called Reishis and the Jews are called Reishis, the beginning- Bereishis, and the culmination-at the end- are connected in one grand circle.

We never truly end the Torah, rather, on the same day of "completion", we begin the Torah anew, with Bereishis, where we are reminded once again of the Earth's renewal, and the purposefulness of the entirety of our existence.

The posuk 4 above echoes the eternality of Bereishis, where Hashem created the world and Rashi tells us of the eternal inheritance of the land that we get because we are Hashem's nation. At Bereishis, the land was the natural inheritance, after coming out of mitzraim and receiving the Torah, the Torah is our inheritance as well, as stated in this posuk and as Rashi explains. The land (and our existence) without Torah is lost, and the world without Torah is for naught.

Now it makes sense that we celebrate the culmination of the reading of the Torah, and the reading anew the Torah on Simchas Torah, and (Shemini) Atzeres- a separate holiday from the rest of Sukkos (although they are connected). The culmination of the reading of the Torah follows the month of Elul, Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Sukkos, Hoshana Raba, we are ready for the renewal of the Torah as paramount and central to our lives. Moshe's

We are the holiest generation, as we are the generation that will inevitably greet Moshiach. In Sukka 45a Rabi Abahu says if we take the lulav al bound together, it is as if the person built a mizbeach and brought an offering¹ (On the posuk in tehillim 118:27).

¹ Contravenes that if Bais Hamikdash hasn't been rebuilt as if it was destroyed in our generation...must be explained further, some thoughts below.

1) Could be a reason why Chabad binds so tightly all the species, with no casing.

2) No other generation has a much access to 4 minim as today, so we are closer to collectively building mizbeach, and making offerings.
3) Bringing an offering is a step in the direction of rebuilt limata m'asara tefachim.
4) Perhaps one can conjecture why Rebbe said open one's eyes to see moshiach, as he is

Another opinion in Sukka 45a – participating in the Joy of the holiday- as if he built a mizbeach and offered a sacrifice on it. The joy that one must have on Sukkos, Shemini Atzeres/Simchas Torah, is the kind that knows no bounds, and will break all yokes and limitations. (In the davening we call the holiday- Z'man Simchaseinu²). This holiday is a standalone yom tov, that is obviously connected to the first days, but in and of itself is a new name, new laws, and new “Shehechiyanu” (as Rebbe Rayatz, quoted by the Rebbe in volume 19 states that the renewal bracha is on the Torah itself). The phrase of Simcha is used in Devarim 16:14 and 16:15. The Ach Sameach, Rashi explains from the gemara in Sukka 48 that includes Shemini Atzeres, where we have a specific “command” (from posuk 14) but more as Rashi says, an assurance (for the repetition on posuk 15) to rejoice. As happiness leads to optimal results in all things (service to Hashem our lives etc. etc. which we similarly achieve on Purim through wine, and the word Simcha is used for the rejoicing the Jews felt from being saved from peril, and we know Purim is directly connected to the Torah- Kimu V'Kiblu).

It is no secret then then Simcha can be achieved in a moment's notice, or with the right preparation. One may think that we should enter the culmination of reading the Torah with trepidation and fear because of the solemnity of Yom Kippur, but it is not, the command is to be full of Simcha, which is assured on the second days (Rashi).

The metaphor of the Makifim of holiness of the Sukka which surrounds us and fills us, is the method through which we can rejoice in the culmination of renewing the reading of the cycle of the Parsheos.

But let it be known that the entire narrative, and the entire purpose of creation was for the time

when the Jews would be involved in the mundane, and enter the land of Israel, with the Torah, steadfast in our ways, as Moshe has been telling us, and are literally his final words (Rashi on V'Zos Habracha).

The final posuk states “Morah Gadol” Rashi states the miracles and acts of might which took place in the great wilderness. Rashi refers to Devarim 1:19 where the desert is called a great wilderness, but we can also refer to 1:19 of Bereishis, which is the culmination of day 4, which is where we are told of the Meor Hagadol (the sun, and the Meor Katan- the moon). The Meoros of Bereishis are the reason we are a nation, as without time, and the blessing of the new moon- as commanded at Hachodesh Haze Lochem (when our nation was created), we would not exist as a nation, with the ability to Paskin laws, interpret and live by the Torah. Hachodesh Haze Lochem, is connected to Bereishis as stated in Rashi's first question why the Torah doesn't begin with the creation of the nation of Israel rather, as it does with the creation of the universe.

Moshe's reference to Moreh Hagadol, can be seen as a connection to that time, when we ought not forget the entire purpose of creation- Lasos Lo Dirah Bitachtonim, and that everything that has happened, every narrative, story, lesson, is completely and utterly intentional- all to culminate with our time, and our place in history, which is ideally the last generation to exist in Galus.

But through our binding of the 4 minim, and the Joy of celebrating the yomtov, may the allegorical building the mizbeach and offering a sacrifice be turned to an actual offering on the physical mizbeach with the geula speedily in our days.

Good Shabbos and Good Yom Tov.

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Aspaklaria Hamira – Sukka 45b

² Lekutei Sichos Volume 19