



Parshas Re'eh 2021, the path from failure

This week's Parsha Perspective is in loving memory of Edward Ben Efraim & Shlomo Ben Edward. May their souls be uplifted & their memories a blessing for their families.

This week's Parsha Perspective is dedicated in honor of Henna Berger's 5th birthday! May G-d bless her with much health and happiness!

Our Parsha continues Moshe's final address to the Jewish people. He informs the nation that depending on their actions, they can be beneficiaries of blessings or curses. The blessings will come if they obey G-d's commandments. However, suppose they defy G-d's laws; they will feel the depth of His anger, Heaven forbid. Moshe then commands that they proclaim these blessings and curses on Mt. Gerizim and Eval as they enter the land of Israel.

Moshe then repeats many laws and commandments, the laws of Maser Sheni, the laws of Shmita, a list of Kosher birds, fish and mammals, and various Kosher laws. The laws of a False Prophet, the Mitzvah of charity, and laws about the holidays.

However, a question comes to mind: At the beginning of chapter 14, Moshe tells the Jewish people how special they are to G-d. *"You are all children of G-d, and you shall not gash yourselves or shave your heads because of the dead."* What is the connection between the law of not slashing oneself and the fact that we are the children of G-d?

The Ibn Ezra, Rav Avraham Ben Meir Ibn Ezra, answers this question by looking at the mourning practices of the nations living in Cana'an. One of their common customs when grieving for the dead is to cut themselves and shave their foreheads.

Moshe is telling us that we are children of G-d; therefore, we are not allowed to follow the habits and traditions of other nations. As the next Pasuk explains,(14:2), *“For you are a holy people to G-d. He has chosen you to be a treasured people for Him out of all the nations of the world.”*

However, the Netziv (*Rav Naftali Tzvi Yeudah Berlin, whose Yahrzeit/Day of passing is this Friday, the 28th of Av*) gives a deeper and more profound explanation. He clarifies that the link between not cutting oneself and being the children of G-d is our belief and trust in G-d. When a tragic event like the passing of a loved one occurs, Heaven forbid, we must turn to G-d for guidance and comfort. G-d is the only real source of solace and comfort, for He is our creator and father in Heaven.

The Torah gives us a method and approach to deal with the loss of life, such as seven days of mourning and memorial services. But when they conclude, we are meant to try and live life once again. We are not allowed to harm or sabotage ourselves, for we still have a mission from G-d to complete.

The Netziv explains that Moshe is telling Jewish people in his final days that if we experience tragedy, we can not let it define us. **We are not allowed to leave permanent marks of misery and sorrow, so we avoid identifying ourselves with it.** Instead, we must look up to our Father in Heaven and beg Him to eliminate our suffering and remove our pain.

In our daily life, when we hit that inevitable bump in the road, we must learn from it rather than identify ourselves with it. We must recognize that we are not our failures or mistakes; quite the contrary! Human beings are created to **attempt and endeavor** to find their path and purpose in this world.

The ability to disassociate oneself from their faults and errors is the difference between inventors and imitators. Only one realizes what they actually are and judges themselves accordingly.

“Our greatest glory is not never failing, but in rising every time, we fail.”

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*