

Parshas V'Eschanan

This week is Shabbos Nachamu (consolation) a name derived from the first word of the Haftora (Yeshayahu 40), as well, appropriately it is the first of 7 haftaros of consolation read after 9 Av, having mourned the destruction of the Batei Mikdash (and other sad events), until Rosh Hashana. It is also Parshas V'Eschanan (meaning pleaded), that is Moshe was begging Hashem (with 515 prayers according to Medrish Raba the same numerical value as V'eschanan) to let him into the Land of Israel- for which Hashem stated- you will not pass into the land, but view it from afar, and appoint Yehoshua as the leader of the Jews.

Was Moshe supposed to go into the land at all?

Chizkuni explains, Moshe's generation all passed away in the desert, and therefore as their leader he needed to remain with them. The people who he took out of Egypt "remained" in the desert, so must Moshe as their leader. In the Parsha we don't see reference to Moshe being punished as a reason for him not entering. As well, leaders of the Jews were chosen on their individual merit, not necessarily nepotism leadership (i.e., the children of Moshe weren't the next leaders, rather it was Yehoshua¹).

Ohr HaChaim (on 1:37 and 3:25) and provides further clarity on whether Moshe was supposed to enter the land. It seems, based on Ohr HaChaim's sources (Taanis 14, Sotah 9) that had Moshe entered the land

and built the Beis Hamikdash- it would have been the final Beis Hamikdash and would have been indestructible. Since people are fallible, and possibly would have deviated from the path of righteousness (as Hashem foresaw), the Beis Hamikdash wouldn't have been destroyed, instead the wrath of Hashem would have completely befallen the Jews, and they would not have survived. Ohr HaChaim explanation seems to imply that Moshe made the ultimate sacrifice, that replaced his being in the land with the eternality of the Jewish people to survive and persevere throughout history, and that the eternality was on the Jews, not the Beis Hamikdash- until the final one.

Furthermore, there was a Halachik issue with Moshe continuing as the leader. Ohr HaChaim explains from Gemara Berachos 48, that two kings times may not overlap (even a hair's breadth), and Yehoshua's time for ruling had arrived, therefore, Moshe's reign had to end (and it couldn't simply just be a resignation as Medrish Tanchuma explains was one of Moshe's methods for staying alive and entering the land on 3:28).

I want to provide an analogy of the explanation as well. Imagine you are spending time with people you love, and when it is time to part ways there are 3 general options. First you leave the loved ones and embark on your journey, which is difficult, but your journey home can quickly make you forget what you left behind. The second option is for your loved ones to escort you back to your place, and then leave you, which could leave you feeling sad. The middle option is where your loved

¹ In fact, kings of Israel weren't appointed until much later, after the Jews requested kings to lead them in the land. It seems this request was inappropriate (as

an affront to the King of Kings). As well dynastic kingdoms led to disputes, civil wars and kings who were corrupt and quite bad for the Jewish people.

ones escort you partially on your journey and take leave at some point on your journey leaving you with enough time to get home, which keeps your mind on the rest of your mission, while also cherishing the moments you had with your loved ones.

Moshe was given 'consolation' of the vision of the land, and the future where the Jews will persist, he kept the nation together and 'comfortably' handed the nation into the hands of a new and capable leader, who completed the journey. This remaining part of the journey kept the nation together, they weren't lost on the mission, as their targets to enter the land were still in their sites. Had Moshe handed them off once in the land, perhaps people would have dissipated, and their mission had been accomplished, and they no longer would have remained together. But with the remaining final stages of their journey to the land they stuck together as a nation, with their mission in their sites, and with the parting words of support from Moshe.

The Haftora- from Yeshayahu 40, Nachamu, are words of comfort to the Jews about the end of exile. It is a reminder of our mission- which is to bring Mashiach, by preparing this world for Hashem to make a dwelling place down here, by uplifting the mundane through Torah and Mitzvos. Rashi explains on 40:1 (Nachamu, Nachamu- the double language from Yalkut Shimoni is on the first and second Beis Hamikdash) that these words break between the previous words of destruction and warning, versus the words that will remain about hope and Mashiach.

The words and mepharshim from the Haftora are incredibly relevant. Hashem created a perfectly natural order that is balanced (I would posit, that some humans

throw things off balance which is why there are ups and downs). Everything Hashem made has a purpose (even if we don't see it in the moment). This Haftora leads into Parshas Lech Licha- which is an allegory for human's mission to go out into the world (and leave your father's birthplace i.e., your comfort zone). Yeshayahu says that the return to Zion will be quick and without impediments.

From V'eschanan, Moshe asks Hashem to instill divine guidance (such as he had) into each Jew, which we see from the Shema which is in this parsha and next week (Eikev). The divine inspiration arrives in 2 ways- Asrusa D'Litata (arousal from below) and Asrusa D'Leila (arousal from above). Both are imperative in a Jew's mission on earth to be close to Hashem. But an arousal from above, although initially is higher (as it is from Hashem directly), an arousal from below will permeate our essence deeper. We need both, especially if the arousal from below is diminished. The Haftaros of consolation, and Moshe's words in the Parsha are part of the required doses of divine inspiration we need to persist eternally- much like the third and final Beis Hamikdash will be. We were given the strength to persist, therefore it is by our own hand that we can bring the third 'eternal' Beis Hamikdash.

On Shabbos Nachamu we are shown the final Beis Hamikdash in our dreams (which are a level of divine prophecy). But Re'iah (seeing) is one level before something manifests into the physical. In the Haftorah posuk 5 we are told "all flesh will see", that is in the future our physical bodies will be able to "see" the divine within all things physical, as opposed to now, where we see a physical object, but can only conjecture

on the divine within (from Cunin Edition of the Haftaros based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe). While Moshe begged Hashem to enter the land, Rashi explains he was shown (Hahar Hatov Haze) Yerushalayim (3:25) and the Beis Hamikdash (Halvanon). Rashi doesn't say that he saw the first second or third Beis Hamikdash. Moshe was shown what will be (possibly all the Batei Mikdash). The parallel between Moshe's experience and the Haftora and ours today is all linked. There is an 8th Day song, "Moses in Me", which is about the fact that we all have a little bit of Moshe in us which will help us get through the exile. We will envision the third Beis Hamikdash, and the promise of Hashem will come true, and through our work we will bring Mashiach speedily in our days. Good Shabbos.