

Ekev: Ramp Up Your Home Base - a blessing to all (תש"פ)

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Perek Chet of *Parshat Ekev* opens with *Moshe Rabbeinu* addressing כלל ישראל, the Jewish People, regarding their history, what they're facing in the present, and where they will be going in the future. The *pesukim* read:

And remember the entire way in which the Lord, your G-d led you these forty years in the desert in order to afflict you, to test you, to know what is in your heart; whether you would keep His commandments, or not. And He afflicted you, and let you go hungry, and then fed you with manna that you did not know, and that your forefathers did not know, so that He would make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but whatever comes forth from the mouth of the Lord, G-d, does man live. (8:2-4, ח:ב-ד)

In the *Netziv's* footnotes, known as the *Harchev Davar*, he refers to a *pasuk* in *Tehillim* that relates to our Parsha:

ה' יִתֵּן-אֶמֶר הַמְּבֹשֵׁר וְזֶה צָבָא רָב: מַלְכֵי צָבָאוֹת יִדְּוּ וְיִדְּוּ וְנָתַתְּ בְּיַד תְּחִלָּה שָׁלֵל
My Master gives promise; is harbingers are a great host: Kings of armies flee; and that dwells within the house apportions the spoils (Psalms 68: 12-13, יב-יג, תהלים סח).

The *Netziv* comments that the prayers and *brachot* will be the source of blessing to all of the world's nations wherein the Jews dwell. The Jewish family, those that dwell within the house, is what the phrase נָתַתְּ בְּיַד is referring to. When it says ה' יִתֵּן אֶמֶר, it should be understood as ה' יִתֵּן יְאֶמֶר - *yomar*, in place of *omer* - ie *tefillot* and *brachot*, prayer and blessing. The *Netziv* is writing that the *tefillot* and the *brachot* will be a source of blessing for the entire world; the *nevat bayit*, נָתַתְּ בֵּית, is unique to the Jewish family.

The *Netziv* concludes his comment in the *Harchev Davar*:

נמצא שביאר הנביא הליכות חיי ישראל בזמן שאינם בארץ ישראל הוא ע"י שהקב"ה יתן אומר המשפיע ברכה

The directions and the style of the Jewish people when they're not dwelling in *Eretz Yisrael* will be because *Hashem* gives the influence of *brachot*.

In essence, the *Netziv* is imparting the concept of הקב"ה's everlasting message to the People of Israel and to all of the world - the Jewish people lived in the desert supernaturally for forty years, and they'll continue on to survive wondrously if they remember the concept of נָתַתְּ בֵּית, *nevat bayit*, what is unique about the Jewish home. When that happens, your prayers and *brachot* will not exist only inside your house, but rather continue on to proliferate and impact the entire world.

תהלים סח:יג-יד/ Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch comments on Psalms 68:13-14:

God has sounded forth His promise to mankind, “Kings of hosts, despite all their power, will quickly depart from the proscenium of history,” says the Lord. But “she who dwells within the house”; namely, the nation which fulfills its destiny in the quiet, simple practice of the “home virtues,” will emerge victoriously in the end of time, and will distribute the “booty” of its victory. Even the purely cultural achievements in the arts and sciences recorded by the other nations will have true and beneficial value only if they are coupled with virtues taught and practiced by this בית, and only if they are used as means to the fulfillment of those ends that are part of the Divine plan for man’s destiny.

Perhaps the silver lining in this coronavirus outbreak, and specifically in its quarantine, is a message to the entire world, that is predominantly focused toward the Jewish people. It’s an important message that has been somewhat lost. That is, reinvigorate the *nevat bayit*; make your home a healthy one! Through the vehicle of this chapter of *Tehillim*, הקב”ה is establishing that taking these actions will be a blessing for you and the entire world.

This is an extension of עם לבדד ישכון, ‘a nation that dwells in solitude’ (במדבר/Numbers 24:8), and strongly relates to our current time period where we continue to spend more time in our homes. Let’s make our homes a place of strong relationships, and share with your family love, Torah concepts, and ideals. Mankind at large is perplexed, so let us have our People become the guiding light who will show the world the true way to salvation, via the *nevat bayit*.

Kings of armies flee, and she who dwells and nurtures the home will be the salvation for the entire world; בעזרת ה' בקרוב בימינו.

אמן!