

# KOLLEL AGUDATH ACHIM

Rosh Kollel

1430 E. 7th Street

רחוב דסקין 5

Rabbi Aharon Ziegler

Brooklyn, NY 11230 ירושלים, ישראל

917-538-3834

050-2925389

**Parshat Bechukotai-2022**

**פרשת בחוקתי 5782**

**“REBUKE MUST BE FOLLOWED BY CONSOLATION”**

Ezra decreed that the Berachot and Kelalot (curses) of Bechukotai must be read before Shavuot and those of the Mishna Torah (Ki-Tavo) before Rosh Hashanah (Megillah 31b).

When Chazal declared that the To'chacha (kelalot) is to be read before Shavu'ot, Rav Soloveitchik noted that we usually have one Shabbat, Parashat Bamidbar, separating Bechukotai from the Yom Tov of Kabbalat HaTorah, as a sort of buffer zone between the two events. It may be too depressing to hear the kelalot and then swing into a spiritually uplifting Yom Tov of Simcha. Usually, Bechukotai is read together with Behar, but this, being a Jewish leap year and we read Parashat Bechukotai by itself, the separation is, Parashat Bamidbar and Parashat Naso (in Eretz Yisroel).

Rav Soloveitchik stated that harsh words of rebuke must be accompanied by words of consolation. Indeed, we find such words at the end of Bechukotai, *“vezacharti et briti Ya'akov, veAf et briti Yitzchak, veAf et briti Avraham ezkor, veHa'aretz ezkor”* [I will remember My covenant with Ya'akov and also my covenant with Yitzchak and also My covenant with Avraham will I remember and I will remember the land} (VaYikra 26:42). The meaning of this consolation is that HaShem will never completely forsake us or abandon us. No matter how far astray we go, somehow, G-d will always find some *zechutim*, (merit) on our behalf to bring us back. Thus the parasha reads, *“I will remember my covenant with Ya'akov”*. Ya'akov is the symbol of *Torah*; he was the *ish tam, yoshev o'halim*. So HaShem declares, even if My people are not perfect, but as long as the majority study My Torah and devote themselves to Torah, I will redeem them.

But what if the majority are not involved in Torah study then the consolation continues, *“VeAf et briti Yitzchak ezkor”* and also My covenant with Yitzchak will I remember. Yitzchak is the symbol of *Avodah*, and *Avodah* is Tefillah, prayer. So that even if majority of My people are not involved with Torah, I will add on those who are involved in Tefillah. The combination of the two, Torah and Tefillah should cover the required needs.

But even if that does not yet constitute a majority, then *“VeAf e briti Avraham ezkor”* then I will remember My covenant with Avraham. Avraham, as we recall, was the symbol of *Hach'nasat Orchim, hospitality, and Gemilut Chasadim*. So, if our people are deficient in Torah study, and they are lacking in observance of Tefillah, then HaShem says, He will add on those Jews who are gracious in *Hach'nasat Orchim*, and thus, bring our total up to the necessary quota.

But, finally the passuk continues, if between the three groupings we are still short of a majority to satisfy the requirements of HaShem, then HaShem will bend back one step further. *“VeHa'aretz Ezkor”*. I will remember The Land. Meaning, G-d will add on to our *zechutim* **those Jews who love the Land of Israel. Even if they are not religious, even if they do not study Torah, they do not Daven (Tefillah), and they are not hospitable, but as long as they live and love Eretz Yisrael, they are beloved in the eyes of Gd.** *“She'kol Hadar BeEretz Yisrael Domeh Ke'mi Sheh'yesh Lo Elo'ah.* (Ketuvot 110b).

**I think we should consider this aspect very carefully before we look down with disdain upon a Jew who smokes on Shabbat, eats in non-kosher restaurant and doesn't fast on Yom Kippur, but he lives and loves his Land of Israel. When HaKadosh Baruch Hu looks scrupulously into our lives and deeds we may need the merit of these non-frum Jews to bring us to the Ge'ulah Sheleima. Just as we are not permitted to speak negatively against Eretz Yisrael, so are we not permitted to speak negatively against any Jew that lives in Eretz Yisrael.**

Shabbat Shalom from Yerushalayim Ir HaKodesh,  
Rabbi Aharon Ziegler