

Parshas Vaeschanan

This week's Parsha, Vaeschanan, recounts the repetition of the 10 Commandments, but begins with Moshe stating that he preferred to enter the Land of Israel with the Jews, yet was prevented from doing so. In keeping with last week's theme of Chumash Devarim as a repetition of the Torah, this Parsha clarifies the purpose of being a Jew and of entering the "Land of Israel", which at that time was specifically to build the Beis Hamikdash, but in our time is to greet Mashiach, i.e., entering our own "land of Israel". Moshe says in 4:2 that we must not add anything; Rashi explains that, specifically with tefillin and Lulav, there is a set number of Parshas or species, and neither may be added to, nor subtracted from. Moshe repeats and focuses on upholding the laws given to us, as it says in 4:6, "you shall safeguard these laws and do them, for through this you will be considered wise, and intelligent in the eyes of the nations, who will hear about the statutes and say, 'this great nation is purely a wise and intelligent people'..." By practicing and observing the Torah and Mitzvos, we change the world. It works to our advantage, and with that, the truth of the Torah, whether through the adaptation of the 7 Noahide laws, or general realization that the truth is within the Torah. In fact, so often, the way in which the world engages with Jews is on a superficial level, without any understanding, and

therefore the people engaged in combat have no understanding of who they are trying to criticize. Over time, the truth will be revealed, especially when you consider how the proliferation of knowledge and information is taking place. Going to the repetition of the Torah, this Parsha, following from Devarim, which paralleled Bereishis, in that Hashem specifically allocated the physical places which would be the homes of the nations. This follows how Rashi explains why the Torah began with creation at all, to teach us that when we know and see that the entirety of creation is for the Torah and Mitzvos, and the Jewish homeland, then everything we do must lift up the world to that goal, not negate it, not destroy, rather, enlighten and shine light, as mentioned in this parsha, we will be viewed as intelligent. People will come to know that truth by seeing Jews engaged in Torah and Mitzvos. This parsha therefore concretizes that, specifically, because it is one thing Hashem created the world with no rules or ability to navigate through this existence- rather, Hashem did give us a guide and a path, and that is through Torah. Moshe's repetition has always been about making sure the Jews follow the laws, such that they apply to existing in a physical human realm with the tools we are given to shine this light. Moshe's repetition is interpreted, especially with Rashi, in the way the Jews actually perform the Mitzvos, and are meant to exist. On that note, Moshe was not

allowed to enter the land of Israel due to the outward reason that he struck the rock. But Moshe (according to the Gemara in Sotah) wanted to go to the land not for the food, but to be able to perform the Mitzvos that are for the land, that are meant to be worked and acted on. He desperately wanted more time to do more Mitzvos. Furthermore, if Moshe had entered the land, the Beis Hamikdash would never have been destroyed; accordingly, Hashem didn't let Moshe enter, so the Jews would be delegated to fulfill the commandments and bring Mashiach. The world then wasn't ready; there needed to be 2 temples built and destroyed and a long galus to further prepare the world so that at the end, Mashiach and the 3rd Beis Hamikdash can be rebuilt, which we can turn to Vaeschanan, and get recharged, especially since it is also Shabbos Nachamu, where we are consoled from the destruction, specifically knowing that the third Beis Hamikdash is to be rebuilt. May we then take the lessons of Moshe, that are eternal and never changed, as the Posuk commanded us, and may our actions shine light, such that Mashiach will do its part and reveal itself.

Good Shabbos