

The Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash

Themes and Ideas in the Haftara
Yeshivat Har Etzion

**This haftara series is dedicated in memory
of our beloved Chaya Leah bat Efrayim Yitzchak
(Mrs. Claire Reinitz), zichronah livracha,
by her family.**

Return, O Israel

SHABBAT SHUVA

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REPENTANCE AS PART OF CONSOLATION

This week's *haftara* – *Shuva Yisrael* (*Hoshea* 14:2-10; *Yoel* 2:15-17) – is the first *haftara* following the completion of the series of seven *haftarot* of consolation. At first glance, there is no connection between *Shuva* and the *haftarot* of consolation, apart from the chronological connection. Since we are no longer committed to the theme of consolation, we are free to select a *haftara* that is suited for this *Shabbat*. And since we are now in the Ten Days of Penitence, it is only right that we should choose a *haftara* that deals with the issue of repentance. In other words, we read *Shuva Yisrael* because it is the *Shabbat* between *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur*. When we examine the words of the *Tosafot*, however, we see that they saw a

connection between the *haftara* of *Shuva* and the *haftarot* of consolation. They write as follows (*Megila* 31b, s.v. *Rosh Chodesh*):

We are accustomed on the basis of the *Pesikta* to read three *haftarot* of doom before *Tisha Be-Av*, i.e., *Divrei Yirmiyahu*, *Shimu Devar Hashem* and *Chazon Yeshayahu*, and after *Tisha Be-Av* seven *haftarot* of consolation and two *haftarot* of repentance, i.e., *Nachamu Nachamu*, *Vatomer Tziyon*, *Aniya So'ara Levada*, *Anokhi Anokhi*, *Roni Akara*, *Kumi Ori*, *Sos Asis*, *Dirshuand Shuva*... And this order begins with *Pinchas*. And your sign is *Deshach Noa Arak Shadash*.

In addition to the three *haftarot* of doom and the seven *haftarot* of consolation familiar to us, the *Tosafot* speak also of "two *haftarot* of repentance" belonging to this set of *haftarot*, namely *Dirshu Hashem be-Himatzo* that is read on *Tzom Gedalya* and *Shuva Yisrael* that is read this *Shabbat*. This means that this entire set of *haftarot* constitutes a response to *Tisha be-Av*. The destruction of the Temple necessitates a two-fold response: 1) mourning over the loss of the Temple and the members of Israel who fell in battle; and 2) a process of repentance "in order to stir up the hearts and open the paths of repentance. This should serve as a reminder of our own evil deeds and those of our forefathers that were as our present deeds to the point that they caused them and us these troubles, so that by remembering these things we should repent and do good."^[1] The first and immediate response to the destruction is consolation; it is urgently needed in order to revive Israel's dejected spirit and strengthen their broken hearts. Following the great effort that was invested in this cause over the course of the summer, the time has come for the repentance that is required in the wake of the destruction as a repair of Israel's evil deeds that led to it. We see then that reading the *haftara* of *Shuva* stems from a double obligation of repentance: a) the special obligation of repentance generated by the Ten Days of Penitence^[2]; and b) an obligation of repentance in the wake of the destruction of the Temple, which is rooted in the laws of fasting, as is emphasized by the Rambam in the aforementioned passage. Formulated in a slightly different manner, it might be argued that now that we have finished reading the *haftarot* of consolation, the time has come to act toward their realization and bring about the redemption. This requires repentance and therefore we must deal with the issue of repentance in the *haftarot* that follow the *haftarot* of consolation.

DIVERSE CUSTOMS REGARDING THE *HAFTAROT* OF *TISHREI*

This still does not exhaust the *Tosafot's* discussion regarding the connection between the *haftarot* of repentance and the *haftarot* of consolation; in the continuation, they raise another issue. We all know that the *haftara* read this *Shabbat* is *Shuva Yisrael*; so deeply rooted is this identification that this *haftara* has merited something that no other *haftara* has merited, namely, that the *Shabbat* itself is called after it. Presumably, then, many people will be surprised to hear that the matter is not so simple, and that there was great tension in the school of the *Tosafot* regarding the determination of this week's *haftara*. The *Tosafot* write as follows:

Sos Asis is always read with *Atem Nitzavim*, that is, on the *Shabbat* before *Rosh Hashana*, because it is the last of the consolations. And *Dirshu* on *Tzom Gedalya*, and *Shuva* on the *Shabbat* before *Yom Kippur*. And when there is a *Shabbat* between *Yom Kippur* and *Sukkot*, then *Dirshu* is read on the *Shabbat* before *Yom Kippur*, for it includes the verse: "Seek the Lord while He may be found," namely during the Days of Penitence, and *Shuva* is read between *Yom Kippur* and *Sukkot*, for it includes the verse, "And He has brought down for you the rain in the first month, the former rain, and the latter rain" (*Yoel* 2:23), and also "And the Lord utters His voice before His army" (*ibid.* 2:11), which refers to water, and it is appropriate before *Sukkot*. This custom will never change, in accordance with the *Pesikta*. And so explained Rabbenu Tam. And not as argued by that Destroyer, that Reformer, that Confuser [= Rabbenu Meshulam], that *Shuva* is read before *Yom Kippur*, and *Sos Asis* is read between *Yom Kippur* and *Sukkot*. For there must be no interruption between the [first] six consolations and the seventh. Rather we follow the words of Rabbenu Tam, so that *Sos Asis* comes first and *Shuva* at the end.

As we can see, the *Tosafot* record two opinions regarding the *haftarot* read in the month of *Tishrei*, neither of which fully corresponds to our custom. The view of Rabbenu Tam is closer to current practice, but even according to him the *haftara* of *Shuva* is often not read on the *Shabbat* of the Ten Days of Penitence. In a year when there is no *Shabbat* between *Yom Kippur* and *Sukkot* there is indeed no difference, but in years when *Parashat Haazinu* is read after *Yom Kippur*, then according to Rabbenu Tam we read the *haftara* of *Shuva* on that *Shabbat*, and then the focus of the *haftara* shifts from repentance in and of itself to our hopes for adequate rainfall over the coming months.

In contrast, Rabbenu Meshulam's position corresponds to our custom in that the *haftara* of *Shuva* is always read during the Ten Days of Penitence. He, however, pushes off *Sos Asis* to after *Yom Kippur*, and thus detaches it from the other *haftarot* of consolation. It was this detachment that aroused the fury of the *Tosafot* regarding "that Destroyer, that Reformer, that Confuser, [who said] that *Shuva* is read before *Yom Kippur*, and *Sos Asis* is read between *Yom Kippur* and *Sukkot*. For there must be no interruption between the [first] six consolations and the seventh." What, indeed, is the logic behind pushing off *Sos Asis*? It seems that Rabbi Meshulam maintains that one cannot talk about the end of the consolation without repentance. Only in the wake of repentance can we talk about full redemption and reaching the state of "as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you" (*Yeshayahu* 62:5). The first stages of consolation do not require repentance, and they follow from the very need to soothe the suffering nation, but the end of consolation necessitates repentance. Thus, *Sos Asis* can follow the *haftarot* of repentance, according to Rabbenu Meshulam.

More important for our purposes is the disagreement between Rabbenu Tam and Rabbenu Meshulam regarding the *haftara* for the *Shabbat* of the Ten Days of Penitence. As stated above, in some years we read the *haftara* of *Dirshu*, according to Rabbenu Tam, whereas according to Rabbenu Meshulam, we always read *Shuva*. Understanding the difference between these two prophecies will grant us insight into the *haftara* of *Shuva*.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN *DIRSHU* AND *SHUVA*

When we examine these two *haftarot*, both of which are "*haftarot* of repentance," we find a very important difference between them concerning the type and quality of repentance of which they speak. The *haftara* of *Dirshu*, familiar to us from the public fast days, speaks of high-quality repentance. This type of repentance is rooted in seeking out God and calling upon Him ("Seek out the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near"; *Yeshayahu* 55:6), and it finds expression in the genuine change that transpires in the sinner: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord" (v. 7). The continuation of the *haftara* speaks of a person who cleaves to God out of deep

identification, to the point that he abandons the ways of his people in order to join himself to God. This, of course, is "the son of the stranger, that has joined himself to the Lord" (56:3). Whether he is a righteous convert, as argued by many commentators, or he is a descendant of No'ach who does not convert, he joins himself to God in order "to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servant" (56:6). This person's conjoining with God out of love and his readiness to be His servant, all this while abandoning his former world, attest to a person whose entire being is subjugation to God and nullification of his own will before the will of God. The *haftara* opens with superlative repentance that involves abandonment of sin, and even the thought of sin ("and the unrighteous man his thoughts"), and ends with conjunction with God. And God responds in kind. He is bountiful in His pardon and mercy, and showers joy and gladness upon the penitent. In the wake of repentance of this sort, He fulfills in them: "For you shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands" (55:12). Repentance that involves a spiritual change and inner recognition of sin lead to atonement, pardon, and attainment of intimacy and identification with God.

The *haftara* of *Shuva* presents us with the very opposite. The repentance is wretched. "O Israel, return to the Lord your God; for you have stumbled in your iniquity" (*Hoshea* 14:2). As is clarified in the continuation, "you have stumbled in your iniquity" does not allude to the moral idea that the iniquity itself constitutes stumbling, but rather this means that the sin did not yield for them the expected gains and that the hoped for benefits never arrived. Why did Israel stumble in their iniquity – because Ashur did not come and deliver them! Surely, this is what is stated in the continuation: "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say to Him, Forgive all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so we will offer the words of our lips instead of calves. Ashur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: nor shall we say any more to the work of our hands, You are our gods: for in you the fatherless finds mercy" (vv. 3-4). The verses clearly imply that the people are returning to God because Ashur will not deliver them, and they will not ride horses. The question begs to be asked: What would happen if Ashur would save them and supply them with horses? The answer, it would appear, is that they would have no incentive to repent, and that they would not say to one another: "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say to Him, Forgive all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so we will offer the words of our lips instead of calves." Rather, they would continue to place their trust in Ashur. With this, the end of the book of *Hoshe'* describes a process that appears already at the beginning of the book (which we encountered in the *haftara* for *Parashat Bamidbar*). There too the prophet testifies about Israel:

"And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not catch them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then she shall say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then it was better with me than now" (2:9). Why return to God, Israel's first husband? Not out of love and commitment to their relationship, but because it was better for her then. Earlier, the prophet describes chasing after idol worship for the same motives: "For she said, I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink" (v.7). And if the husband will provide better water and flax, it will be worthwhile to return to him. To put it simply, both in the opening chapter of his book as well as in his chapter of summation, Hoshe'a describes a process not of purifying repentance but of repentance that is worthwhile. It involves neither recognition of sin and remorse, nor an inner spiritual change; this repentance is guided and directed by cold utilitarian calculation. How great is the distance between this repentance and the repentance described by Yeshayahu in the *haftara* of *Dirshu*! There we find abandonment of sin based on religious consciousness and cleaving to God, whereas here we find a return to God because He is more reliable than Ashur and brings Israel greater benefit.

Here we raise a question as to the meaning of repentance of this sort. Is it not merely hypocrisy and cynical pretense on the part of the sinning servant who wishes to exploit the good heart of his master and receive a reward? In order to answer this question, we must go back and consider the opening word, "*shuva*," "return." We use the term *teshuva* in the sense of returning to the proper path. A person forsakes the path of sin and returns to the place where he had been before he corrupted his ways. In other words, "*teshuva*" means retreat from the path of sin and return to the good. The term *teshuva* is indeed used in this sense in many sources, the most striking being *Hilkhot Teshuva* of the Rambam. In Scripture, however, the term does not denote return to one's prior path, but return to God. From the section dealing with repentance at the end of the book of *Devarim* and through the entire course of the Prophets, *teshuva* denotes returning to God, establishing a relationship with Him, and drawing near to Him. This is the key to understanding Hoshe'a's call, "O Israel, return to the Lord your God; for you have stumbled in your iniquity." The most important thing is not repair of the past, but the very act of return and the rehabilitation of the relationship in the present. To what may this be likened? To a child who leaves his house because of tensions and anger between him and his parents, proclaiming that he will never need their kindness, never take any money from them, and perhaps never even speak to them. But things don't work out, and after a period of wandering, hunger and privation, he knocks on the door, ashamed, his tail between his legs, and asks to come home, to sleep in his bed, and to have a bite to eat. Is there any doubt how his parents will react? Surely they will receive him, sit him down to eat a

sumptuous meal prepared by his mother, make his bed, and rejoice in their hearts that their son has returned. "As one whom his mother comforts," says Yeshayahu (66:13). In many places, the prophets are guided by the model of parents who greet their wayward son with open arms. Just this week, we read in the *haftara* for the second day of *Rosh Hashana* the words of Yirmiyahu regarding repentance that is not accompanied by inner change. He argues: "For I am a father to Israel, and Efrayim is my firstborn" (*Yirmiyahu* 31:8). This is also the meaning of the repentance in our *haftara*. Returning to God out of utilitarian motives still attests to the basic connection between Israel and God, for Israel returns to Him, and no one else.

God's response to the repentance described in this chapter accorda with that repentance and is different from His response in the *haftara* of *Dirshu*. The primary assertion in this context is "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for My anger is turned away from him" (*Hoshe'a* 14:5). In this context, Rashi's comment is worthy of citation:

"I will heal their backsliding" – The prophet says: So the holy spirit has told me ... I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely. **Even though they are not worthy of love, I will love them freely**, for My anger is turned away from him.

Formulated differently, the repentance and atonement in *Yeshayahu* are given to man by right and not by grace, for when a person abandons sin and is no longer the man he used to be, he is no longer the sinner, for the sin has separated from his person and left him. On the other hand, the repentance and atonement in *Hoshe'a* are God's gift to man, for he has not mended his ways or changed, and it is only by the grace of God that He is being saved. Therefore, the prophet describes this as free love, that is, love that man does not deserve, as emphasized by Rashi. In light of this, it is still necessary to heal Israel from sin, for they have not yet undergone a process of regret and repair of their moral qualities, and therefore God proclaims that he will heal them, because they have not yet done so.

The continuation of the process is not the joy and closeness described by Yeshayahu, but merely rest. The important metaphor is that of dew, which gently falls and restores life in a delicate and soothing manner. Dew does not have the

intensity of rain, but it has pleasant vitality. Those who return to God out of distress and lack of salvation, are in need first and foremost of rest. Just as we encountered in the *haftara* for the second day of *Rosh Hashana* the goal of "when Israel sought for rest" (*Yirmiyahu* 31:1), this effect is also achieved through the metaphor of dew.

However, even the goal of dew is to satiate Israel and bestow goodness upon them in abundance, as is detailed in later verses:

His branches shall spread, and this beauty shall be like the olive tree, and his fragrance like the Lebanon. They who dwell in His shadow shall return; they shall revive like corn, and blossom like the vine: their fragrance shall be like the wine of Lebanon. (*Hoshea* 14:7-8)

Hoshea's summarizes the prophecy of *Shuva* and his book in general in the last two verses. The first continues in a most conscious and striking manner the idea of repentance and return to God for utilitarian purposes and reward:

Efrayim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I answer him and look on him: I am like a leafy cypress tree, from Me is your fruit found (v. 9)

From Me is your fruit found! This is the justification for returning to God and finding refuge in His shadow, and thus the prophet summarizes the *haftara's* message. The final verse, "Whoever is wise, let him understand these things: whoever is prudent let him know them; for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just walk in them: but the transgressors shall stumble in them" (v. 10), is ambiguous. Is it referring exclusively to material success, that he who walks in the ways of God will prosper in everything he does, whereas the transgressor will stumble, because sin does not pay, in accordance with the line adopted in the beginning of the book of *Mishlei*? Or perhaps there is a transition and a step upward, the prophet intimating to Israel that there is a higher level at which righteousness in itself is a goal, and success stems from the fact that walking in the ways of God is a life of truth. I believe that we are dealing here with intentional ambiguity. The prophet turns to each person on his own level, and leaves it to him to decide the matter for himself.

THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE TWO PARTS OF THE *HAFTARA* OF *SHUVA*

Moving from the first half of the *haftara*, which is taken from the book of *Hoshe'a* and which we have dealt with up until now, to the second half which is the prophecy of *Yo'el*, we find certain common elements and certain differences between them. In *Yo'el* as well, the repentance is not motivated by a search for truth, and the striving for God does not arise on its own, but rather in the wake of a plague of locusts (described in detail in the chapter that precedes the *haftara*). It can be said that both prophets describe a process of repentance in the wake of troubles, familiar to us from tractate *Taanit*, and for reasons similar to those described there. *Hoshe'a* prophesies in the wake of a security failure ("Ashur shall not save us") and *Yo'el* in the wake of locusts; these two situations are familiar to us from the *mishnayot* in *Taanit*^[3] (which are based on Shelomo's prayer). And indeed, *Yoel* does not ask God to deal favorably with Israel on account of their merits, their having abandoned their evil ways, or a genuine spiritual change that transpired in them, but rather his plea is: "Spare your people, O Lord" (*Yoel* 2:17), and God's goodness is later described as following from "And He pitied His people" (v. 18). Pity is the reason for atonement and its goal is to benefit Israel in the wake of their troubles:

And the Lord answered and said to His people, Behold, I will send your corn, and wine, and oil, and you shall be satisfied therewith... Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do greater things. Be not afraid, O beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness shall spring, for the tree bears its fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He has given you the former rain in due measure, and He has brought down for you the rain in the first month, the former rain, and the latter rain. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust has eaten, the hopping locust, and the destroying locust, and the cutting locust, My great army which I sent among you. And you shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God who had dealt wondrously with you: and My people shall never be ashamed. And you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and there is none else; and My people shall never be ashamed. (2:19-27)

THE DIFFERENCE'S BETWEEN THE TWO PARTS OF THE *HAFTARA* OF *SHUVA*

From this perspective, Yoel's prophecy constitutes a direct continuation of Hoshe'a's prophecy and the world described therein. *Yoel*, however, includes certain additional elements that do not appear in *Hoshea*. First, it mentions the desecration of God's name as a reason for atonement. The argument that it is important to God to forgive Israel because of the desecration of His name that will be caused by their punishment runs throughout Scripture, from its appearance in Moshe's prayer following the sin of the golden calf as a central argument ("Why should Egypt say"; *Shemot* 32:12) until the massive use made of it by Yechezkel ("But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations, into which they came. Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God; I do not do this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations, to which you came"; *Yechezkel* 36:21). Yo'el too bases himself in large measure on this principle when he turns to God and emphasizes that this is reason for atonement: "Why should they say among the peoples, Where is their God" (2:17). In this, his prophecy complements that of Hoshe'a; when we combine the two prophecies, the *haftara* presents the two main reasons for atonement when the people of Israel are not worthy of pardon solely on the basis of their actions, namely: Israel's suffering in and of itself, and the desecration of God's name.[\[4\]](#)

However, another point that distinguishes between *Hoshe'a* and *Yo'el* should be added. In the second half of the *haftara*, we read about a massive prayer assembly in the wake of the situation. The sense of urgency is evident, as is the idea that something has to change. The entire people gather together, young and old, bride and groom, infants and suckling babes, and they weep about the difficult situation.

Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those who suck the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth from his chamber, and the bride out of her pavilion. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar." (2:16-17)

It is clear that we are dealing here with the beginning of an inner process of repentance. However, they still do not feel that they merit to ask for anything by right, and their actions have not yet achieved the change of "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts," but they send out their first feelers for the path of repentance. The very assembly and the recognition of the need to repent is the beginning of the process of repentance. Repentance has not yet ripened in this prophecy, but the process has begun. *Chazal* noted this, and learned from these verses most of the laws governing the procedures that are to be followed on public fast days.^[5]

This means that there is a certain progress between the first half of the *haftara* and the second half. The first does not discern any movement whatsoever toward repentance, whereas the second speaks of the beginning of the process.^[6] This is also the reason that in *Hoshe'a*, only the prophet speaks, for his words are a call to the people in the hope that they will respond. In *Yo'el*, on the other hand, the call lies on the border between call and description, and it is not clear whether his words are merely a call or the beginning of a description of the process. Even if we see in them a call, their formulation in the style of a description follows from the hope and the assumption that the call will be answered.^[7] So too, *Yo'el* prophesies about God's response to His people, emphasizing that they are His people, and he expands on the consolation that awaits them, whereas in *Hoshe'a* this idea is all but missing.

SUPERIOR REPENTANCE AND INFERIOR REPENTANCE

To summarize, common to the two sections of the *haftara* of *Shuva* is the absence of a process of full repentance which includes remorse and deep abandonment of sin, and the fact that the basic motivation for Israel's return to God is the troubles that befall them. There is, however, a certain development between the two parts; the *haftara* opens at a very low spiritual point, and progresses toward a higher point of awareness with respect to repentance.

We see then that there are two models for prophecies of repentance that translate into two kinds of *haftarot*. There are prophecies that present us with repentance and pardon in all their glory and describe a high spiritual state, and there

are prophecies that deal with repentance at a very base level. We find many pairs of *haftarot* created in this way. We saw the two *haftarot* for *Rosh Hashana*, where the *haftara* for the first day describes an impressive spiritual process, whereas the *haftara* for the second day speaks of a base and wretched people. So too we will encounter this phenomenon on *Yom Kippur*, when the *haftara* read in the morning describes a situation of impressive spiritual repair, whereas the *haftara* of *Yona* presents repentance that follows from distress and threat, and is done in haste. This model repeats itself in the two *haftarot* read during the Ten Days of Penitence. *Dirshu* presents superior repentance, whereas *Shuva* presents inferior repentance.

We must now return to the question that was posed above regarding the selection of the *haftara* for the *Shabbat* between *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur*, the two possibilities being *Dirshu* and *Shuva*. It would seem that the *haftara* of *Dirshu* is more appropriate, and this indeed is the situation according to Rabbenu Tam in certain years. Is it not better to turn to the people with a call to superior repentance rather than to be satisfied with inferior repentance?

However, the consideration that guides our custom is to select *Shuva* precisely because of its low common denominator. The prophecy of *Dirshu* is undoubtedly more exalted and uplifting than *Shuva*. However, *Shuva's* deficiency works to its advantage. *Dirshu* presents man with tall demands. Fortunate is he who merits to realize them, but not everybody is capable of doing so. The threshold is so high and the demands so considerable that many people cannot meet them. Its realization depends on an elevated spiritual state, and while it is certainly preferable, it is difficult to achieve. *Shuva*, on the other hand, does not set big demands. All that Israel has to do is come home to God. There is no need for a profound spiritual change, and a feeling of privation suffices to draw man close to God. Paraphrasing the words of Rav Chayyim of Brisk that "even a wretched *apikorus* is an *apikorus*," so we can say that even wretched repentance is repentance. Moreover, not only is it repentance, but it is in every person's reach. From this perspective, *Shuva* is preferable to *Dirshu*, which is not appropriate for everyone.

Therefore, the choice between the two *haftarot* is not only a choice between two chapters of repentance, but between two alternative ways of turning to the community during the Ten Days of Penitence. The one presents repentance that is of

high quality, but hard to achieve, and thus not applicable to certain segments of the population, whereas the other presents repentance of inferior quality, but open to all. Our custom is to read *Dirshu* on *Tzom Gedalya* as part of our effort to engage in repentance on the fast day and during *Tishrei's* days of mercy. But as for the main *haftara* of the week that is read on *Shabbat*, we prefer *Shuva*. This was the position of Rabbenu Meshulam (and also the view of the Rambam in *Hilkhot Tefila*), whereas Rabbenu Tam's view was that *Dirshu* should be given the central position, to the degree that it is possible to read the *haftara* of *Shuva* on the *Shabbat* that follows *Yom Kippur*.

(Translated by David Strauss)

[1] Rambam, *Hilkhot Taaniyot* 5:1.

[2] As we know, Rabbeu Yona in his *Shaarei Teshuva* counts the *mitzva* of repentance during the Ten Days of Penitence as a separate *mitzva*, whereas the Rambam in *Hilkhot Teshuva* speaks of a special fulfillment in the framework of the general *mitzva* of repentance.

[3] See *Taanit* 3:1.

[4] This is basically true also with respect to the three verses from the book of *Mikha* that according to many customs are appended to the *haftara* of *Shuva*. It should be added that there is a third factor that justifies pardon without repentance, namely, the covenant that had been made with the Patriarchs. This does not appear in the prophecies of Hoshea and Yoel, but is mentioned briefly by *Mikha* ("as you have sworn to our fathers from days of old" [7:20]).

[5] See *Taanit* 12b.

[6] Another difference, which we will not dwell upon here, is that the first deals primarily with individuals, whereas the second includes a public element of gathering the community together.

[7] We refer particularly to v. 17: "Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar" (2:17).