

Torat Imecha NACH YOMI



Sefer Shmuel Alef is dedicated to the safety and peace of Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael. May the words of Nach uplift us and give us strength during these challenging times.

Please keep in mind that these sheets contain sheimos and should be discarded in accordance with halacha.

Shmuel Alef 11

Hello and welcome to Torat Imecha Nach Yomi with the OU Women's Initiative. My name is Elana Glatt and today we will be studying ספר שמואל א פרק יא, chapter 11. Picking up where we left off last, *Shaul* has now officially been anointed as the first king of Israel and a public lottery drawn before all of *Am Yisrael* in *Mitzpah* confirmed that *Shaul* was indeed *Hashem's* choice for this lofty position. We saw how despite all of this, *Shaul* was still pretty hesitant to accept this mighty role, and he hid in the communal coat closet in a last effort to avoid this honor.

But once the *Urim V'tumim* confirmed yet another time, and a determined group of people came to find him, *Shaul* finally stepped out and into this grand role, hovering head and shoulders above all of the people. At this point, most of the *Bnei Yisrael* excitedly accepted *Shaul* as their king, calling out excitedly, *Yechi Hamelech*, long live the king! Except for a small group of *Bnei Bliyaal*, a small group of skeptics, who mocked *Shaul* and his kingship and refused to accept him as their leader. This detail would be extremely relevant for our *perek* in discussion today. In our *perek* today, we'll now watch *Shaul* rise up to his majestic new role, rushing to the defense of the Jewish people and proving himself a mighty war general and a passionate leader, truly deserving to be the king of Israel.

We will also watch this miraculous victory prompt *Shmuel Hanavi* to regather all of the *Bnei Yisrael* and to recoronate *Shaul* as king of Israel for a second time, this time accepted and recognized by all. *Perek yud aleph*, our story for today, opens up with an evil king by the name of *Nachash*, the leader of Ammon, coming out and attacking a peaceful Jewish city in the portion of *Menashe* by the name of *Yavesh Gilad*. *Yavesh Gilad* was a quiet city on the cross Jordan, on the east bank of Israel where the two and a half *shvatim*, the two and a half tribes *Reuven*, *Gad*, and *Chatzi Shevet Menashe*, lived, with the *Amonim* as hostile neighbors to their south.

The people of *Yavesh Gilad* were extremely frightened by their enemies and they begged them to please make a peace treaty instead of attacking them. They offered to pay them taxes and to act as their servants, just in exchange for safety. This was a common occurrence we see repeat itself many times in *Sefer Shoftim*. Local *shvatim* were attacked, and knowing they likely didn't have such a big chance of galvanizing enough people from *Bnei Yisrael* to help fight, they'd surrender in the hopes of achieving relative calm, relative peace. *Pasuk bet: Nachash*, the *Ammoni* leader whose very name made clear what kind of cunning and evil ruler he truly was, like a nefarious snake, he answered them.

He said, okay, you want to make a pact with us? You want to make a peace treaty with us? Fine. We'll make peace with you, but on one condition. All you need to do is poke out the right eye of every single person in your city, humiliating your entire city and the entire Jewish people as they will have to sit back and watch this horror occur. Then, and only then, will we make peace with you.

Pasuk gimel: The elders of *Yavesh* are extremely shaken by this unprecedented request. They're not 100% certain what's best to do here. How do they respond to *Nachash*? What should they do? And so they quickly look at each other, they turn to *Nachash* and they ask him, please give us seven days time to attempt to maybe send messengers throughout the territory of Israel, and if no one comes to help us, no one comes to our aid, then we're going to surrender fully to you.

Nachash agrees to this request. He's pretty certain that there's no chance that they're going to succeed. And so the people quickly galvanize each other, they run to pull together some messengers in an attempt to try and send out a huge SOS to their brothers and sisters in the rest of *Eretz Yisrael*.

Rashi offers us some interesting perspective here as to why *Nachash* would make such an incredibly cruel and strange demand like cutting out the right eye of an entire city's population. He explains that when *Nachash* made this request, he was actually telling them to bring him a *Torah* scroll, which was given by the right hand of *Hashem*, so that he could publicly burn it for all to see. Why did *Nachash* want to do that? Because he knew that written in the *Torah* is the prohibition for a Jew to marry a man from Ammon or from *Moav*, and so he wanted to publicly burn that *Torah* and humiliate the very nation who stood by that.

Just to give a little bit more context as to why there's such a prohibition, the *Bnei Yisrael* are not allowed to marry *Ammoni* men because as the *Torah* tells us in *Sefer Devarim 23:5*, the *Ammonim* are considered an ungrateful people. The people of *Ammon* were descendants of *Lot*, whose very life was saved by *Avraham Avinu*.

Yet later, when the Jewish people left *Mitzrayim* and were in need of food and some drink on their journey, the *Ammonim* refused to offer the *Bnei Yisrael* food when they passed through their land. Because of the deep-seated bad character of the *Ammonim*, *Hashem* did not want the Jewish people to marry them. And what's interesting here, with *Nachash*, with his kind of cruelty here, he most certainly proved that the *Torah* had good reason to forbid marriage with *Ammon* after all. He was as cruel as his ancestors were.

Pesukim dalet through *Hey* tell us that the messengers, distraught, now come to *Givat Shaul* and they tell over this horrible, terrible news to all the people there and the people are in complete shock from what they hear and they start immediately screaming and crying out. And just then, as the people are screaming and crying and not sure what to do with themselves, *Shaul Hamelach* himself comes in from the field behind his oxen. It's interesting to note that even though he was anointed king, he was still involved in regular mundane errands at this point in time. And *Shaul* sees everyone's faces and he asks them, "What's the matter? What's going on here? Why is everyone here crying? What is wrong?" And so they tell him about the terrible predicament that the people of *Yavesh Gilad* themselves are facing.

Pasuk vav tells us, ותצלח רוח אלקים על שאול כשמעו את הדברים האלה, *The spirit of Hashem gripped Shaul when he heard these things*, ויחר אפו מאד, *and he became extremely angry. Pasuk zayin*: So what did *Shaul* do? He took a pair of oxen, he cut them into pieces which he sent with messengers throughout the entire land of Israel to every single town saying, "Whoever does not go out after *Shaul* and *Shmuel* to battle will have his own herd of cattle cut up into many pieces like this." And the *pesukim* tell us that a fear of *Hashem* fell upon the people and they went forth united as one man. Here, *Shaul* was gifted with courage and with strength from *Hashem* Himself and he rises up like a ferocious lion with passion and fervor to save those from his nation who are in trouble. He also does so to set a precedent of the type of leader he's going to be, notably only when he has *Hashem's* help, he's going to try and strive to be a decisive and capable leader.

A line I saw written in *The Little Midrash Says* actually captures this scene so eloquently. It says that the cut-up pieces of meat would remind *Bnei Yisrael* that if we are cut up and split apart, then we are dead meat, we cannot accomplish anything, but if we unite, then we can win. How timely that message is for us in this generation. There's nothing that can stop us when we are united.

The imagery of *Shaul* cutting up these two animals and sending it out in pieces to all of the *Shevatim* also brings up very vivid imagery from an incident still pretty fresh on our minds from the end of *Sefer Shoftim*, namely the incident of *Pilegesh Begiva*. There are many parallels between the two stories here, with the people of *Yavesh Gilad* playing a prominent role in both, and here, with cutting up the animals and sending them around in this way, *Shaul* is almost rectifying the sin of the people there by rallying them up and uniting them, this time to become one united front against their enemy. The last time *Bnei Yisrael* were unified in this type of way was actually precisely when they galvanized against the men of *Binyamin* in response to the unfortunate tragic story of *Pilegesh Begiva*.

So here, with this vividly despicable imagery that *Shaul* is conjuring up and uniting them together against a foreign enemy, he was truly providing a *tikkun* for that horrible scene, which also, interesting to note, deeply personally affected *Shaul*, as he was one of the few surviving families from that event, as *Shaul* came from the tribe of *Binyamin*.

Our story continues onwards though, *pesukim chet* and *tet* tell us that *Shaul* now gathers all of the *Bnei Yisrael*, all of the people in *Bezek*, and he counts them. According to *Rashi*, he did so

by collecting little pebbles from each of them, and he counted those up. And the count comes out: 300,000 men come from across the *Bnei Yisrael* and also 30,000 men from *Yehuda*, who are generally counted separately.

This is a huge huge gathering of all the *Bnei Yisrael* under one king. The messengers are then told to go back to the people of *Yavesh Gil'ad* and to tell them that you have nothing to worry about. Do not worry. Tomorrow you're going to experience a true *Yeshua*, a huge great salvation before the sun even turns hot.

And when the people of *Yavesh Gil'ad* hear this news, they're overjoyed. They rejoice. *Baruch Hashem*, they can't even believe it. Wow. Thank Gd, we're going to be saved from this horrible, horrible, tricky situation that we find ourselves in. And so the people of *Yavesh Gil'ad* quickly return back. They go to *Nachash* and as a decoy, they tell him that tomorrow *Nachash* you'll be able to do with us whatever it is that you desire. Meanwhile...

Pasuk yud aleph: *Shaul* splits the people into three groups. He galvanizes them together and they emerge upon the *Amonim* the next day, just as he said that they would. And they manage with strength and commitment and bravery. They manage to completely strike down the entire camp of *Amon* before the day even becomes hot.

It was a complete victory. The *pesukim* tell us that there didn't even remain two surviving men who could stand one next to the other. The people here were truly overwhelmed. They were impressed by *Shaul's* bravery, his ability to unify the *Bnei Yisrael* in this way.

This was an absolutely miraculous and powerful victory. And the *Bnei Yisrael* are all on a high. And so in that feeling, that elation of *Shaul HaMelech*, our great leader who we have now with us, a group of people come to *Shmuel* in *pasuk yud bet* and they ask him, did you see this incredible leader that we have? Do you remember that there was a group of men who disregarded *Shaul* and his kingship at the very beginning when he was first anointed? A story which we mentioned yesterday.

And they turn to *Shmuel* and they say let's kill them for disrespecting the king. This king, he's so capable. He's incredible. How could they have disrespected him in that way? But *Shaul* himself intercedes.

He jumps in and tells them, let's not put a damper on this miraculous day of victory. *Hashem* just helped us to smite down our enemies with such force and such power. Let's just enjoy this victory. There's no need to mar this day and put anyone to death. Just leave it.

And our *perek* concludes with the final two *pesukim*, *yud dalet* and *tet vav*. *Shmuel*, now seizing the momentum of this incredible victory and realizing how proud the people are of their leader *Shaul*, he now gathers up all the people at a place known as *Gilgal*, a place that was holy and sacred from the time that the *Aron* was there when *Yehoshua* first entered into *Eretz Yisrael*. And *Shaul* is now re-established as the king of Israel a second time. This time with all of the *Bnei Yisrael* in agreement. And *Shaul* and the people were extremely happy. *Shaul* truly grabbed this opportunity in today's story to rise up to the very leadership he had first tried to run from. And

with the unique strength and courage imbued to him from *Hashem* himself, he managed to truly galvanize the *Bnei Yisrael*, uniting them in a way we haven't seen in *Bnei Yisrael* for quite some time.

But I just want to end off our learning today with one quick question to think about. Our *perek* today we learned was a true high note for *Shaul* and for his kingship and for the *Bnei Yisrael* as a whole. But was *Shaul* right here, at the end of our *perek*, in choosing to forgo his honor and forgive the group of *Bnei Bliya'al*, the skeptics who had publicly mocked and doubted him? Was he right in dismissing the people's comments and leaving today as a national day of victory, or should he maybe have dealt with them in a harsher or more hands-on way? The *Gemara* in *Yoma* 22B, ב עמוד כב, actually criticizes *Shaul* for this very incident and for not acting harsher with the group of skeptics who spoke against him. Why? Wasn't *Shaul* righteous? Doesn't this show incredible, impeccable *middos* on his part?

Because although it's true that on a personal level we should always strive to work on our own *middot* and to forgive other people and there's great merit in achieving self-mastery and not responding back when faced with adversity, a king is not like any other ordinary person. A king is supposed to represent and he does represent, *Hashem*. And as such, if someone is disrespectful to a king, it's as though he's disrespecting *Hashem*. And therefore, by ignoring the insults being thrown at him, *Shaul* failed to think globally here.

On an individual level, he was righteous and his *middot* are impeccable. But failing to realize that he no longer represents just himself and his brand, he now represents and stands for the King, *Hashem*, that was something that *שואל* didn't properly take into account.

We're going to hopefully continue to watch this idea closely as we continue to learn more about *שואל* and his ensuing leadership as king. Will he stand as the strong direct representative of *השם* Himself, or will he allow himself to be swayed by the people and their opinions as he continues to lead them? Lots of food for thought as we continue our study of *ספר שמואל* together *אם ירצה* *השם*. Thank you so much for learning this *פרק* together, wishing everyone a beautiful day. Today's *פרק* is dedicated to the safety and peace of *ישראל* and *עם ישראל*.

May the words of *נ"ך* uplift us and give us strength during these challenging times.

Shmuel Alef 12

Hello and welcome to *Torat Imecha Nach Yomi* with the OU Women's Initiative. My name is Elana Glatt and today we will be studying *Sefer Shmuel Aleph, perek yud bet*, Chapter 12. Before we enter *perek yud bet*, let's quickly frame the moment we're stepping into for today. *perek yud aleph* was a true high note in our *sefer* so far. *Shaul HaMelech*, imbued with bravery and courage from *Hashem*, truly stepped into his role as king of Israel in yesterday's *perek*, and he proved himself to be the very leader the *Bnei Yisrael* had been asking for. He successfully unified the nation and miraculously he saved the *Bnei Yisrael* from *Nachash*, who as we learned yesterday, was the evil king of *Amon*, who cruelly tormented the people of *Yavesh Gilad*, insisting that they poke out their right eyes in exchange for peace. With the *Bnei Yisrael* all on a high from this incredible miracle, the *perek* ended off with *Shmuel* regathering the people, this time at *Gilgal*, to recoronate *Shaul* as the king of Israel. At this point in our *sefer*, the monarchy is now real, established, and thriving, and precisely now, at this moment of success, turning to our *perek* for today, *perek yud bet*, *Shmuel* will now gather all of the *Bnei Yisrael* yet again. This time though, to give over a powerful, honest, and emotionally charged farewell speech to the *Bnei Yisrael*.

As we'll see together today, *Shmuel* is going to reprove the people for their wrongful decision to ask for a king, a major theme of the speech and a topic we've already spent much time discussing. But he's doing so precisely now on the tail end of this momentous victory and with the *melucha* already firmly established in order to make it clear to the *Bnei Yisrael* that he's not looking to turn back the clock or to retake any leadership role for himself or for his family. Nothing in this speech is at all personal. Rather, it's all going to be guided through *nevuah*, through prophecy. And he's specifically rebuking the people now as he's coming upon age in order to set them on the proper path for the future moving forward.

Pesukim aleph through bet: Shmuel, who like many great leaders of the *Bnei Yisrael*, chooses to reprove the nation before he dies, now opens up his final speech to the *Bnei Yisrael*.

הנה שמעתי בקלכם לכל אשר אמרתם לי, ויאמר שמואל אל כל ישראל, *Shmuel says to all of Bnei Yisrael*, *behold, I have listened to all that you have asked of me and I have crowned a king over you.*

ועתה הנה המלך מתהלך לפניכם ואני זקנתי ושבתי, *And now the king goes before you, but I have become old and gray*, ובני הנם אתכם ואני התהלכתי לפניכם מנערי עד היום הזה, *and as for my sons, here they are with you. And as for me, I have walked before you from my youth until this day.*

We know that *Shmuel* up until now has been the leader of the *Bnei Yisrael*, serving them since he was a very young child. *Shmuel* opens up his speech mentioning with a double language how he has become old, *zakanti v'savti*, and he's doing so purposely in order to emphasize how devoted he has been to *Klal Yisrael* his entire life, and that despite the fact that all of his work on their behalf has aged him, perhaps even prematurely (many *Meforshim* point out that he's only fifty here at the time of this speech), he would not give up anything from his time serving them. And he's also doing so right now to set the record straight:

I'm old. I'm not looking for any new roles. I'm not even looking to step back into the role I'm in. All the words that I (*Shmuel*) am about to tell you in this *perek*, in this speech, are completely *l'shem Shamayim*. They're coming directly from *Hashem* and meant to enter into each and every one of your hearts.

He also notes about his sons, *uvanai hinam itchem*. I'm not looking for my sons to be the next leaders either. They've already stepped back from their roles and they want a king just as much as everyone else in the *Bnei Yisrael* does. They'll be subservient to him in precisely the same way as everyone else.

Again, doubling down this idea: All *Shmuel* is going to share now in this impassioned speech is completely for the sake of *Hashem* and His honor and for the betterment of the Jewish people themselves. And before he gets into more direct rebuke towards the people, he uses the next few *pesukim*, *pesukim gimel* through *heh*, to clarify another thing to the *Bnei Yisrael*. He says, here I am today, standing in front of you at this farewell gathering. Please come and testify against me, here and now in front of anyone. Please let me know whether I ever wrongly took anything from anyone, *chas v'shalom*. If anyone feels I owe him anything at all, please come forward and tell me, I will repay it right away. Is there anyone whose ox I have taken or used for my own personal use? Did I ever take or use anyone's donkey for any of my journeys? Did I ever take money from anyone who feels I didn't deserve that money I had taken? Is there anyone from whom I ever even remotely took a bribe in any way and let them escape punishment that really he was deserving of? If I ever committed any of these sins, please come forward now and tell me. I will make sure to compensate the victim right now, right away, in front of everyone.

Shmuel is inviting public scrutiny here and with all of the *Bnei Yisrael* in attendance, not even one person has anything they can report or respond back. As we learned earlier, *Shmuel* was very meticulous in his practice of never taking anything from the public, even things he was deserving of. He stayed as far away from gaining any personal benefit from public funds or possessions, highlighting the high level of honesty and *yashrut* of *Shmuel*, a *midah* we can aspire towards in our own lives. And the people then respond in unison: "You have taken nothing from us." A unified voice of absolute clarity.

And *Shmuel* then adds: "*Hashem* is your witness." And the people respond back: "A witness." And *Rashi* notes here that a heavenly voice itself came forth and declared: "I am a witness." *Hashem* himself testified to the people that *Shmuel* was not only righteous publicly, but privately as well, through and through. *Shmuel* here is making the point without making the point directly. "Didn't I live up to the leadership? Wasn't I extremely honest and a devoted leader to you? And yet you still rejected me?" And no one from the *Bnei Yisrael* has anything to respond. They agree that *Shmuel* really was the ultimate leader for them.

Now *Shmuel* pivots slightly in his speech. In *pesukim vav* through *yud*, he shifts to the next part of his speech, namely showing the *Bnei Yisrael* that the request for a king was a sign of ingratitude to *Hashem* Himself. Through taking them on an abbreviated tour through Jewish history, he's going to point out to the *Bnei Yisrael* that the people always had to deal with

adversity, even without having an established king to save them. But that *Hashem* always does save them when they finally look inwards and recognize their own sins and their own failures that brought them to that very spot in the first place.

He mentions how when *Bnei Yisrael* were desperate and stuck in their plight in the land of *Mitzrayim*, and they call out to *Hashem*, *Hashem* sent them *Moshe* and *Aharon* to redeem them. But then the people forgot *Hashem*, and so he delivered them into the hands of *Sisra*, the main general of *Chatzor*, and into the hands of the *Plishtim*, and into the hands of the king of *Moav*, and they fought them. And then again, the *Bnei Yisrael* cry out from the oppression they were facing. And then he mentions the *Shoftim* cycle, zooming forward many years, the very pattern we're about to discuss.

And *pasuk yud aleph*: וישלח ה' את ירבעל ואת בן ואת יפתח ואת שמואל ויצל אתכם מיד איביכם מסביב ותשובו בטח. And so *Hashem* sent *Yeruba'al*, this is referring to *Gidon* by the name he was given for standing up against the *Ba'al*, and *Bedan*, this is *Shimshon* who came from the lower *shevet* of *Dan*, and *Yiftach*, and *Shmuel*. Here he refers to himself in the third person because he's giving over a *nevuah* as it is told. And *Hashem* delivered you from the enemies around you, and you dwelt in security.

Rashi notes here that this *pasuk* lists three lower-weight leaders, as he refers to them—*Gidon*, *Shimshon*, and *Yiftach*—in comparison to three world-important leaders—*Moshe*, *Aharon*, and *Shmuel* themselves—to show us that every leader in each generation is considered equally great in importance to *Moshe*, *Aharon*, and *Shmuel* themselves. Even with less prominent leaders, *Bnei Yisrael* accepted them and returned back to the proper ways of *Hashem*. They didn't beseech *Hashem* for a king at any of those earlier points. They recognized that as long as they returned back to the ways of *Hashem*, *Hashem* would then continue to save and protect them.

It had been their fault all along for the sufferings they faced time and again, their fault and not the leader. And now he continues. *Pasuk yud bet*: "And you were scared because *Nachash*, the king of *Ammon* threatened you." We learned in yesterday's *perek*. "And you asked for a king.

But really, *Hashem* himself was your king all along. If you would have done *teshuvah*, *Hashem* could have helped you against *Nachash*, even without a king. He can save you through anyone He chooses to, if only you turn to Him and recognize that He is truly your savior." This really puts a bit of a damper on yesterday's *perek* when we, along with all of the *Bnei Yisrael*, were on a high from watching *Shaul* miraculously defeat *Ammon* and properly rise to his role as defending the *Bnei Yisrael*. But again, *Shmuel's* not trying to discredit *Shaul* or to undo what already now exists. He just wants the *Bnei Yisrael* to realize that they were wrong in thinking that a king would be the main solution, and that *Hashem* is truly the One and only true *melech*, King over them. This is precisely the main take-home message we will now see in *pesukim yud daled* through *tet vav*.

אם תיראו את ה' ועבדתם אתו ושמעתם בקולו ולא תמרו את פי ה' והייתם גם אתם וגם המלך אשר מלך עליכם . אחר ה'...

Now that you have a king, if you fear *Hashem*, worship Him and obey Him and never rebel against *Hashem's* command, then you and the king who reigns over you will remain following after *Hashem* your God. You'll have the kingship continued.

ואם לא תשמעו בקול ה' ומריתם את פי ה' והיתה יד ה' בכם ובאבותיכם. *But if you do not obey Hashem and you flout Hashem's command, Hashem's hand will strike you as it did your ancestors.*

Shmuel is reframing everything here. You have a king, *Baruch Hashem*. But you must know this equation. If you follow *Hashem*, you and your king will succeed. If not, you and your king will fail. The king will not determine your fate. You do. Here *Shmuel's* shifting the responsibility back to the *B'nei Yisroel*.

And now *Shmuel*, recognizing that אין דומה שמיעה לראייה, you cannot compare hearing to seeing, is about to bring a demonstration, a sign, to prove that all he's been saying has been divinely guided. It's true and from *Hashem*.

Shmuel now says in *pasuk yud zayin*: You might be thinking, "but *Hashem* agreed to our request, so it must have been okay, no?" I'm going to show you. It's now the season of the wheat harvest, he says. No rain ever falls in *Eretz Yisroel* during this time as it's harmful because it prevents the harvested wheat from drying properly and it can actually ruin the entire crop. But I will now *daven* to *Hashem* and He's going to bring forth thunder and rain.

Pasuk yud chet: So *Shmuel* calls out to *Hashem* and He brings forth crashing thunder and booming lightning and rain, something we actually experienced this past Friday night amidst this current war with Iran, deciphering and trying to figure out which were the powerful thunder booms coming from *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* and what were actual booms of missiles that were being targeted or impacted that might need us running to a shelter, a pretty crazy moment of recognizing the power of *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* and His nature.

And *Pasuk yud tet*: And the people became super frightened and they asked *Shmuel* to *daven* for them, recognizing and admitting that they had done the wrong thing in asking for a king. Seeing *Shmuel* bring this powerful and untimely rain both really scared the *B'nei Yisroel*, but it also confirmed to them three important things. First, they realized with this crazy rainstorm that *Shmuel's* spiritual power and his connection to *Hashem* surpassed that of any king and they had wrongly undervalued him and his leadership.

The second: they understood that timing matters. Like rain, a king can be a blessing or a curse depending on when it's given, something we discussed previously that the *Malbim* addresses when speaking about the issue of asking for a king. And the third: they learned that *Hashem* granting a request doesn't mean that He approves of it. It may still be harmful to them. The *perek* now ends off though with five beautiful *pesukim*, *chaf* through *chaf heh*, with *Shmuel* reassuring the *B'nei Yisroel* that they have nothing to fear at all.

As long as they stay loyal to *Hashem* moving forward, He will never forsake or leave them. True, the rain freaked them out. True, the lightning and the thunder was scary and true, it showed to them just how wrong they had been. The *pasuk* tells us: כי לא יטוש ה' את עמו בעבור שמו הגדול כי

הואיל ה' לעשות אתכם לו לעם, *For Hashem will never abandon His people for the sake of His great name, for Hashem has sworn to make you for a people unto Him.* In *Avodat Hashem*, the next best path you can take is the next path forward. Keep growing, keep striving for better, keep to *Hashem* and His ways and He will always be with you. A Jew is never too far gone.

Look ahead, look forward, always rekindling and repairing your relationship with *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*. We can always make amends. I remember hearing once from a noted psychologist that she mentioned the most important parenting tool is not perfection but it's repair. Fixing mistakes and creating a healthy path to move forward is one of the most important tools that a parent can use in parenting and we can use in all relationships in our lives.

And *Shmuel* notes that he too will never stop *davening* for the Jewish people. He says, I will always be here for you, *davening* for you and striving to guide you on the proper path. This was never personal and I am always and will always be here as your guide. And as we close our learning of this *perek* for today, we can leave off summarizing *Shmuel's* impassioned speech with one profound thought.

The *B'nei Yisrael* came into this moment thinking that the answer to all of their problems was a better leader. A king. But *Shmuel* today teaches them that really, the full solution is not a better leader, it's a better people. It's not the king, not the *shofet*, not the system, it's really us, our choices, our *teshuva*, our relationship with *Hashem*.

Thank you so much for learning this *perek* together. Today's *perek* is dedicated to the safety and peace of *Am Yisrael* and *Eretz Yisrael*. May the words of *Nach* uplift us and give us strength during these challenging times.