



## PROBING

## THE PROPHETS

BY RABBI NACHMAN (NEIL) WINKLER

Faculty, OU Israel Center

Rabbi Winkler's popular Jewish History lectures can be viewed by visiting the OU Israel Video archive: <https://www.ouisrael.org/video-library>

There is an old joke that, after Moshe Rabbeinu shattered the luchot, the people began to pick up the pieces left from the broken tablets. One group picked up the side of the stone tablet that said: “Lo”, “Lo” “Lo” – “You cannot”, “You may not”, “You shall not”- and built their faith on that. The other group picked up the other side of the tablets and read what remained: “Steal”, “Testify falsely”, “Covet”....and carefully followed those laws.

Because, you see, the smallest word can make the most difference.

When trying to understand this week's haftarah, we best pay attention to one LETTER – the first one, “vov”. Our reading from Sefer Yechezkel (ch. 44; 15-31) closely parallels the very first theme of our parasha, i.e., the sanctified position placed upon the kohanim. The Torah details many laws that pertain to the obligation of the Kohanim to retain a lifestyle even more sacred than that of others and the obligation of the

people to revere them as the attendants of Hashem. Likewise, the haftarah tells of how the Kohanim, descendants of Tzadok who retained that sanctified behavior and holy lifestyle required of them, would continue to serve Hashem and the people in the future.

But what about the “vov”?

Well, were we to study the first fifteen psukim of this perek that precede the haftarah, we would learn that the kohanim of Yechezkel's time were NOT those who faithfully carried out the mitzvot commanded to them in the parasha. These earlier verses describe how the Kohanim had, like the masses, fallen into idolatry, even serving false gods, so that the navi describes them as “B'nai Neichar” – “foreigners, strangers”. As a result, Hashem denies them the right to serve as full Kohanim anymore, relegating them only to attending to - but not actually performing - the ritual rites (Sefer Yechezkel 44: 11-12).

“V”Hakohanim,” **HOWEVER...** the

פוליש

Polishing & renewing of decks



ניקוי חבנים

Cleaning of offices and Shuls



ניקוי שטיחים

Carpet cleaning



ניקוי ספות

Sofa cleaning



[www.talclean.co.il](http://www.talclean.co.il)

050-4455975



Kohanim descended from Tzadok were the exception to that rule. The haftarah, therefore, takes on more significance, underscoring a most important truth about Kedusha – i.e. it is granted by Hashem but can be lost by Man. The very same lesson taught by the prophet Amos in the haftarah we SHOULD HAVE READ last Shabbat (WERE IT NOT EREV ROSH CHODESH)... Kedushah is a privilege that can be retained only by meeting its challenges.

HaRav Soloveitchik adds an equally important lesson taught by the haftarah. He asks: “What new laws or ideas regarding the obligation of the kohanim does the navi add in this message? The Rav explains that, years after Yechezkel issued his message to Israel, when Ezra led his return from Galut, he struggled to reinstitute the state of purity to the kahuna. In Babylonia, many Kohanim had intermarried and Ezra had removed them from the Kehuna, and when he arrived in Yerushalayim, he found the same was true.

What G-d had Yechezkel impart to the people – and what Ezra reminded them years later – was that the priesthood, the Kehuna, would exist even after Galut and even after the destruction of the Temple. The sanctity and purity of the kahuna is the cornerstone to the holiness of Israel.

Kedusha does not depend on a Mikdash; it depends on an Am Kadosh. ■





**077-2050015**  
**052-2678749**  
[www.golan-realestate.net](http://www.golan-realestate.net)



**Meir Golan**

**City center:** luxurious 5-room penthouse, 235m, nice big terrace facing fabulous panoramic view of Jerusalem and the Old City, 2 private parking spots 17,500,000 NIS

**Rechavia:** 5-room apartment, 130m, Sukkah balconies, 4 exposures, elevator, small & quiet building 5,200,000 NIS

**City center:** luxurious 4-room apartment, 112m, balcony facing fabulous panoramic view of the Old City, private parking spot 5,000,000 NIS

**Old Katamon:** 4-room apartment, 108m, sukkah balcony, Shabbat elevator, underfloor heating, high standard, private parking, 4,400,000 NIS

**Old Katamon:** 4-room apartment, 95m, balcony, open view, Shabbat elevator, private parking, 3,290,000 NIS

**Arnona:** 4 room apartment, 90m, master suite, balcony, elevator, private parking 3,100,000 NIS

**Baka:** 3-room apartment, 60m, nice view, elevator, parking, 2,300,000 NIS

## Healing Pain

*When Drugs and Procedures Don't Help*

**Andrew David Shiller, MD**

**Integrative Pain Management**

Harvard Trained

In Jerusalem, Gush Etzion, and  
by Telemedicine in Israel, NY, CT,  
NJ, FL, VA

scan me for  
more info





[drshiller.com/consult](http://drshiller.com/consult)

058-789-0369