

# WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RABBI YITZI

לרפואה שלימה ליוסף יצחק בן ברכה

## PARSHAT BALAK

### How To Bring Protection and Redemption

In this week's Parsha, Balak, we read how Balak and Balaam schemed to curse the Jewish people. Hashem protected them, not allowing Balaam to curse the Jews; instead, he blessed them. Balaam goes on to prophesy the coming of Moshiach. It ends off on a low note, of indecency, immodesty, and the serving of the false deity Baal Peor.

I am amazed by the brilliance of our sages to choose Haftoras, which encapsulate the theme of the Parsha to a tee. Reading the Haftora helps us understand the theme of the Parsha.

At first glance, the Haftora mentions, "Please remember what Balak king of Moab advised, and what Balaam answered him..." But this is mentioned only as part of a larger picture, so it can't be the reason that this Haftora was chosen.

What are the essential themes of this parsha that the Haftora brings out? What specifically is this Parsha, which has no mitzvahs, and Haftora asking us to do?

#### **G-D'S PRESENCE IS OUR GREATEST PROTECTION, AND OUR TRUST IN HIM BRINGS REDEMPTION.**

In the Haftora, Micah prophesies about things that will happen before the coming of Moshiach, "The remnant of Yaakov will be among many nations." And they will not put their trust in man, but only in Hashem, "like dew sent by Hashem, like heavy rain upon vegetation, that does not hope in man and does not wait for the sons of men..., like a lion among the animals of the forest, like a young lion among the flocks of sheep..." Then, he brings the complaint Hashem has to the Jewish people. "What have I done for you... I brought you up from Egypt... from a house of slavery, I redeemed you... I sent before you Moshe, Aaron, and Miriam... remember please, what Balak advised and what Balaam answered him... So you can know the righteous acts of Hashem..." And concludes with Micah saying Hashem doesn't care for grandiose gestures, rather, "He has told you... what is good and what Hashem demands of you, only, to do

justice, to love loving-kindness and to walk modestly with Hashem."

The first verses of the Haftora connect to the end of the Parsha, where some of the Jewish people were enticed into serving Ba'al. What was the service of Ba'al? People would defecate before it, the most base act of nature. At its core, it is giving credence to nature, as if nature is not in Hashem's hands.

The Jewish people were about to enter the land of Israel. Throughout the 40 years in the desert, their lives were clearly in Hashem's hands; their food was the manna that fell daily from heaven, and their water came miraculously out of a rock that traveled with them. There could be no denying that it was directly from Hashem. But now they would be entering the land and would have to contend with nature; they would have to sow, plant, and reap if they wanted food.

The question is if nature is a system that Hashem created and is now an entity of its own, or is it a facade and Hashem is really controlling everything?

Even though we live in nature and contend with it in agriculture, business, health, and more, we have to understand that really Hashem is in control.

The implications of this idea are tremendous. If one puts nature on a pedestal, he may consider doing things contrary to Hashem's will because nature dictates that doing this action will give him the desired outcome. For example, according to nature, working seven days a week instead of 6 will bring in more money; if so, he may consider doing business on Shabbos. But if he realizes that Hashem controls everything, including nature and his income, he will see the silliness in this way of thinking. Nature doesn't have anything to do with his level of income; it is only the tool with which Hashem facilitates His will. Of course, he has to make a vessel with which to receive Hashem's blessing by engaging in business, but thinking that doing anything in contrast to Hashem's will will grant him any more than what is coming to him is silly.

This is the lesson the Jewish people learned from the episode of Ba'al just before entering the Holy Land. That



they should realize that though they will be seemingly contending with nature, it is really all from Hashem.

When Moshiach comes, we will openly see how nature is controlled by Hashem, and we will turn directly to Him. We won't put our hope in nature, and we won't have to rely on any person.

The Haftora tells about the time just before the coming of Moshiach when we will once again be entering the land. Hashem says that it will be "Like dew sent by Hashem, like heavy rain upon vegetation, that does not hope in man and does not wait for the sons of men..." That it will be our great trust in Hashem, in this darkest part of the exile, that will bring Moshiach. Now that we are so close to the redemption, we must strengthen our trust and hope in Hashem, and even to the extent that we don't put any trust in man. A taste of the time of Moshiach.

There is another connection to the Parsha.

The Haftora and Parsha have two themes - two gifts - which are intertwined, and the key to receiving both.

First, Hashem saves and protects us from those who wish to harm us. He took us out of Egypt, and He saved us from Balak and Balaam.

The second is that Moshiach is coming.

They are intertwined because the coming of Moshiach is the final redemption, protection, and salvation of the Jewish people. Being that Hashem's presence will be open to all, evil will cease to exist. Hence, salvation, redemption, and protection will be unnecessary.

The key is found at the end of the Parsha and Haftora.

In the Parsha, we see that it was our failure to keep our laws and modesty that caused us to lose our protection.

The Haftora says this in a positive way. It gives us three rules to follow.

"Do justice." Which means to keep Hashem's laws, mitzvahs, etc.

"Love loving-kindness." In Torah language, love is not a feeling; it is an act. Here, it means to do acts of loving-kindness.

"To walk modestly with Hashem," which means to be aware of Hashem's presence. When you are aware of Hashem's presence, it is more than belief. Your relationship with Hashem has reached a point where you know He is there; He is real to you. This changes the way you do things. The way you talk, act, dress, and even think, becomes more refined because Hashem is part of your reality. This also echoes the idea of seeing Hashem's providence in everything and putting our trust in Him and not in nature.

These three things are who we are; it is the definition of being Jewish. When we get away from our essential selves, we lose our protection. Because Hashem wants to protect us, not someone else we are acting like.

Becoming who we are meant to be, taking on these three things, keeping Hashem's laws, doing acts of loving-kindness, and making Hashem part of our reality are key to bringing Moshiach as prophesied in our Parsha. May he come soon.

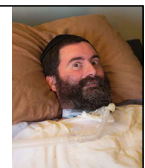
*"Dear Rabbi Yitzi,*

*I am in London (England) and always feel so inspired by Rabbi Yitzi when I visit his Instagram page. Despite the enormous difficulties of ALS, Rabbi Yitzi's strength of mind, soul and courage are so evident and immensely inspiring and I'm sure so many draw strength from him. Sending my love to all of your family!"*

- Daniella E, London

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.*



DEDICATED IN HONOR OF THE  
50TH BIRTHDAY OF THE MASHPIA

**RABBI MENDY מנדי SHAPIRO**

22 TAMMUZ

MAY HASHEM GIVE HIM THE STRENGTH TO  
CONTINUE HIS HOLY WORK GUIDING  
BOCHURIM FOR MANY YEARS TO COME!

· BY A CHAVER ·

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

