

Shaleeakh

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Ha'azinu "Give Ear" Devarim (De) 32:1-52 8 Tishrei 5767 – Sep. 30, 2006

By Rabbi Yaakov benYosef – ABOUT-Torah.org

Understanding a prophetic passage in scripture is often difficult. To aid in our understanding many prophecies are given multiple times. Therefore, we have the opportunity to compare the prophecies from different perspectives. In fact, to discern the meaning of a prophecy it is crucial that we find parallel prophecies and compare them. When studying scripture we can use this type of comparative analysis to give us a deeper understanding of the prophecy. This is important, since all the prophecies are designed to compliment one another. Prophecies given by individuals in a congregational setting are also subjected to comparative analysis. Rav Shaul instructed the congregation at Corinth to use comparative analysis by allowing the prophets to judge the prophets. 1 Corinthians 29-33 states **"Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."** Rav Shaul's instruction to let the prophets judge the prophets brought unity to the congregation by confirming the prophecies that were spoken. Therefore, the congregation would not fall into the confusion that occurs when prophecies are not in agreement. Comparative analysis of the scriptures works the same way. Comparative analysis brings

unity to the prophecies and eliminates confusion. One of the easiest Torah portions to use comparative analysis on is Ha'azinu. This is because Rav Shaul has already used comparative analysis to interpret part of Ha'azinu.

Before his death, Moshe warned Yisrael that the nation would not always be faithful to HaShem. *Devarim* 32:15-18 states **“Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.”** Moshe prophesied that Yisrael would eventually turn to Idolatry and forget the God who delivered us from Egypt. However, according to Rav Shaul an integral part of interpreting this prophecy is the understanding that Yisrael's unfaithfulness allows HaShem's plan for the world to be fulfilled. *Devarim* 32:20-21 states **“He said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very forward generation, children in whom is no faith. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those, which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.”** Rav Shaul's interpretation of *Devarim* 32:21 starts in Romans 10:19 when he states, **“Did not Israel know? First Moses said, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.”** From this quotation Rav Shaul begins to explain that the foolish nation mentioned in *Devarim* 32:21 consists of gentiles. Rav Shaul is literally interpreting *Devarim*, 32:21. This is because the word used for nation in *Devarim* 32:21 is goy. When translated the Hebrew word goy refers to anyone who is not Jewish. Therefore, Rav Shaul interpreted this passage to show how HaShem would use gentiles to provoke Yisrael to jealousy. Romans 11:11 states, **“I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.”** Rav Shaul understands that when Yisrael turned away from HaShem and practiced Idolatry it allowed HaShem's plan of salvation to come to the gentiles. In the next verse, Rav Shaul then explains that through the salvation of gentiles HaShem intends to bring Yisrael to fullness as Romans 11:12 **states “Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?”** In the following two passages, Rav

Shaul then explains how salvation of the gentiles will bring about the fullness of Yisrael. Romans 11:13-14 states **“I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.”** Rav Shaul states that as an emissary to gentiles he magnifies his office, in hopes that he might provoke Yisrael to emulation. In other words, by teaching gentiles Rav Shaul hopes that he will provoke many of his Jewish brethren to live a lifestyle that is founded on his example of faith in Yeshua and established in the Torah. This agrees with Rav Shaul's previous comment in Romans 3:29-31 where he states, **“Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the Torah through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the Torah.”** Rav Shaul clearly believes that gentiles and Jews are both justified by faith so that the Torah will be established. This agrees with Ezekiel 36:26-27 which states **“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”** Rav Shaul then makes the promise that when Yisrael has faith in Yeshua and establishes the Torah through faith, it will reconcile the world and a transforming experience will occur as Romans 11:14 states **“For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?”**

Comparative analysis of prophecy leads us into deeper understand. Rav Shaul used comparative analysis this way to lead his followers into a deeper understanding of *Ha'azinu*. Rav Shaul's teaching on *Ha'azinu* focuses specifically on *Devarim* 32:21, which states, HaShem will provoke *Yisrael* to jealousy with a foolish nation. Rav Shaul draws the conclusion that this section of *Ha'azinu* is talking about HaShem's future plan for the gentile believer. In fact, Rav Shaul even states that teaching gentiles magnifies his ministry and brings hope that his ministry to the gentiles will lead his brothers in the flesh to emulate his lifestyle of faith in Yeshua and obedience to the Torah. When this happens Rav Shaul promises that reconciliation of the world will occur and the world will be transformed. Therefore, let us continue in Rav Shaul's hope. So that through our faith in Yeshua and obedience to the Torah we may provoke to emulation those individuals who need faith in Yeshua and those individuals who believe the Torah is not compatible with faith in Yeshua.

By Rabbi Yaakov benYosef – ABOUT-Torah.org | [Newsletter Archives](#)

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