

Parshas Eikev

This week's Parshas is Eikev, which means "because", but there are many explanations for the reference to "heel" (like the source of the name Yaakov), which range from Rashi, who explains not to trample the easy Mitzvos (that would be stomped on so to speak by the heel), to the Tzemach Tzedek that this alludes to the generation that are the "Ikveseh D'Meshicha" (the heel of Mashiach). All these have a common thread. The first point to make is that this Parsha is toward the end of the day of Moshe's final time on earth as the leader of the Jews; the Parsha is about Moshe telling the Jews that they will receive blessings in abundance if they keep to the Torah. The generation by Moshe was experiencing their final redemption from the trials of the desert, and the redemption from Egypt; this is the entry into the "Promised Land." Moshe's words then apply to us today, when we are on the verge of experiencing our redemption into our own promised land.

Moshe's speech still echoes, in that he says, 'What if we ask how we will conquer our enemies? To which Moshe responds, Do not fear, for you have Hashem..'. While Moshe also reminds us of the trials, the lesson remains that staying with the Torah, learning it, keeping it and having faith in Hashem is what keeps us safe. This is 100% true, as the Jewish faith in Hashem, and the Torah has been strong, relatively unchanged, that so many thousands of years after Har Sinai, and the Jews entered into Israel, and Moshe gave them this speech, we remain connected and serving Hashem, much in the same way.

I've said this before, and written about it, that there is a common adage to assume there was "Yeridas Hadoros", or a devolution in the generations in terms of observance and fear of Hashem. But there is a Gemara that says, any generation that the Beis Hamikdash wasn't rebuilt it was as if it was destroyed. Does this mean that at the Rambam, Rashi, or any great sage didn't deserve to have Mashiach? The answer is that, on an individual basis, these great sages and even a generation may have merited to be revealed Mashiach, but as a general population, i.e. the whole world, was not ready. This means, if Mashiach has not come yet, then our generation is the worthiest and holiest, if the maximum potential for Mashiach to arrive is now. So, our generation isn't distant from the dream of Mashiach; it is the maximum potential for Mashiach to arrive, which means we have a heretofore unforeseen power that didn't exist before us.

The faith of our forefathers, the steadfastness to Torah, and belief in Hashem, have been an unbroken chain since this generation of the Parsha entered into the land. And their journey was not without mistakes and being human. Notwithstanding, we still are Hashem's children, and we will still welcome Mashiach.

It is incumbent on us to recognize Moshe's words, heed the words of the Torah, and stay faithful to Hashem so that we can truly materialize the coming of Mashiach.

Good Shabbos