

פרשת נצבים האזינו / Parashat Ha'azinu

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The Foundation of our Faith

This Weeks Reading List:

Torah: Numbers Deut 32:1-32:52

Haftarah: 2 Samuel 22:1-51

B'rit HaChadashah: Romans 10:14-11:12

This parsha really sort of begins at the conclusion of Parashat Vayelech with a rather depressing prediction in Deuteronomy 31:14-17. God summons Moshe and Yehoshua (Joshua) to the "ohel mo'ed" (Tabernacle), to inform them that Yehoshua can expect the worst:

Deuteronomy 31:14-17

31:14 ADONAI said to Moshe, "The time is coming for you to die. Summon Y'hoshua, and present yourselves in the tent of meeting, so that I can commission him." Moshe and Y'hoshua went and presented themselves in the tent of meeting. 31:15 ADONAI appeared in the tent in a column of cloud; the column of cloud stood above the entrance to the tent. 31:16 ADONAI said to Moshe, "You are about to sleep with your ancestors. But this people will get up and offer themselves as prostitutes to the foreign gods of the land where they are going. When they are with those gods, they will abandon me and break my covenant which I have made with them. 31:17 Then my anger will flare up, and I will abandon them and hide my face from them. They will be devoured, and many calamities and troubles will come upon them. Then they will ask, 'Haven't these calamities come upon us because our God isn't here with us?' (CJB)

The covenant that God is making with his people isn't only about privileges and promises of protection, rather it is about our responsibilities and obligations we have as a result of our representing Him here on earth. The way we can ensure our representing God as a holy nation is by setting up the correct foundation for our faith.

In structural engineering, a foundation is used to transfer a load from a structure through a series of layers. Different types of deep foundations include piles, drilled shafts, caissons, and piers, to concrete block in a residential home. The foundation is usually embedded in a few feet of soil; pads of concrete or other materials which extend below the frost line and transfer the weight from walls and columns to the soil or bedrock below. A good foundation is designed to distribute an adequate load capacity with limited settlement upon aging. The primary design concern for foundation is to ensure throughout the life of the structure (building) there will be adequate bearing capacity so the building stands. In a similar manner we need to have a sure foundation in our faith so that under times of trouble we can stand and remain faithful to God.

In this weeks parasha we find an interesting correlation in God's prediction that Beni Yisrael (children of Israel) would forsake the Rock that fathered them. The foundation or rock is God, and his Holy Word.

Deuteronomy 32:18

*32:18 You ignored the **Rock** who fathered you, you forgot God, who gave you birth.*

Deuteronomy 32:31

32:31 For our enemies have no rock like our Rock -even they can see that!

Our enemies who are not part of God's kingdom by faith do not have a solid foundation (Rock) like we do, as is written in Deuteronomy 32:31. Yeshua understood this, the importance of building our faith upon a solid foundation as he explains in Matthew 7:24-29.

Matthew 7:24-29

7:24 "So, everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on bedrock. 7:25 The rain fell, the rivers flooded, the winds blew and beat against that house, but it didn't collapse, because its foundation was on rock. 7:26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a stupid man who built his house on sand. 7:27 The rain fell, the rivers flooded, the wind blew and beat against that house, and it collapsed -- and its collapse was horrendous!" 7:28 When Yeshua had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at the way he taught, 7:29 for he was not instructing them like their Torah-teachers but as one who had authority himself. (CJB)

Yeshua taught on the issue of having a secure and sure foundation, one that is not built upon sand rather one that is build upon a solid rock. The foundation is that of the Word of God and having the truth written upon our hearts. In this we can be certain we will not sway in the wind, back and forth, towards every wind and doctrine that comes along our way as well as not failing in our faith when trouble comes our way. The solid foundation we stand upon demonstrates the beauty of the revelation of God in that real authentic faith is marked by ones actions more than doctrinal statements. A regenerated life that has been touched by God's spirit through grace and faith results in the fruit of the spirit (*Matt7:20*), a renewed mind (*Romans 12:1-2*), and obedience to God's word (*John 14:15, 1 John 2:3-6*). In conclusion, the foundation of our faith can be summarized from scripture in the following outline.

Foundation of our Faith

- We believe in one God, as He has revealed Himself in the Scriptures. "Sh'ma, Yisra'el! ADONAI Eloheinu, ADONAI echad [Hear, Isra'el! ADONAI our God, ADONAI is one]; and you are to love ADONAI your God with all your heart, all your being and all your resources. (*Deuteronomy 6:4-5*)
- Yeshua is the Son of God, the Messiah, the Eternal One in Whom all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form, and who is the Word who became flesh and dwelt

- among us, and whose glory we beheld, the glory of the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth. (*John 1:1-14; 1 Timothy 3:16; Colossians 2:9*)
- The Spirit of God comforts, teaches leads, indwells and empowers all whom God regenerates. (*Acts 9:31; 1 John 2:27; John 16:13; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Timothy 1:7*)
 - The Bible, both the Tanach and the B'rit Hachadashah (New Testament), are the inspired and authoritative Word of God. (*2 Timothy 3:16-17*)
 - We believe that all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)
 - Yeshua's death and resurrection accomplished the atonement for all who place their faith in Him. Whoever trusts in God, in His work alone, is made a new creation in Yeshua, and is transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His own Son. (*Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 5, 6*)
 - Salvation is by faith through the grace of God and not by human efforts. One may not earn, merit or keep this eternal salvation by his own efforts. (*Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 8:29-39*)
 - The spiritual unity and equality of all believers is achieved in Yeshua the Messiah. Forgiveness of our brothers and sisters is foundational for unity in God's holy community. (*Ephesians 2:11-22*)
 - The continuity of God's covenants with the Jewish people, the physical people of Israel (*Jeremiah 31:35-36*). Part of the fulfillment of these covenants is the physical return of the Jewish people to their Promised Land Israel. (*Deuteronomy 30*)
 - All non-Jewish people who trust in Yeshua are grafted into Israel by God's grace and mercy. While this does not make them Jewish, however, they are full and equal participants in the covenants of promise. (*Ephesians 2:12; Romans 11:11-24; Jeremiah 31:33*)
 - The Torah is a revelation of the righteousness of God to His people. The torah is for all people and a description of the lifestyle of the redeemed community. (*Matthew 5:17-19; 2 Timothy 3:16-17*)
 - The literal and physical return of Messiah to rule and reign upon the throne of David in Jerusalem is eminent therefore we need to be ready for Yeshua's return. (*Zechariah 14; Revelation 19-20*)

Bringing people back to the Torah, that foundation of the scriptures, and understanding the Jewishness of our faith will help to lead us into a fuller and more

complete understanding of our faith in Yeshua HaMoshiach. Application of these Torah truths is an awesome way to enjoy a rich and full life in Moshiach, one that blesses both God and everyone around us.

Be Blessed in Yeshua the Messiah

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
“Yeshua” King Messiah for ever and ever