

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RABBI YITZI

לרפואה שלימה ליוסף יצחק בן ברכה

CHOL HAMO'ED SUKKOT

The War Which Will End All Wars

On Shabbos Chol Hamoed Sukkos, the Haftora is from Yechezkel (Ezekiel), and about the war of Gog and Magog, which will be the prelude to the coming of Moshiach. It is followed by Yechezkel's vision of the Third Temple. (Note: There is a Chasidic tradition that this war may not need to occur, being that this exile has been so prolonged).

In the Haftora, Gog, king of Magog, together with his allies, which is understood to mean the whole world (as is hinted in the numerical value of the words Gog uMagog, which equals seventy - the number of nations originally counted in the Torah, and therefore represents the nations of the world), will converge on Yerushalayim.

The Haftora now describes what Hashem will do to Gog, Magog, his allies, and the lands that support the war. There will be an earthquake, fires, and much more. The armies that will converge on Israel will be so vast that their weapons will provide fuel for seven years, and it will take seven months to bury all their dead.

After this war, hatred towards the Jewish people will cease, as all their opponents will be gone. It will be the war that will end all wars, and everyone will accept Hashem as their God.

SUKKOS IS A TIME TO HARVEST ALL THE SPIRITUAL ENERGIES OF THE HIGH HOLIDAYS.

signifies Hashem's acceptance of the Jewish people after the sin of the golden calf. This event can be seen as a new era of greatness and closeness between Hashem and the Jewish people. Our Haftora also speaks of the acceptance of the Jewish people following this dark exile, which was brought on us, as we say in the holiday prayers, "because of our sin." The difference between then and now is that the acceptance after the golden calf was followed by an exile. However, when Moshiach comes, the acceptance will be complete, not to be followed by another exile.

Another connection is that according to many, the war

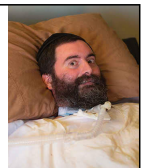
of Gog and Magog will happen during the month of Tishrei. But why read it on Sukkos? Because in the Haftora of the first day of Sukkos, it speaks of the same war and mentions that the gentiles will have to keep the holiday of Sukkos. Another reason is that our Haftora tells about the transformation of the nations of the world, and on Sukkos, 70 sacrifices were brought for the nations of the world.

However, I feel that the main reason is because Sukkos is the holiday of the harvest, when we gather all the produce we toiled so hard for. On a spiritual level, we start to gather in the spiritual benefits of our efforts throughout the month of Elul, the High Holidays, and the Ten Days of Teshuva. After the war of Gog and Magog, we will reap the benefits of our toil in this dark exile and we will be forever together with Hashem.

We are left with a question. I understand the connection between the Haftora and Sukkos, but why read it on Shabbos Chol Hamoed. Why not read it on the first day of Sukkos? Because the message of the Haftora, while being connected to Sukkos, it is not an annually recurring theme of the holiday. Being that Shabbos Chol Hamoed doesn't occur every year (for example, when the first day of Sukkos is Shabbos, there is no Shabbos Chol Hamoed), it is the perfect time to have a message that connects to the holiday but is not recurring.

This Haftora is about the coming of Moshiach, which we don't need to be recurring. We just need it to happen once. With or without a war, may he come soon.

Despite facing one of life's most difficult challenges, Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz continues to spread joy and faith to thousands around the globe. Diagnosed in 2012 with ALS, Rabbi Yitzi is now 95% paralyzed and no longer able to speak or breath on his own. Thanks to the miracle of technology, Rabbi Yitzi continues to spread his wisdom through his eyes, focusing on each and every letter of these Torah articles. Rabbi Yitzi, his wife Dina and their seven children are the Rebbe's Shluchim to Temecula, California.



**WISHING YOU AND
YOURS A HAPPY AND
HEALTHY SUKKOS!**

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