

Parashat Nitzavim / Vayeilech

פרשיות נצבים - וילך

Shabbat Elul 25, 5770, September 4, 2010

32:1-32:52 MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of God

<http://www.matsati.com> | matsati@matsati.com

Having Genuine Faith

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Deuteronomy 29:10-31:30

הפטרה: Isaiah 55:6-56:8, 61:10-63:9

הברית: Romans 10:1-18

החדשה

This week's Parashat is a double portion, Parshiot Nitzavim and Vayeilech. Reading through the double portion (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 29:10-31:30*) and then the portion of scripture from the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic writings), *Romans 10:1-18*, the way Rav Shaul (Paul) writes to the ecclesia at Rome it appears that Paul had these two Parshiot in mind. Was Paul drawing from his understanding of Parshiot Vayeilech and Nitzavim when he was speaking to the believers in Rome? Let's look at these Parshiot and the verses from Romans and see what we can find out.

Romans 10:1-18

10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. 10:2 For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. 10:3 For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. 10:5 For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. 10:6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: 'Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down), 10:7 or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).' 10:8 But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10:10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. 10:11 For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.' 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 10:13 for 'Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.' 10:14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? 10:15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!' 10:16 However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, 'Lord, who has believed our report?' 10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. 10:18 But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Indeed they have; 'Their voice has gone out into all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world.' 10:19 But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses says, 'I will make you jealous by that which is not a nation, By a nation without understanding will I anger you.' 10:20 And Isaiah is very bold and says, 'I was found by those who did not seek Me, I became manifest to those who did not ask for Me.' 10:21

But as for Israel He says, 'All the day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.' (NASB)

Here in *Romans* chapter 10, Paul is speaking about salvation, righteousness, and the connection and role of the Torah (Law) in a believer's life. A great deal of misunderstanding on prayer, righteousness, worship, and the Torah existed in the 1st Century most probably resulting from the pagan community of Rome. There had to have been a lot of mixed messages (varying opinions) on how to worship God especially for the believers who lived in Rome therefore, Paul writes that his heart's desire and prayer is for their salvation (10:1). According to 10:2-3 there were some people who had a zeal for God but not the kind of zeal that was in line with the righteousness of God. These people had a righteousness of their own, something of their own making which is why Paul says that they do not subject themselves to God's righteousness. Paul then contrasts the righteousness of these men with the righteousness that is based upon faith. Now Paul makes two references to Moshe in *Romans 10:1-21*. The first reference to the parsha for this week is found here in 10:5 quoting from Parashat Nitzavim in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 30:11-14* referring to Yeshua who ascended into heaven after the Resurrection.

דברים 30:11-14

11 כִּי הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי ׀
 מִצְוָה הַיּוֹם לֹא־נִפְלְאת הִוא מִמֶּךָ וְלֹא־רַחֲקָה הִוא׃
 12 לֹא בַשָּׁמַיִם הִוא לֵאמֹר מִי יַעֲלֶה־לָּנוּ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וַיִּקְחֶהָ
 13 לָנוּ וַיִּשְׁמַעֵנוּ אֹתָהּ וַיַּעֲשֶׂנָּה׃ וְלֹא־מֵעֵבֶר לַיָּם הִוא לֵאמֹר
 מִי יַעֲבֹר־לָנוּ אֶל־עֵבֶר הַיָּם וַיִּקְחֶהָ לָּנוּ וַיִּשְׁמַעֵנוּ אֹתָהּ
 14 וַיַּעֲשֶׂנָּה׃ כִּי־קְרוֹב אֵלֶיךָ תְּדַבֵּר מְאֹד כַּפִּיךָ וּבִלְבָבְךָ
 15 לַעֲשׂוֹתָ׃ רֵאשִׁית נִתְּתִי לְפָנֶיךָ הַיּוֹם׃

Romans 10:6-9

10:6 *But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: 'Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down), 10:7 or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).'* 10:8 *But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;*

A comparison of the Torah text to that in Romans shows Paul has used a word-for-word quotation from Parashat Nitzavim. Paul is not changing the meaning of the scripture from the Torah but is trying to illustrate how we are to live by the word of faith. He says in 10:10 that with the heart a person believes that results in righteousness and with the mouth confession is made to salvation. Paul is revealing to us that a genuine faith and reliance upon God leads to both righteousness and salvation. The comment about having a zeal for God in knowledge (10:2-3) and his contrasting that with subjecting one's self to God's righteousness indicates that genuine faith is not simply a mental exercise that would fail to affect one's actions. The keeping of the mitzvot without faith,

Devarim / Deuteronomy 30:11-14

30:11 'For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. 30:12 'It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' 30:13 'Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' 30:14 'But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it. (NASB)

especially without a faith that is centered upon Yeshua the Messiah does not lead to salvation. Look at what Paul is saying here in *Romans 10:12-14*.

95

10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 10:13 for 'Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.' 10:14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

100

Paul is arguing that there is no distinction between the Jew and non-Jew because the Lord is the Lord over all. He then continues asking how one is to be saved if they have not heard about Yeshua. These verses within context are clear that the mechanistic keeping of the Mitzvot in the Torah does not save apart from faith in Yeshua. It is also here that Paul states explicitly, in *Romans 10:17*, that faith

105

comes from hearing of the Messiah (Yeshua) and salvation comes as a result of having trusted, and believed in Him, that He died and raise from the dead.

110

10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. 10:18 But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Indeed they have; 'Their voice has gone out into all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world.' 10:19 But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses says, 'I will make you jealous by that which is not a nation, By a nation without understanding will I anger you.' 10:20 And Isaiah is very bold and says, 'I was found by those who did not seek Me, I became manifest to those who did not ask for Me.'

115

In *Romans 10:19* Paul quotes from Parashat Vayeilech. It appears that Paul is appealing to the Jewish believers when he quotes from this Parashat in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:18-21*.

120

דברים 32:18-21

18	צֹר יִלְדֶּךָ תִּשִׂי	לֹא שָׁעֲרוּם אֲבֹתֶיכֶם:
19	וַיִּרְא יְהוָה וַיִּנְאֹץ	וַתִּשְׁכַּח אֵל מְחַלְלֶיךָ:
20	וַיֹּאמֶר אֶסְתַּדְּרָה פָּנַי מֵהֶם	מִכַּעַם בָּנָיו וּבְנֹתָיו:
	כִּי דֹר תַּהֲפֹכֶת הָמָּה	אֲרָאָה מָה אַחֲרֵיהֶם
21	הֵם קִנְאוּנִי בְּלֹא-אֵל	בָּנִים לֹא-אֱמֵן בָּם:
	וַאֲנִי אֶקְנִיאֵם בְּלֹא-עֵם	כַּעֲסוּנִי בְּהַבְלִיהֶם
22	כִּי-אֵשׁ קָדְחָה כְּאִפִּי	בָּנָיו נִבְּל אֲכֻעִיסֵם:

125

It is no surprise that Paul is using this portion of scripture from the Torah which says in *32:18 'You neglected the Rock who begot you, And forgot the God who gave you birth*. I believe these scriptures were specifically referenced because of the connection with the rock and foundation of our faith, Yeshua the Messiah. Here Paul is showing how the Torah is pointing to Yeshua as the one who has birthed us newness of life by the power of God Almighty. The unbelieving Jewish person of the first century would have immediately been able to recognize the place of the Parshiot in Paul's explanation of having faith in Yeshua.

130

Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:18-21

32:18 'You neglected the Rock who begot you, And forgot the God who gave you birth. 32:19 'The Lord saw this, and spurned them Because of the provocation of His sons and daughters. 32:20 'Then He said, 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be; For they are a perverse generation, Sons in whom is no faithfulness. 32:21 'They have made Me jealous with what is not God; They have provoked Me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation, (NASB)

135 Today, we have to realize that Yeshua has provided the means for our
salvation and that a genuine faith and reliance upon God is required for salvation;
faith is not simply a mental exercise that fails to affect our actions. Volumes exist
on the issue of soteriology (theology the doctrine of salvation) disusing salvation
140 by faith versus works and for that matter on all of the scriptures. Salvation is the
work of God which is something James describes as a fruitful faith, a living faith,
a faith that does not failure to *“let your light so shine before men that they may
see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew
5:16)*. Matthew also has an equally profound warning about hypocrisy of those
145 who profess to have faith but their lives do not reflect the works of God that are
manifest through them. This is the kind of faith Paul is addressing in *Romans 10*,
the men he is speaking to have a faith and a form of righteousness but one of their
own making and not one that is subjected to God’s righteousness and faith in
Yeshua the Messiah. It is not the absence of good works that condemns a person
150 to everlasting fire; it is the absence of genuine faith. Unless faith comes alive
through Yeshua, the righteousness of God (Christ’s righteousness) is not imputed
to us. Until we submit ourselves to the will of God, He cannot use the imputed
righteousness to work through us to produce His divine fruit that is to be
displayed and made visible to others as Yeshua states in *Matthew 5:16*. It is
155 through this genuine faith that lead one to live his or her life for the Lord
according to the Torah, but not as a mechanistic exercise. If you desire to do a
work for the Lord, do so in a faith that is centered upon Yeshua the Messiah. The
result will be works coupled with faith that attest to the Lord working in your life
in a mighty and powerful way. Works that can be done through faith attest to the
genuine faith of trusting the Lord and trusting that Yeshua has provided the means
for our salvation. Isn’t that the kind of faith we should be having? Ask the Lord
to help you today on this in Yeshua’s name.

160
165
170
175
Copyright © 2010 MATSATI.COM | All Rights Reserved: <http://www.matsati.com/>

Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever