



Valuable Vision

Shabbat Chazon' the Shabbat of Vision, is so named for the first words of the *haftorah* of the week. Typically, the *parashah* and *haftorah* direct us with a relevant message. Here we are called upon to find a vision as we move forward toward *Tisha B'Av* and beyond.

The *Shem Mishmuel* understands the three *haftorot* in the weeks before *Tisha B'av* as signifying the momentum to engage in *teshuvah*. Each *haftorah* speaks of potential for closeness with Hashem, even though the Jews have cast away their attachment opting for temporal worldly pleasures. The first *haftorah* highlights the notion of speech, "*kol demama daka*" (*Melachim*

I 18;12), the second begins with a call to hear, "*Shimu devar Hashem beit Yaakov*" (*Yirmiyahu 2;4*), and finally the *haftorah* of *Parashat Devarim-Chazon* opens with seeing, "*Chazon Yeshayahu ben Amotz asher chazah*" (*Yeshayahu 1;1*). This continuum climaxes with visual awareness inviting *Am Yisrael* to take a hard look into their lives and see what needs mending and repair. Shabbat is a time of *teshuvah*. The spiritual light of Shabbat allows one to see where he has erred and instills him with a desire to change. Indeed, the letters of Shabbat, when rearranged spell *tashuv*, return. This Shabbat is an opportunity to use our vision, look inward and be inspired to heed the words of the *Navi* and establish meaningful change.

The *Netivot Shalom* sees an encouraging message in this *haftorah*. At the very moment that Hashem is castigating His people He calls them his sons. "*Banim gidalti... vehem pashu bi*" (*Yeshayahu 1;1*). This *haftorah* broadcasts a poignant theme of hope; Hashem never forsakes His people, His love for them is eternal even when they are absorbed in betrayal. Indeed, the Talmud relates that in the last stages of the *Churban*, the *keruvim* were embracing each other. We can employ the vision of this Shabbat to see how much Hashem loves us; despite our many shortcomings, the relationship remains intensely durable and intimate. The

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inspiration this connection arouses can be harnessed to inject greater *kavanah* in our *tefillah*, *zemirot* and *divrei Torah* throughout shabbat. When we create a vision of a Shabbat with an authentic bond and love we can aspire to live the reality.

Chasidic masters teach that on *Shabbat Chazon* we are enjoined to envision the third Temple rebuilt in its glory. From the very depth of our mourning, we must rise and foresee a world of perfection, a world of ultimate *shalom*. Only one who longs for a perfected world, a world where closeness to Hashem is the natural order, will desire to work towards reaching that goal. On *Shabbat Chazon* we are infused with the vision of a transcendent world. Let us allow the yearning to inspire within us renewed commitment and passion. ■

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