

Parashat Va'etchanan

פרשת ואתחנן

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5

A way of life for a people already redeemed!

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11

הפטרה: Isaiah 40:1-267

הברית: Acts 3-5

החדשה

Triennial cycle: Devarim / Deuteronomy 3:23-5:18

10

This week's reading is from sefer Devarim (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11*) Parashat Va'etchanan, Moshe is recapitulating (summarizing and restating) the main points during Yisrael's journey from Mitzrayim to their present location (Beth Peor). Moshe requested to enter the Promised Land but God said to go to the top of Pisgah (a mountain summit in Moab) to see the land with his eyes only. The Scriptures again and again show us how God has defined who He is by what He has done for His people. *Devarim 5:3* states that - לא את-אבותינו כרת יהוה את- meaning *5:3 'The Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, with all those of us alive here today.*

15

(NASB) Moshe goes on to say that אָנֹכִי עִמָּד בֵּין-יְהוָה וּבֵינֵיכֶם בְּעֵת הַהוּא, the NASB translates as "I stood between the Lord and between you at that time," it is interesting that the phrase **בעת ההוא** is indicative of Moshe standing between the people "in/at his time," does this refer to the individual person by the use of the pronoun **הוא**? The Hebrew thesaurus shows us the synonyms for **הוא** to include

20

the word **האיש** (man). The text here shows us God's continued perfect and absolute promise of His covenant coupled with the messianic expectation of the Messiah Yeshua personified in Moshe Rabbenu.

25

פרשת ואתחנן ספר דברים פרק ה פסוק א-ה

30

א וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-הַחֻקִּים וְאֶת-הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי דֹבֵר בְּאָזְנֵיכֶם הַיּוֹם וְלִמְדַתֶּם אֹתָם וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם לַעֲשׂוֹתָם: ב יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ כָּרַת עִמָּנוּ בְרִית בְּחֹרֵב: ג **לא את-אבותינו כרת יהוה את-הברית הזאת כי אתנו אנחנו אלה פה היום כלנו חיים: ד בפנים דבר יהוה עמכם בקר מתוך האש: ה אנכי עמד בין-יהוה וביניכם בעת ההוא להגיד לכם את-דבר יהוה כי יראתם מפני האיש ולא-עליכם בקר לאמר:**

35

בעת ההוא that אָנֹכִי עִמָּד בֵּין-יְהוָה וּבֵינֵיכֶם בְּעֵת הַהוּא means "in his time/season" and asked the question whether this could refer to an individual person. According to Brown Driver Briggs Lexicon, when the word **הוא** is joined to a substantive the pronoun is translated as being written to refer to the time/season and thus is translated as "that time/season." Therefore, **בעת**

40

1

Hebrew Thesaurus

בעתו

(תה"פ) בזמנו, בזמן המיועד לו, בזמן הנכון, בזמן המתאים, בזמן ההולם, בזמן טוב

ההוא

(מ"ג) הלז, לא זה, זה שם, האדם ששם, האיש משם

Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:1-5

5:1 Then Moses summoned all Israel and said to them: 'Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I am speaking today in your hearing, that you may learn them and observe them carefully. 5:2 'The Lord our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. 5:3 *'The Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, with all those of us alive here today.* 5:4 'The Lord spoke to you face to face at the mountain from the midst of the fire, 5:5 while *I was standing between the Lord and you at that time,* to declare to you the word of the Lord; for you were afraid because of the fire and did not go up the mountain. He said, 5:6 'I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. (NASB)

is translated correctly by the NASB as “at that time.” In addition to this, the masculine pronoun **ההוא** is written to be read as feminine suggesting it is referring to **בעת** and is to be translated as “at that time.” Here Moshe saying-**בין-עמד** illustrates his role as mediator on behalf of the people. A mediator is one who intervenes, is a peacemaker, and intercedes on behalf of two persons. In this case, Moshe stood between the people and between God to speak the Word of the Lord. The one who stands between God and man is understood to function as a type of Messiah to deliver the people from the wrath of God. Based on this text, on what we know about the scriptures, the role of the Messiah is to deliver to the people the Word of the Lord, to redeem the people, and to make atonement for the people saving them from their sins. Note that the Aramaic translation (Targum Onkelos) states in Devarim **5:5** **ה אָנָּא הוּיִתִּיקָאָם בִּין־מִמְרָא־דִּי וּבִינִיכּוֹן בְּעֵדְנָא הֵהִיא לְחֻזָּא לְכוּן יִתְפַּתְנָמָא דִּי אָרִי** **5:5** **ה אָנָּא הוּיִתִּיקָאָם בִּין־מִמְרָא־דִּי וּבִינִיכּוֹן בְּעֵדְנָא הֵהִיא לְחֻזָּא לְכוּן יִתְפַּתְנָמָא דִּי אָרִי** that Moshe stood between the Memra (Word) of the Lord and the people to give to them the Memra of the Lord. Moshe exemplified (served as an example) a type of Moshiach (משיח) in **Shemot / Exodus 32:30-33** when he said to blot out his name if the Lord would not forgive the people’s sin.

שמותפרשת כי תשא ספר פרק לב פסוק ל-לג

ל וַיְהִי מִמָּחֳרָת וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הָעָם אַתֶּם חָטֵאתֶם חַטָּאת גְּדוֹלָה וַעֲתָה אֶעֱלֶה אֶל־יְהוָה אוּלַי אֲכַפְּרֶה בְּעַד חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם: לֹא וַיָּשָׁב מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר אָנָּא חָטָא הָעָם הַזֶּה חַטָּאת גְּדוֹלָה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם אֱלֹהִי זָהָב: לֵב וַעֲתָה אִם־תִּשָׂא חַטֹּאתֵם וְאִם־אֵין מְחַנֵּי נָא מִסִּפְרֶךָ אֲשֶׁר כָּתַבְתָּ: לֵב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה מִי אֲשֶׁר חָטָא־לִי אֶמְחִנּוּ מִסִּפְרִי:

Moshe says **אם תישא** saying **אם-תשא חטאתם ואם-אין מחני נא מספרך אשר כתבת** “if you will carry, lift, bear, endure, or suffer” **חטאתם** “their sin.” Based on the Hebrew text Moshe is asking God to forgive the peoples sin in a very unusual way. The translators of the NASB understood this to mean “if You will forgive their sin” as it is translated in English (NASB version of the Bible). Interestingly, Moshe is asking God to carry, bear, endure, and suffer the sins of the people for them in a way that results in the forgiveness of sins. Does Moshe understand something about the nature and character of God in making this statement asking to forgive the people? Moshe qualifies his statement by saying **ואם-אין** “and if not” **מחני נא מספרך אשר כתבת** “erase/destroy me from your book that you have written.” The word **מחני** comes from the root **למחות** meaning “to destroy, wipe out, and erase.” Moshe asks if God will not forgive their sin; blot his name out of the book of the living. The Lord responds saying **יהוה אל-משה מי אשר** **יהוה אל-משה מי אשר** meaning “the one who sins I will erase/destroy from my book.” The Lord is saying that the individual person who sins will be removed from the book.

In these verses from **Shemot / Exodus 32:30-33**, we see the role of the messiah figure, to make atonement for the people, to be selfless or self sacrificing on behalf of the people, and the Lord’s response that each person is guilty according to their own sins. In addition to this, Moshe stood between the people

Shemot / Exodus 32:30-33
 32:30 On the next day Moses said to the people, ‘You yourselves have committed a great sin; and now I am going up to the Lord, perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.’
 32:31 Then Moses returned to the Lord, and said, ‘Alas, this people has committed a great sin, and they have made a god of gold for themselves. 32:32 ‘But now, if You will, forgive their sin and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written!’
 32:33 The Lord said to Moses, ‘Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book. (NASB)

to speak to them the “Word” of the Lord. Isn’t it interesting that the Messiah would be none other than the “Living Word of God” as the Apostle John says in *John 1:1-14*? In the Targum Onkelos (תרגום אונקלוס ספר דברים פרק ה) on *Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:5* is written in Aramaic אָנָּא הוֹיִתִּיקָאָם בֵּין־מִיָּרְא־דִּיִּי which states that Moshe stood between the “Word of the Lord” and You (the congregation of people). The Aramaic text shows us that as an advocate for the people, Moshe stood between the Word of the Lord in order to deliver the Word of God unto the people. Emphasis is placed in the Aramaic translation on Moshe standing between the “Word of the Lord” and the people and then stating he speaks the Word of the Lord to the people. A parallel is found here in Yeshua, the Word of God became flesh (*John 1:14*) so that Yeshua could deliver God’s Words to us, God’s people (note the various reference in the Ketuvei Shelachim when Yeshua says “my words” *Matthew 24:35, John 8:31, 14:23, 15:7*). In this way, the Word becoming flesh, the Word of God was able to provide atonement on our behalf, and fulfilling what is written of the Lord, and of the Messiah in the Torah where Moshe wrote אִם-תִּשָּׂא תְּשֹׂא תְּטָאֲתָם saying “if you will carry, lift, bear, endure, or suffer” תְּטָאֲתָם “their sin.” Today, God forgives you and me by His Word in Yeshua the Messiah.

Moshe then says to the Lord in *Shemot / Exodus 33:12*, it is written וְאַתָּה יְיָ יָדָעְתָּנוּ בְּשֵׁם וְגַם-מִצָּאתָנוּ חוֹן בְּעֵינֶיךָ that God knows us by name. The knowing by name is a Hebraic way of saying that God knows our ways and our sins. We know this based on the context of the Scriptures in *Shemot / Exodus 33*. It is in this Hebraic way of thinking, Moshe asks to know “your ways” (דרכך) Lord so that he can know God and find favor in God’s eyes.

פִּרְשֵׁת כִּי תִשָּׂא סֵפֶר שְׁמוֹת פֶּרֶק לֵג פִּסּוּק יב-יג

יב וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-יְהוָה רְאֵה אֶתְּהָ אֵימֶר אֵלַי הֲעֵל אֶת-הַעַם הַזֶּה וְאַתָּה לֹא הוֹדַעְתָּנִי אֶת אֲשֶׁר-תִּשְׁלַח עִמִּי וְאַתָּה אֹמְרָת יִדְעִיתִךָ בְּשֵׁם וְגַם-מִצָּאתָנוּ חוֹן בְּעֵינֶיךָ הוֹדַעְנִי נָא אֶת-דְּרֹכֶךָ וְאִדְעֶךָ לְמַעַן אֶמְצָא-חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וּרְאֵה כִּי עַמֶּךָ הֲגוֹי תְּהֵאֶהָ:

Moshe shows us the personal nature of his request in *Shemot 33:12-13* stating (i) “You have not told ‘me’ who You will send with ‘me,’” (ii) “You promised ‘me,’” (iii) “You said ‘I’ found favor in Your sight,” (iv) “if so, if ‘I’ have found favor,” (v) “let ‘me’ know Your ways,” (vi) then ‘I’ will know You,” and (vii) “‘I’ will find favor.” In these two verses, we find Moshe using the personal pronouns “I” and “me” over and over again to illustrate the personal nature of his relationship with God. The Lord promised to maintain intimacy with Moshe because he had found favor in God’s eyes. The parallel of knowing the Name of God (וְאַתָּה אֹמְרָת יִדְעִיתִךָ בְּשֵׁם) in *Shemot 33:12* and knowing your ways so that I can know you (הוֹדַעְנִי נָא אֶת-דְּרֹכֶךָ וְאִדְעֶךָ) in *Shemot 33:13* shows the Hebraic understanding and connection between knowing, believing, and walking (following) in God’s ways. Once we believe by faith in the Lord and His Messiah Yeshua, we are to walk in righteousness and holiness before God as He has shown us according to the Scriptures.

Shemot / Exodus 33:12-13

33:12 Then Moses said to the Lord, ‘See, You say to me, ‘Bring up this people!’ But You Yourself have not let me know whom You will send with me. Moreover, You have said, ‘I have known you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight.’ 33:13 ‘Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight. Consider too, that this nation is Your people.’ (NASB)

135 According to the Hebrew text from *Devarim / Deuteronomy 5* and *Shemot / Exodus 32* and *33*, a very interesting observation can be made. Moshe writes that the Lord told him that he has found favor in God's eyes. Then, Moshe states that "if I have found favor in your eyes, cause me to know Your ways so that I
 140 can know You." According to these scriptures, the Torah is given to us to instruct us on how to live before God in holiness and righteousness. It is interesting that in the sequence of events, observance of the Torah was never intended as a way of good works that one might complete to earn the status of "righteousness." The Torah was given as a "way of life" (*Romans 7:10*) and most importantly it was
 145 given as a way of life for a people already redeemed. The Lord did not say to Yisrael in Mitzrayim (Egypt) "Here is my Torah, now if you keep it perfectly for a year or two, then I will liberate you from your slavery." Rather, God said "I am delivering you now because I promised Abraham I would do so, then when, and only when I have done so, I will give you the way of life that you will need for
 150 when you come into your promised land." (*"Justification: God's Plan & Paul's Vision," N. T. Wright 2009, IVP Academic, 279 pages*) Based on these scriptures, the Torah was never given or intended as a means for an individual (or a nation) to earn salvation, freedom from slavery, and redemption, through obedience. The scriptures show us that the gift of salvation, deliverance, and redemption always precedes that of living and walking in God's ways according to the Scriptures. The Torah becomes a way of life for a people already redeemed!

Let's look at a portion of text from the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) from *2 Corinthians 5:17-21*:

155 **Η ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΚΟΡΙΝΘΙΟΥΣ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ 5:17-21**

155 ¹⁷ὥστε εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις: τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά: ¹⁸τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς, ¹⁹ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς. ²⁰ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν: δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ. ²¹τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ.

165 According to the Greek text *5:18* τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς, it says "*And all things are of God, of the reconciling us to Himself through Jesus Christ and having given to us the service of reconciliation.*" Verse *5:19* says ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς. "*how that God was in Christ the world reconciling to Himself not imputing to them their transgressions and having put in us the word of reconciliation.*" It is interesting here that Rav Shaul (Apostle Paul) is saying that (i) all things are of God of the reconciling us to Himself through Yeshua and (ii) He has given us to the service of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. 5:18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 5:19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 5:20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (NASB)

Notice the order of the events here in this verse. God has reconciled us in Yeshua, the gift of life has been given in Yeshua the Messiah. Then, following the giving of the gift, He gives us the service of reconciliation, that service is living for the Lord demonstrating God's miraculous power to save us from sin. Paul goes on to say in **5:19** to emphasize the giving of the gift of life saying (i) God was in Christ the world reconciling to Himself and (ii) He put the Word of reconciliation into us. Paul goes on to explain that we are now ambassadors of God literally saying "God appealing through us" (*ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν*) meaning that on believing in Yeshua, God places His words in our hearts, our lives change, and we become a completely new person, as Paul says in **5:17**, we become a new creation, and God lives in and works through us. This process of transformation results in "God appealing through us" to the world. Does your life exhibit God appealing/working in and through you? Paul finishes with saying *τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ.* ***"For the one not knowing sin for us a sin offering he made that we should be righteousness of God by him."*** God worked in Yeshua and now He works in us. According to **2 Corinthians 5:17-21**, in Yeshua we are righteous before God, God has given us the gift of life by making Yeshua a sin offering on our behalf and we become new creations. The Torah principle that we find here at work is that the gift of God precedes everything else, purely because of God's faithfulness to His promises He has made to us. Moshe wrote about the Messiah that the Lord would bear our iniquities and forgive us our sins (***Shemot / Exodus 32:32***). Moshe showed us the role of the Messiah (***Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:5***), to deliver, save, make atonement, and redeem the children of God. God sent His Word, to save us from our sins. Yeshua characteristically fulfilled this role that Moshe so clearly stated in the Scriptures. When we receive the gift of God by faith, we are redeemed, saved, and have life everlasting based on the Lord God bearing our sins in Yeshua the living Word of God. Praise the Lord, what a wonderful savior we have! As a people who are redeemed have you ever asked the question Moshe asked in ***Shemot / Exodus 33***? ***"Lord show me Your ways, so that I might know You and find favor in Your eyes!"*** We know that we cannot earn forgiveness and salvation; both are the gifts of God. Scripture tells us in ***Romans 6:12*** saying ***"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?"*** In Romans, Paul describes the attitude that Moshe had when faced with the great sin the people committed at Har Sinai and khet ha'egel, the sin of the golden calf. ***"Lord show me Your ways so that I might know You,"*** Moshe is telling us, according to the Scriptures, to seek the Lord and most importantly to seek the salvation the Lord God has provided us in the Messiah Yeshua. Yeshua showed us God's ways and by faith, we die to sin and no longer are to walk in sin but to live a life that is wholly dedicated to God. Do you believe what Moshe wrote concerning the Messiah? Have you placed your faith in Yeshua for the forgiveness of your sins? If you have not, let's pray.

225 Heavenly Father,

I have studied Your Words found in the Torah and see what Moshe has said about Your Messiah. Help me to understand the meaning of these Scriptures and the gift You have provided for me in Your son Yeshua. Please forgive me of my sins, have mercy on me because of what Yeshua has done on my behalf. I believe what is written about Yeshua in the Torah and what is written in *2 Corinthians 5:21*, Yeshua is my atoning sacrifice. I believe Yeshua died for my sins and that He is the promised Messiah! Cleanse me from all sin Lord in Yeshua's name. I want to grow and I want to be filled with all of You Lord. Help me to know You in the covenant You have made with me in Yeshua the Messiah. Help me to live according to Your will as it is laid out in the Scriptures. Sanctify me in Your holy Word Lord and in Your Son Yeshua. Thank You Lord for everything You have done for me. I give You the glory, the honor, and the praise forever and ever.

240 In Yeshua's (Jesus') Name I pray!

Amen

245

250 **What to pray:**

- *Ask the Lord to help you understand what Moshe wrote about the Messiah in the Torah..*
- *Ask the Lord to help you seek His ways. To set your feet on the path of righteousness as He has defined, and to begin walking in the spirit by the power of His Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit).*
- *Thank the Lord for lifting the burden of sin and revealing His truth in your heart.*

265 **Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!**

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