

# WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RABBI YITZI

לרפואה שלימה ליוסף יצחק בן ברכה

## PARSHAT VAYIGASH

### One Nation Under Yehuda

The Haftora for Parshas Vayigash is a prophecy of our prophet Yechezkel (Ezekiel) about the uniting of the two kingdoms, Yehuda and Yisrael, in the time of Moshiach.

The Haftora begins with Hashem speaking to Yechezkel, "Take one stick of wood and write on it Yehuda..., and take one stick of wood and write on it Efraim... Bring them close to each other, like one stick, and they will become one in your hand." Then Hashem tells him that when people will ask, what are these sticks to you? He should tell them, "So says Hashem..., behold I am taking the stick of Yosef, which is in the hand of Efraim..., and I will put together with them, the stick of Yehuda, and I will make them into one stick."

Then, the Haftora describes how Hashem will gather all the Jewish people from wherever they are. He will unite them into one nation, "No longer will they be divided into two kingdoms."

This division is first seen in our parsha with the confrontation between Yosef and Yehuda, "And he stepped close to him (to Yosef)." This is the event that

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brought us down to Egypt, as Yosef revealed himself to his brothers, telling them to move down to Egypt. Yosef and Yehuda are symbolic of two ways in Jewish life: intellect and action, or in other terms, Torah and mitzvahs. There is a Talmudic debate on which is greater, study or action. They conclude that study is greater because it brings to action.

The Haftora continues with Hashem saying that when we become one nation, "My servant David will be king over them." Then later He says, "David My servant will be a Nassi to them forever." This is saying that ultimately David will be the one king over Yosef as well, meaning, that when Moshiach comes, action will

be greater than study. How does this work?

From the statement that "Study is greater because it brings to action," we understand that the point is the action, only that the way to the action is through study. Therefore, today, study is most important. However, when Moshiach comes, the revelation will be so great, that it itself will bring us to action, even without the study. The importance of action was well understood by our ancestors when receiving the Torah at Mount Sinai. They said, "We will do, and we will listen." First they said "do," meaning action, and only after that they said "listen," which is study.

Yechezkel's prophecy differs from all other prophecies in a few ways. First, by other prophecies, the job of the prophet was to tell the prophecy to the people right away. However, here, he had to get sticks and write on them, and only after he was asked about what he was doing was he to tell them Hashem's message.

Why the whole display with the sticks? Every good prophecy comes true, although sometimes, we don't get to witness them because they only actualize in the spiritual realms. This happens when we become unworthy due to our sins. The prophecy gets stuck, unable to descend into the physical. This is what Yaakov was afraid of when he was going to confront his brother Eisav, not that Hashem's promise of protection wouldn't come true, but rather, that perhaps because of something he did, it would not come into the physical.

By Hashem commanding the action of bringing the two physical sticks together, He was ensuring that nothing would block the prophecy, as it has already entered the physical realm.

What are we meant to learn from the people asking Yechezkel about the two sticks? The Baal Shem Tov taught that a Jew must learn a lesson about his service to Hashem from everything he sees. Here is a clear indication from the Tanach that this is, in fact, the case and therefore, the natural tendency of Jewish people.

In the two verses about David, there are differences



that beg for explanation, and answering them will give us more of an understanding of what King Moshiach's leadership will be like.

The first verse calls him "My servant David." The second verse calls him "David, My servant." The first verse calls him a king, and the second says that he will be a Nassi, which is the highest position of leadership beneath the king. The first says he will be king "over" them, while the other says that he will be Nassi "to" them. The second verse says that he will be Nassi to them "forever," and the first verse says nothing like that.

When the Talmud discusses the Davids in these verses, it says about the first that it is referring to another David, but about the second, it says that it refers to King David. It also explains that it is like Caesar and the second to Caesar. How many kings will there be? And why does the Talmud call them Caesar and the second to Caesar, Roman terms? Why not use the Hebrew?

The explanation. King Moshiach will be one person, but his leadership will take two forms. First, he will be a king, bringing law and order. He is called "another David" because he will be different than David. As the Rambam explains, that he will fight the wars of Hashem, and bring the whole world to follow Hashem's will. This is something that is extraordinary, that has never happened before, an end to war, jealousy, etc. He will be king "over" them because law and order is done even by force.

Why will he have the ability to effect such amazing change? Because of his subservience to Hashem, which will allow Hashem's presence to shine through and make this change possible. That's why he is called "My servant David" here, with the word "servant" first, because it is specifically his subservience to Hashem that will change the world.

Now we can understand why they use the term Caesar. Tosafos explains why Roman kings were called Caesar.

There was a pregnant woman who died, they cut open her belly and found the baby alive. He later became king of Rome, and being that the word for a cesarean (C-section) in Roman (Latin) is caesar, that was adopted as the title of Roman kings. In Hebrew, a cesarean is called a yotzai dofen, which means one that exits through a wall. The expression yotzai dofen, is also used for something that is out of the ordinary. Being that Moshiach will do the extraordinary, the term Caesar, is used.

Once the world will be changed, the king form won't be necessary anymore. That is when the Nassi mode of Moshiach will begin. Nassi was the term used for the head of the Sanhedrin, the chief teacher of Torah. As the Rambam explains, Moshiach will be wiser than Solomon and teach Torah at a new level, as in

the era of Moshiach, there will be a great thirst for the knowledge of Hashem. This will be the purpose of Moshiach to teach Torah. Though his teaching will be at a level never experienced before, it is nevertheless Torah, which is never changing. You can go deeper, but the whole of Torah was given at Mount Sinai, not to be changed. So, in this capacity, Moshiach will be special but not completely unique and extraordinary. That's why he is called "David My servant," David first, because here he will be like David and the kings after him.

Now we can understand why it says that he will be a Nassi "to" them. Because as a teacher, he will be close to the people and rule, not from a position of power, but from a position of acceptance. As there will be no more need for power because law and order will be natural.

Being that a law and order king won't be necessary anymore, Moshiach's position of Nassi will be "forever," and our only yearning will be for deeper and deeper understanding of Hashem and his Torah.

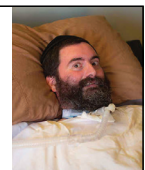
And as the Haftora concludes, "I will make for them a covenant of peace, an everlasting covenant..., and I will put My Sanctuary in their midst forever. And My presence will be upon them, and I will be to them as G-d, and they will be to me as a nation. And the nations will know that I Am Hashem Who sanctifies Israel when My Sanctuary will be in their midst forever." May it happen soon.

*"Dear Rabbi Yitzi,  
Thank you for inviting me into your home today. I had a wonderful and inspiring day. I look forward to visiting you again."*

- Lonnie M, California

RABBI YITZI WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU! SEND YOUR MESSAGE TO:  
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*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.*



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