

והיית לנו לעינים

“...and you *shall be* as eyes for us...”

a view from a *GER*

יונתן נח בן אברהם

yonason noach *BEN AVRAHAM*

*Parashas KI SISA*

## The messenger adopts the name of the Sender

It is a **FACT** that the *Anshei Kennesses HaGadolah* codified in our *davening* the phrase,

ומבלעדיך אין לנו מלך גואל ומושיע

“*Other than You [HaShem], we have no king, redeemer, or savior.*”

**HOWEVER** we find in Torah (in the larger context of the word) that there are “other” kings, redeemers, and saviors:

**Devarim 17:15** “You shall set him king (מלך) over you, whom the Lord your God shall choose...” (See *Shmuel Alef*, *Shmuel Beis*, *Melach Alef*, *Melachim Beis*, *Hilchos Melachim*, et al)

**Yishayahu 59:20** “And a redeemer (גואל) shall come to Zion...”

**Shemoneh Esrei, Patriarchs** “... Who recalls the kindnesses of the Patriarchs and brings a redeemer (גואל) to their children’s children...”

**Shoftim 3:9** “And when the people of Israel cried to the Lord, the Lord raised up a savior (מושיע) to the people of Israel, who saved them...”

**Ovadiah 1:21** “And saviors (מושיעים) shall ascend Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau...”

How can we understand the clear statement, “ומבלעדיך אין לנו מלך גואל ומושיע” when there “clearly” seem to be “other” kings, redeemers, and saviors? This author has developed a *chiddush* regarding this “apparent inconsistency” based upon the *Rambam*, *Hilchos Melachim* 4:10 coupled with the *Navi Yechezkel’s* vision of the End of Days (*Yemos HaMashiach*), specifically *Haftaras Parashas HaChodesh* (*Yechezkel* 45:16 – 46:18). The *Rambam* reads:

“...In all matters, his (a *Yiddisha* king of flesh and blood) deeds shall be for the sake of Heaven. **His purpose and his intent shall be to elevate the true faith** and fill the world with justice...”

In other words, a *melech Yisrael’s* primary job is to teach us, and lead us in the proper path of *HaShem’s* Torah.

The *Navi Yechezkel* reads:

(**37:21-22, 24-25, Haftaras Vayigash**) “And say to them, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from among the nations, where they have gone, and will gather them on every

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side, and bring them into their own land; And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king (מֶלֶךְ) shall be king (מֶלֶךְ) to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, nor shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all ... And David my servant shall be king (מֶלֶךְ) over them; and they all shall have one shepherd; they shall also follow my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob my servant, where your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell in it, they and their children, and their grandchildren for ever; **and my servant David shall be their prince (נָשִׂיא) forever.**”

Please note the change from calling the *Mashiach* a מֶלֶךְ to calling him a נָשִׂיא. Never again in *Yechezkel's* End Times' Prophecy is the *Mashiach* called מֶלֶךְ. And why is this? Perhaps this is because of the return of HaShem to His “dwelling place” on earth. Consider *Yechezkel 44:1-3*:

“Then He brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces the east; and it was closed. Then says the Lord to me; ***This gate shall be closed, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it; because the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered by it, therefore it shall be closed.*** As for the prince (אֶת־הַנָּשִׂיא), he, being the prince (נָשִׂיא), shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord; he shall enter by the way of the vestibule of that gate, and shall go out the same way.”

In *Haftaras Parashas HaChodesh (Yechezkel 45:16 – 46:18)*, the *Mashiach* is referred to as נָשִׂיא in eleven different *passukim*, but he ceases to be referred to as מֶלֶךְ by *Yechezkel*. Then the Navi finishes off his references to the *Mashiach* as נָשִׂיא three more times in *Yechezkel 48:21-22* (cf. *Yechezkel 45:7*).

But what is it that causes HaShem's return to earth, what event – or better – what change in *hashkafah* will we undergo in order to bring about His return? Could it be that **once the *Mashiach* is successful in getting it through our stiff-necks and hard-heads that HaShem is our ONLY King, Redeemer, and Savior** (a lesson that was made clear to us by the *Navi Yishayahu* two and a half millennia ago [45:21] “***Declare, and bring them near; yes, let them take counsel together; Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Did not I the Lord? And there is no other God beside Me; a just God and a Savior (מוֹשִׁיעַ); there is none beside Me,***”) that **he will have fulfilled the role assigned to him by HaShem's Torah and codified in *Hilchos Melachim 4:10***? And once this occurs, he will no longer bear the title מֶלֶךְ, because – after all – he will be nothing more than HaShem's *meturgeman* leading up to the days when (*Ovadhiah 1:18*) “[The] saviors (מוֹשִׁיעִים) shall ascend Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau; and **the Kingdom shall be the Lord's,**” and (*Zechariah 14:9*) “**the Lord shall be King (מֶלֶךְ) over all the earth;** on that day the Lord shall be one, and his name one.”

Yet one question remains, how is it that our Prophets and Sages referred to flesh and blood as kings, redeemers, and saviors? Was this not misleading? Rabbeinu Bachya makes most of the above chiddush a b'ruch shekivanti. Rabbeinu Bachya reads:

**Shemos 33:7 “...and whoever sought HaShem would go out to the Tent of Meeting.”**

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The entire *passuk* (Shemos 33:7) reads, “***And Moses took the Tent, and pitched it outside the camp, far away from the camp, and called it the Tent of Meeting. And it came to pass, that everyone who sought HaShem went out to the Tent of Meeting, which was outside the camp.***”

**Rabbeinu Bachya comments:**

“This teaches us that the *Shechinah* was no longer resident within the camp of the people. Actually, we would have expected the Torah to write, ‘whoever wanted to seek out Moshe, etc.’ The fact that the Torah does not use this syntax indicates that seeking out Moshe was equated with seeking out G-d’s presence. Moshe was described by the Torah as ‘HaShem’ in this regard ... In all instances mentioned the rule is that the messenger adopts the name of the Sender.”

Thus, in this author’s opinion (with a major assist from Rabbeinu Bachya), and king’s job is to teach us that HaShem is our only true King; and redeemer’s job is to teach us that HaShem is our only Redeemer; and any savior’s job is to teach us that HaShem is our only Savior. And in accomplishing these tasks, these kings, redeemers, and saviors of flesh and blood become part of the Crowning of HaShem, herald His Redemption, and remind us that He is our only True Savior, all without taking (or deserving) any credit<sup>37</sup>.

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**Consider:**

The Gemara (*Megillah* 15a, which happens to be lesson of the 48<sup>th</sup> of the 48 Ways, *Pirkei Avos* 6:6) states: “*Whoever says a thing in the name of its author, brings redemption to the world.*” The Maharal of Prague/*Derech Chaim* (ArtScroll’s “A Daily Dose of Torah,” *Parashas Shemos*, Tuesday) explains: “This does not mean that the act of attributing a quote to its proper source has a power to bring redemption. Rather, it means that one who is in the habit of giving credit where credit is due, rather than seeking credit for himself, is the type of person whom HaShem will employ to bring redemption. For when redemption is brought about by someone who will not take credit for himself, this creates a greater revelation of HaShem’s glory, as all will realize Who is truly responsible.”

In other words (*Derech Chaim* as quoted in ArtScroll Mishnah Series, *Avos*): “When G-d effects salvation for His nation, He wishes for all to be aware that He was the cause of salvation, so that the Glory of His Name will be increased in the world. Therefore, He chooses as His messengers of redemption only those who take no credit for the work of others, such as Esther, for such people can be counted on to attribute the salvation not to their efforts, but to G-d, the true Source of salvation.”

***Rabbeinu Bachya Ben Asher, Bereshis 32:30*** – למה זה תשאל לשמי, “why is this that you ask for my name?” He meant, “We do not have a fixed name; our names always change according to the mission we are sent on.” Another meaning of these words: “Why do you ask for a name seeing that we are not in the habit of revealing our names?” The reason an angel does not like to reveal his name is so as not to appear to crown himself with the success of any mission<sup>37</sup> he has been sent on. He does not want a human being to go around saying: “this and this angel has performed such and such a miracle.” He is a servant, a mere extension of his Master in Heaven and he is careful not to do something which could create the wrong impression. This is the reason that the angel who had announced to Manoach and his wife that they would have a son resented being asked his name (*Shoftim* 13:18) saying that his name was פלאי, “something concealed.” This is the meaning of *Yishayahu* 43:7: לכהודי בראתינו - לכבודי בשמי - כל הנקרא בשמי, “everything which bears My Name – I have created for the sake of My honor.” This is also the thrust of David saying in *Tehillim* 29:1: “ascribe to the Lord, o divine beings, ascribe to the Lord, glory and strength.”

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