



Bechukotai

Through what merit is the Jewish people saved?

One answer is presented in Parshat Bechukotai.

Within the context of the tochacha, a long tragic list of curses which God forbid might befall the Jewish people, Hashem tells us 'Vezacharti et-beriti ya'akov' – I will remember my covenant with Jacob, 've'af et-beriti yitzchak' – and also my covenant with Isaac.

've'af et-beriti avraham ezkor' and I will also remember my covenant with Abraham 'Veha'aretz ezkor' – and I will remember the land.

Rashi asks why is the regular order reversed here?

Throughout the Bible we are told about Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, the three Patriarchs. Whereas here, it is first Yaakov, then Yitzchak and then Avraham.

Rashi shares the answer of our sages who tell us that in the first instance God says: 'I'll look to Yaakov, let's see what merit he has and if that is not enough merit to save the Jewish people, then I will also look to Isaac, if that's not enough I will look to Abraham.'

Rav Soloveitchik gave a beautiful Perush, he said as follows, the merit of Jacob is through Torah, Torah knowledge and the practice of the Mitzvot of Torah.

The merit of Isaac is Avodah, it is the service of God through prayer.

The merit of Abraham is Gemilut Chassadim, acts of loving kindness.

So, what will happen God forbid, if all of the merit coming from all of those deeds from the Jewish people, is still not good enough?

There is one final detail in this verse which is, 'Veha'aretz ezkor', God promises us, 'I will remember the land' and what does that mean, asks Rav Soloveitchik? It means God will remember the dwellers of the land and those who support the land.

I find it quite extraordinary because here the Torah recognises the contribution to the Jewish people given by those who live in the land and those who support the land.

Rav Soloveitchik says even if they don't keep Torah laws, the very fact that they are there for the sake of the land is an incredible mitzvah.

Today, thank God, we are blessed by the people of Israel who, under the most trying of circumstances, are striving to save the country from those who seek to destroy it.

We are also blessed by all those Jewish people and our very good friends around the world who are giving support to the land.

We have a promise in our Torah, that through this merit, the Jewish people will always live on – Am Yisrael Chai.

Shabbat Shalom.