

# WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RABBI YITZI

לרפואה שלימה ליוסף יצחק בן ברכה

## PARSHAT BO

### Do Not Fear, I Am With You

The Haftora for Parshas Bo is Yirmyahu's prophecy of the destruction of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar. This is followed by a vision of hope and reassurance, that the Jewish people will return to their homeland.

The connection to our Parsha is clear. Parshas Bo tells us of the destruction of Egypt by Hashem, through the final three plagues. Followed by the exodus from Egypt, which was the beginning of the travels, that brought the Jewish people to the Holy Land, Israel.

The Haftora begins with a detailed description of the devastation of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar and his army, who will come from the north. So vast will his army be, that they will be more than a swarm of locusts. It describes how the Egyptians would waiver out of fear, and flee. Even Pharaoh will be afraid, he will talk big, but when the time comes, he too will waiver. Egypt will be deserted for a time, and then its dispersed will return.

The Jewish people will see the Egyptians returning to their homeland, and wonder, when will they be returning to their homeland? The prophecy

**THERE IS NOTHING  
TO FEAR, FOR THE  
CREATOR OF ALL IS  
RIGHT THERE INSIDE  
YOU.**

continues with a reassurance, that they too will return to their homeland. "Do not fear My servant Yaakov, do not be dismayed Yisrael, for behold, I will save you from far away, and your

descendants from the land of their captivity. Yaakov shall return, and be at rest and at ease, and none shall make them afraid. Do not fear My servant Yaakov..., because I am with you..."

Shabbos. What is the difference between Yaakov and Yisrael? Why is the custom to specifically use the name Yaakov after Shabbos? And finally, why is Yaakov called "My servant?"

The Talmud tells us, that after Hashem changed Avram's name to Avraham, we are not permitted to call him Avram anymore. As the verse says, "Your name will no longer be called Avram." However, even though the verse says the same with regards to the name Yaakov, "Your name will no longer be called Yaakov," we are permitted to call him Yaakov because after his name was changed to Yisrael, the Torah continues to use the name Yaakov.

The question is, why continue to use Yaakov when the name Yisrael is a greater name?

The difference between Yaakov and Yisrael is, that the name Yaakov refers to us when we need to contend with the physical world and outsmart the evil inclination, in order to use the physical for G-dliness. Yaakov is called, "My servant," as this work is pleasureless, like the work of a servant, and like a servant, Yaakov doesn't feel a closeness to Hashem. This is because, as the name suggests, Yaakov comes from the word akeiv, a heel, referring to the lower part of the neshama, that can be concealed by the body and the physical world.

Yisrael refers to us when we are above the physical and we are called Hashem's son, "Yisrael is My firstborn son," as we feel close to Hashem. Instead of the evil inclination and the physical being a hindrance to our service to Hashem, it becomes a helper. As the name Yisrael is, "Because you struggled with angels and with men and you prevailed." Meaning, that he has overcome the opposing angels and the scoffers, to the point, where not only do they not hurt, but rather, they help. This is because, the letters of the name Yisrael, make the anagram, "li rosh," which means, I have a head. The head refers to the higher part of the



neshama that nothing has the power to conceal.

This is also the meaning of the verse from Parshas Balak, that we say on Rosh Hashanah, "A sin was not observed in Yaakov, and toil was not seen in Yisrael." Yaakov doesn't have any sins, because he has the ability to overcome every challenge through toil. Yisrael, on the other hand, doesn't have to toil, because he is above it all.

In a general sense, this is the difference between a Tzadik and the average Jew. The Tzadik is at the level of Yisrael, he has no struggle because he has totally changed his evil inclination into good. However, the average Jew is like Yaakov, he struggles, but he overcomes.

On another level, we see that the average Jew has both Yaakov and Yisrael. It is the difference between the weekdays and Shabbos. During the weekdays, when he must contend with the physical and his evil inclination, to overcome and transform them into holiness, he takes on the role of Yaakov. However, when Shabbos comes, even the physical becomes holy, as we see that eating food on Shabbos is holy, sleeping on Shabbos is holy, etc., that is when he takes on the role of Yisrael.

This is true for a Tzadik as well, albeit in a more subtle way. As understood from the fact, that he was still called Yaakov, even after he earned the name Yisrael. This is because even a Tzadik must be Yaakov at times.

Now you can understand the custom to say after Shabbos "Do not fear My servant Yaakov." Why Yaakov? Because we are coming from Shabbos, when we are Yisrael, where everything is holy and there is no struggle, and entering the weekdays as Yaakov, with darkness, struggles, and hardships, and that is scary. Why shouldn't we be afraid? Hashem says, "Because I am with you." This also means, that Hashem specifically puts us in this situation, and helps us accomplish what he wants most, that we turn this dark world into a place where Hashem could reside openly. So when Hashem says, "Do not fear My servant Yaakov," He gives us the strength to persevere and succeed.

In fact, there is really nothing to fear, as we are certain that ultimately we will be victorious. Because at our core we have a Neshama, which is a part of Hashem, and just as no one can rule over Hashem, so too, no one has power over us. As we see from the last words of the Haftora, "I will not make an end of you...., and I will not wipe you out." While others may be wiped out, we will always

remain; because we have an essential connection to Hashem which can never be erased. On top of that, we have a guarantee, that "Not one of us will be cast away." And that "All of Yisrael will have a portion in the world to come."

Knowing this will fill us with joy, and the joy will help us succeed even quicker.

One time, my wife Dina came into the room and noticed that I was smiling. She asked me, "Why are you smiling?" I explained that growing up, we were always taught about being happy and having trust and belief in Hashem, especially in times of darkness and difficulty. But I didn't know how I would react when put to the test. Now that Hashem has given me ALS, He put me in the darkest of places, and I handled it well, that makes me happy. So now I know, and somehow knowing makes things easier.

May we merit to win our final victory, which will usher in the coming of Moshiach, when it will be like Shabbos the whole time. May it happen soon.

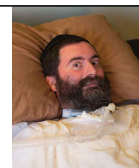
*"Dear Torah From My Eyes*

*Hi! I had just heard about Rabbi Yitzi, and was inspired by the work that he is continuing to do. May we all be so persistent and willing to make an impact on the world!"*

- Anonymous

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 BAR MITZVAH OF

**KASRIEL CHAIM  
GEWIRTZ**

· א' שבט ·

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

