

# WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RABBI YITZI

לרפואה שלימה ליוסף יצחק בן ברכה

## PARSHAT ACHAREI

### Supporting The Fallen

The Haftora for Parshas Acharei (and Acharei-Kedoshim when they are together) is a prophecy from our prophet Amos.

Hashem says that we are to Him like the children of Cush, Ethiopia, and how he took us out of Egypt. Then He speaks of the destruction of the sinful kingdom, meaning the kingdom of Efraim, the Ten Northern Tribes, but He promises that He will not wipe out the house of Yaakov. This is Hashem's guarantee that we will always remain as the Jewish people through the exile. He continues to say that He will spread us among all the nations, but we will remain Jewish, "Just as a pebble shakes back and forth in a sieve, but does not fall to the ground." Meaning, though we will bounce around the whole world, we will retain our connection to Hashem.

Now, the Haftora starts to speak of what it will be like when the redemption will come. The two Jewish kingdoms will be united under the rebuilt monarchy of David, as it once was. The nations that wished to destroy us will instead serve us. There will be an abundance of food. Our destroyed cities will be rebuilt, and we will inhabit them and never be uprooted ever again.

#### **TZEDAKA IS THE MITZVAH OF THE END OF DAYS, RELEASING US FROM THE DARKNESS.**

The connection to parshas Acharei (and Acharei-Kedoshim when they are together) is that the parsha(s) tell us that if we will act in the sinful and debased manner of the Egyptians or the Canaanite nations that were in Israel before us, we will be spit out of the land, into exile. Similarly, the Haftora tells us that because of our sins, Hashem will spread us among all the nations.

Most of the Haftora is complementary to the Jewish

people and about the redemption. The same is true about the parshas.

Acharei tells us about the service of Yom Kippur, which was done in the holiest place, on the holiest day, and by the holiest person, the Kohen Gadol. It is a day of atonement and forgiveness, bringing us closer to Hashem. The laws found in this parsha are to retain this level of holiness and closeness.

Kedoshim is all about us being holy; we are meant to be a holy and distinguished nation. However, Parshas Kedoshim takes a different approach, telling us laws of honesty, respect, purity, and decency as a way of being holy and getting closer to Hashem.

Acharei speaks to a Tzadik who is at the level of Yom Kippur. Kedoshim is speaking to us who think "I am not a Tzadik. What do you expect of me?" Kedoshim is saying that there is holiness to be found in honesty, respect, purity, and decency. The fact that most years Acharei and Kedoshim are read together is to teach us that these two paths to Hashem are actually one. If you start with honesty, respect, purity, and decency, you will eventually reach the holiness of Yom Kippur.

Why does Hashem say that we are to Him like the children of Cush, Ethiopia? The first time this term is used is in the Torah, about Moshe's wife Tzipora; it says, "The Cushite woman that he married." Rashi explains that she wasn't from Ethiopia, rather it was a term used to say that she was very beautiful.

In our verse, Rashi explains it in a negative context. Hashem is explaining why he will be punishing the Ten Northern Tribes. It is a reference to a verse in Yirmiyahu, "Will a Cushite change his skin, or a leopard its spots? So will you be able to improve." Meaning, that even if you say that you will repent, it won't be believed.



Others explain it in a positive light that Hashem is explaining why He made us His nation upon the Exodus from Egypt, mentioned later in the verse. Ethiopians are known to be very loyal, so too, we will serve Hashem for eternity. Even more, because of the color of their skin, Ethiopians stand out. So too we will always stand out as Hashem's people, no matter where we are. Being that we weren't afraid to stand out and we didn't intermarry throughout our 210 years in Egypt, when the time for the Exodus came, we were clearly recognized as the Jewish people, Hashem's nation.

The Haftora turns to the subject of Moshiach. Hashem says, "On that day, I will erect David's fallen sukka." What is David's fallen sukka?

The simple meaning is that the kingdom of David will be re-established.

The Talmud tells us that Moshiach is called "bar Nafli," the son of the nofel, the fallen. A nofel is a child that dies before turning the age of one month. Why is Moshiach called "bar Nafli?" because David, who is the father of Moshiach, was supposed to die after three hours of life. However, Hashem showed Adam all the people who would come from him. When he saw that David would only live three hours, he gave up 70 years of his own life to David. Nofel, fallen, is hinted at in the words, "David's fallen sukka."

On a deeper level, David's fallen sukka refers to us, the Jewish people, who, from the time of receiving the Torah at Mount Sinai until the end of the First Temple era, had a close and open relationship with Hashem. It was a face-to-face relationship, meaning, that we experienced Hashem openly. But now we have fallen into exile, where we don't experience a face-to-face relationship with Hashem; it is only with great effort that we feel anything at all.

On an even deeper level, it refers to the Shechina, which went with us into exile. Meaning that instead of the Shechina affecting us from above, inspiring us, as it did before the exile. Now, the Shechina is found in the most physical things, and it is up to us to uncover the G-dliness through our Torah and mitzvahs.

And now, at the end of the exile, the main way to release the Shechina and ourselves from the exile is through the mitzvah of tzedaka of which our great sages said, "Israel will be redeemed only through tzedaka." Even though our sages equated tzedaka with Torah study, it was at a time when we had the great sages of the Mishnah and the Talmud,

but our Torah study today is not at the level that can equal the mitzvah of tzedaka. And being that now we are at the end and the darkest part of the exile, the Shechina is found in the absolute lowest realms of the physical world, the only way to access it is through physical action, physical mitzvahs, and mainly the mitzvah of tzedaka.

The prayer of Ashrei, which we recite three times a day, has verses that begin with every letter of the Hebrew Alef Bet, except for the letter Nun. This is because Nun stands for nofelim, the fallen. However, if you look closely, you will find that it is included in the next verse, which begins with the next letter, samach. "Somech Hashem l'chol ha'nofelim," "Hashem supports all of the fallen." Instead of having a verse about how we have fallen, we have a verse about how Hashem supports us when we are down. Because especially in the darkness of exile, when we feel so down and lost, Hashem is holding us and supporting us.

May our efforts, especially in doing the mitzvah of tzedaka, bring the ultimate redemption, the coming of Moshiach, when we will merit to see the prophecies of this Haftora come true. May it happen soon.

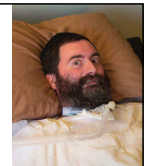
*"Dear Rabbi Yitzi,*

*You are incredible! Please post more of your inspirational messages. Hashem should shower you with nachas and health and all good things!"*

- Chanalee, the Challah Fairy

RABBI YITZI WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU! SEND YOUR MESSAGE TO:  
(937) 770-4802 | TORAHFROMMYEYES@GMAIL.COM

*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.*



IN MEMORY OF THE MESIRAS NEFESH OF  
**RABBI MOSHE AHARON  
& RIVKA DINA GEISINSKY**

AND THEIR ENDURING FAMILY LEGACY

SPONSOR AN EDITION OF 'TORAH FROM MY EYES: (937) 770-4802 | TORAHFROMMYEYES@GMAIL.COM

