



Eikev

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I'll tell you the answer that the prophet Isaiah gives.

In the Haftarah for Parshat Eikev, he declares 'Shim'u elai rodefei tzedek mevakshei Hashem' – listen to me, all those of you who pursue justice, who love Hashem, all good people, I want to tell you something really important.

What is it? 'Habbitu el-tzur chutzavtem' – look to the rock from which you were hewn.

'Ve-el-makkevet bor nukkartem' – and to the hollow in the pit from which you were dug out.

In a nutshell the prophet is telling us, look to your past, look to your ancestors, look to the people as a result of whose actions you are in this world, derive inspiration from them for the sake of your productive and successful future.

But isn't there some unnecessary repetition here?

The rock from which you were hewn, the pit from which you were dug out. Is that not the same thing?

I'd like to suggest as follows: you see with regard to the rock, you chisel from the top downwards.

But when you are digging out of a pit, you're digging upwards - and that's the message of the Prophet.

When we look to our Jewish ancestors, those who guaranteed Jewish survival in the past, there was a combination of looking to Hashem to influence, inspire and save us from above, coupled with our actions from below.

It's that fusion of 'bitachon' and 'hishtadlut', our trust in the Almighty together with our own efforts.

That's the combination that has guaranteed our Jewish survival.

That is exactly what is unfolding within Jewish circles today, in a time of great danger for our people. We're constantly praying to Hashem for his help and salvation and that is coupled with our own proactive efforts to guarantee our survival.

So let's never forget this most outstanding piece of advice, to combine our praying to Hashem with our own great efforts, for the sake of our collective future.

Shabbat Shalom.