



## PROBING THE PROPHETS

BY RABBI NACHMAN (NEIL) WINKLER  
FACULTY, OU ISRAEL CENTER

# “Nachamu”- Where Is The Comfort?

As was true of last week’s haftarah, the familiar name of the Shabbat – Shabbat Nachamu - is also drawn from the opening word of the haftarah. There is, however, a difference, in that the very appellation of the Shabbat reflects more than a simple connection to the haftarah. Indeed, the name itself expresses what the Shabbat itself should be... one of consolation and comfort. It is meant to be a Shabbat of “Nechama” – solace and succor – inspired by the words of our haftarah.

But do we really find any comfort in Yishayahu’s message?

Upon studying the text of the haftarah, we find very little comfort in the opening verses. The first expression of “consolation” informs the suffering nation that their sin has been

forgiven *for she has received **double** [punishment] from Hashem for her sins!* There is no mention of redemption, return to the land or a glorious future – only the obvious truth that they have suffered through a double punishment, that has now ended.

The Ibn Ezra quotes the pasuk in Megilat Eichah [4: 22] as being an echo of these opening verses, as it states “Tam avoneich Bat Tziyon-lo yosif l’hagloteich”, “Your sin is atoned (ceased)... [Hashem] will exile you no more”. These words, like those in our haftarah, express some relief – but not true consolation!

And so we ask: Where is the comfort? Where is the encouragement? Where are any words that would bolster the hope of a grieving nation?

Simply put: **Where is the “nechama” of “Nachamu”?**

The answer to this question is found in the p’sukim that follow the rather “unconvincing” introduction of the haftarah. The rest of Yishayahu’s nevu’ah, begins by describing Hashem’s strength that overpowers all natural forces. even emphasizing the incomparable acts performed by Hashem. And yet, these first verses, too, do not really fulfill Israel’s need for solace and succor.

But a careful read of these p’sukim will better reveal a powerful message left for both that generation and many future ones as well. Consider: Of what purpose is a prophecy that one could not guarantee? Of what good

### LIFE SETTLEMENTS

Do you have a life insurance policy you:

- No longer want?
- No longer need?
- Can no longer afford the premium?
  - Could you use extra money instead of keeping your policy?

**I can guarantee that if you qualify with the underwriting process I can get you more money than if you cash it in with the company.**

Please contact Moshe Russell at:  
Buymypolicy32@gmail.com

is a promise that one cannot keep? For this very reason this fortieth perek, the chapter that marks the beginning of Yishayahu's prophecies of comfort, opens with words that appear to lack any real message of consolation. It was first essential for the grief-stricken generation to hear more than promises or pledges. Those who have been devastated by many years of torment, pain and loss will, understandably, find assuring words alone as being empty and meaningless. This is the reason why HaKadosh Baruch Hu told His navi "NACHAMU" – "Comfort My people" – by first assuring them that it is I, the Eternal One, He Who guarantees His promises and His prophecies.... and, therefore, their very future.

And how interesting it is that, in the middle of describing the great abilities of the all-powerful G-d, Yishayahu adds a verse that seems out of place: "K'ro'eh edro yir'eh, bizro'o y'kabetz t'la'im u'v'cheiko yisa..." "As a shepherd tends his flock - gathering lambs in his arms and carrying them in his bosom...". The beautiful depiction of Hashem as a caring shepherd Who lovingly leads and protects His flock is a compelling lesson leaving Israel with the knowledge that G-d is not only One Who is capable of fulfilling His prophecies, but that He would do so because He is the Faithful Shepherd of His nation.

And what better message could be given to the nation than this introduction to Yishayahu's magnificent prophecies of their future, their redemption....and, therefore, their ultimate comfort!! ■

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



**THE LEAK DETECTIVES**  
Experts in Non-Invasive Leak Detection

*We get it right the first time!*

*We Service all of Israel!*

**Water Leaks? Mold and Mildew? Peeling or Bubbling Paint?**

WE USE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY TO IDENTIFY AND ELIMINATE ALL FORMS OF WATER INTRUSION.

- Infrared thermal imaging inspections.
- Certified professional trained inspectors.
- Comprehensive reports.
- Inspections for Insurance claims.
- Pipe cameras, Tracer gas.
- Acoustic testing, balloon tests and more.
- Waterproofing, plumbing, roofing.
- Inspection before purchase.

*Anglo Service!*

*Shomer Shabbos*

Call today for a FREE phone consultation  
**053-712-0322**



**LUXURY PROJECTS & APARTMENTS IN NETANYA NORTH, PARK HAYAM, IR YAMIM**

Ideal for Anglos, walk to sea, beach, sea views with many options to suite all lifestyle & choices

**Limited pre-sale options**

- ✓ Prime location
- ✓ Spacious 3, 4, 5, 6 room options
- ✓ High end premium finishes and layouts
- ✓ Ideal for families, investment or Aliyah
- ✓ Some options 20% secures deal, others TBA
- ✓ Options available now or within 1 to 3 years
- ✓ Schedule your free no obligation consultation today and make your Dreams come True!

**CONTACT US TODAY**

**ISRAEL PROPERTIES**  
BY STAVELMAN & PARTNERS

Tel/WhatsApp: +972 50 446 9515  
Office: +972 02 568 6578  
Email: [info@israel-properties.com](mailto:info@israel-properties.com)  
[www.israel-properties.com](http://www.israel-properties.com)