

## **Inspirations from the Haftarah-No Peace in Our Time** **by Rabbi Eliyhu Kirsh**

In the Haftarah for Nitzavim we come across the verse [Yeshaya 62:1] stating 'For Tzion's sake I will not be silent and for Yerushalayim's sake I will not be quiet until its righteousness comes out like light and its salvation will burn like a torch.' Rav Gifter, Zt"l, Rosh Yeshiva of the Telshe yeshiva, brings the Targum Yonasan on this verse in one of his drashas. The Targum Yonasan understands this verse to mean that the nations of the world will not have peace and there will be not such notion as universal peace. Why? Because Am Yisroel, Hashem's beloved nation is in exile and enjoys no security or true tranquility, so neither will the nations of the world. If we look at every country in the world's history, we certainly will find this to be the case. The history of every nationality and ethnic group is abounding with wars. Even tribal groups deep into Africa or Asia who have had little or no contact with the Western world are at war with each other from time to time. Certainly in the history of the Western world in the last several centuries, we have seen so much war and bloodshed. Strikingly, all of these wars were claimed to have been fought in the name of good and just causes and hopes for a better world. Even if there were no actual wars taking place, there was always the threat of war. Take a look at the percentage of every country's national budget that goes into maintaining its armed forces and constantly updating its weaponry and war readiness. Every county has a secret service and a CIA or equivalent government agencies to protect the nation. Why is the entire world so preoccupied with war?

Rav Gifter explains to us that all of these wars that take place in the world are to remind Am Yisroel that they are Hashem's beloved nation. Even two primitive tribes are fighting each other deep in the jungles and these tribes never had any contact with Jews, the events are taking place to remind us that we are in exile. After all, Am Yisroel is the purpose of the entire creation, so it logically follows that everything that takes place in the entire creation is connected to Am Yisroel. Rav Gifter further understands from this theme that all of these world events that we hear about are a reminder that we need to do teshuva. In our time the lesson continues with the threat of a nuclear Iran and a nuclear North Korea. Till the end of days this is the way things will be. It is upon us to see Hashem's hand in all of these events that take place. Every time we hear about a war or similar occurrence, it is to be understood as a reminder that we are still in exile and need to do teshuva. Especially at this time of the year, as the year is winding down to its end we need to have this awareness. May it be Hashem's will that we merit to do a complete teshuva before the year's end and may the coming year be a better year for Am Yisroel and all of humanity. Amen.