

HAFTORAH OF SIDRA : נצבים

*When the Sidras Nitsovvim and Vayelech are together,
the Haftorah of Nitsovvim is read.*

*The Haftorah is from Sefer Yeshayohu,
from Chapter 61, verse 10 till Chapter 63, verse 9.*

*In those years when Nitsovvim and Vayelech are separate,
Sidra Vayelech will be after Rosh HaShonoh and that Shabbos Vayelech will be
“Shabbos Shuvoh” taking its name from the first word of the Haftorah.*

1. This is the last of the seven “Haftoras of Consolation.” It speaks of how HaShem will take us back again as His People, in full view of the Nations of the world and how the special relationship between us and HaShem will be re-established. The Novvi describes how in the great future to come the Nations of the world will acknowledge the special status of the Jewish People as the Chosen People of HaShem.
2. Much of the Haftorah focuses on the retribution that HaShem will bring upon those who throughout history have deliberately harmed His Jewish People. The Novvi portrays HaShem as a champion returning from the country of Edom (their country was south of Eretz Yisroel) with His garments bespattered with blood as if He has just come from a great slaughter. HaShem declares that He has indeed executed justice against the people of Edom and their imitators and followers for tormenting His People throughout the ages.
3. Edom is the People that is descended from Aysov, that arch-hypocrite who, while committing all types of crimes and cruelties, pretended to be pious and G-d-fearing. Aysov was also the twin brother of Yaakov and he therefore stands doubly condemned for not learning from his righteous brother, with whom he could have been so close, to be righteous and good. Although Edom as a distinct, identifiable people no longer exists, our Chachommim tell us that Edom has a successor in Rome and indeed it was the Romans who destroyed the Second Beis HaMikdash and exiled the Jewish People from their Land. This Exile has dragged on for two thousand years and during this Exile the trials and tribulations of the Jewish People have been cruel almost beyond belief.
4. Our Chachommim tell us that the pig is symbolic of the People of Edom. It is a remarkable fact that the pig is the only animal in the world that has cloven hoofs but does not chew the cud (the other sign of a kosher animal) and it is the nature of the pig that when it lies down it spreads its trotters in front of itself as if to proclaim, “Look! I’m a kosher animal!” This makes the pig a natural hypocrite, so to speak, and the fitting symbol of Edom and of the crass hypocrisy of Rome, which portrayed itself as so civilized but which was so calculatingly cruel.
5. In this hypocrisy, sad to say, the Christian world — and so much of Western civilization of today — is indeed the spiritual heir of Rome. Rome and Christianity are synonymous. This

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dates back especially to when the Emperor Constantine became a Christian and Christianity therefore became the State religion of Rome. From that time on, throughout the Roman world our troubles went from bad to worse and increased in intensity, in cruelty and in scale. As merely even a cursory reading of history will show, Christianity, which calls itself “the Religion of Love,” is directly responsible for some of the very worst hatred and cruelties that the Jewish People has ever suffered. Indeed, almost all of western Anti-Semitism, and its murderous results, is directly based on Christianity and even non-western Anti-Semitism is a more-or-less exact copy of the Christian model.

6. The day will come, proclaims the Novvi, when HaShem will mete out true justice to all those who have harmed His People. HaShem is portrayed as “coming alone from the slaughter” for alas, through the ages, very few peoples have sought to protect the Jewish People from their tormentors. Thus, says the Novvi, it is HaShem alone Who comes to avenge his People.
7. But this “great slaughter” that is, the retribution that HaShem will bring upon our tormentors — the most prominent and most cruel who have been the Christians — is described by the Novvi in an unusual parable. He asks, “Why are Your garments red with blood as one who has been treading grapes in the wine-press?” The commentaries point out that in the same way that grapes are pressed out and their “blood” is made into wine, so, too, even when HaShem will punish the nations of the world for their cruelty to us, He will, so to speak, use their blood, that is, their life force, and make it into wine, that is, into a drink that is refreshing and invigorating. In other words, there is good to be found in all peoples and this life force of the nations can be utilized and harnessed positively, to be made into something that can refresh and invigorate humanity.
8. There is some good in everybody. If they wish to avoid the dire Day of Judgement, let each and every ethnic folk and people, and each and every individual of each folk and people, resolve to control and subjugate the hate and jealousy that threatens to destroy that which is good and instead bring to the fore and harness the vital energies that lie within, to the benefit of all.