



Parshas V'eschanan 2019, the consequence of our actions

This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of the Refuah Shlema of HaRav Amitai Ben Shoshanna, Leah Mintche Bas Gittel and Shaul Ben Berta.

This week's Parsha Perspective is in loving memory of Edward Ben Efraim, Shlomo Ben Edward, and Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia.

Our Parsha continues with Moshe's final address to the Jewish people. He tells them that if they follow the Torah's path and keep the Mitzvahs, they will be blessed above all people. He reminds them that they did not inherit the land due to their own righteousness. But because of the promise G-d made to our forefathers.

Moshe recounts how he broke the Luchos on his way down from Har Sinai when he saw them sinning with the Golden Calf. He also tells them the second paragraph of the Shema; where we are told the physical rewards that we will receive for observing the Torah or the consequences if we don't, Heaven Forbid.

A question comes to mind: We see throughout the Torah that when Moshe asked G-d for mercy on the Jewish people, his prayers were usually answered. He saved the Jewish nation from destruction by the sin of the Golden Calf, by the fatal episode of the Spies and many other times. Why didn't G-d answer Moshe's prayers and allow him into the promised land?

Furthermore, it says in Gemora in Moad Katan (16b) that a Tzaddik can abolish negative decrees, which is the reason we seek blessings from them. So why did G-d not answer the prayers of the greatest Tzaddik and let him enter the land that he fought for so vigorously?!

There are different opinions on what exactly Moshe did to be denied entry into the land. Rashi explains that it was because he hit the rock. The Rambam says it was because Moshe got angry and spoke harshly to the Jewish people.

G-d is merciful and kind; however, he is also just. Since Moshe was on a lofty level of spirituality, his action was scrutinized with a finer tooth and comb. Despite Moshe's best intentions, the word of G-d was not followed in the manner that was expected of him; therefore, he was not allowed into the land of Israel.

G-d did not answer Moshe's prayers because Moshe was responsible for his actions, and his actions carried consequences regardless of the intentions. We see in Parshas Shlach, (15:32) that when a man was caught gathering wood on Shabbos, he was killed. Even though his intention was only to show the Jewish people what is not allowed to be done on Shabbos, he still had to pay the consequences for his actions.

This is why Moshe repeats the Ten Commandments to the Jewish people; he tells us always to follow G-d's path because we have the freedom to choose. Therefore, we are responsible for all our actions regardless of intentions; some actions can carry grave consequences.

In our daily lives, it is imperative we understand that our actions, no matter how big or small, have real value; this is both an amazing privilege and a great responsibility.

Therefore, to be successful in any part of your life, you must be able to analyze your behavior. If done correctly, you will see if your actions are helping you or holding you back from reaching your goals, dreams and ultimately, your potential.

"We all make choices, but in the end our choices make us."

Have a meaningful Shabbos!

Rabbi Sholom Yemini