

# WORDS OF WISDOM.

## Chapter Eleven.

### From the Desk of Rabbi Yochanan Hammond

[uitam@unitedintorah.org](mailto:uitam@unitedintorah.org)

Catherine of Siena said, “**Lose yourself wholly; and the more you lose, the more you will find**”. I find this an intriguing statement, especially if we relate it to our relationship with HaShem, HaMoshiach and Torah.

If a relationship is fractured then you can be sure there has been an event or events that have contributed to this. Our nation Israel is to be a nation that has a very close relationship with the God of Israel. Yet history shows us that this has not always been the case, in fact seldom has this been the case. Unfortunately it is no different today. There have been countless events that have contributed to this. The “Golden Calf” episode was just one. Numerous Kings, prophets and priests of Israel have been corrupt and failed to follow the Torah. These corrupt leaders of Israel caused division and were a major cause of a fractured relationship between HaShem and our nation.

The one thing we can be absolutely sure of is the fact that this fracture was **not** due to the corrupt unrighteous behaviour of HaShem. We Children of Israel have been the sole cause of any fractured relationship with HaShem. Over and over we have failed to love and trust HaShem, preferring to love ourselves and to trust in our own polluted wisdom. Down through the ages we have been very good at talking the talk of Torah but rather poor at walking the walk of Torah. I am not speaking of trying to keep all the Halakah of strict Orthodox Rabbinic Judaism; but just trying to be “observant” in our faith, to the best of our ability. We have replaced so many instructions and guide lines from HaShem with our own “manmade” instructions and guidelines. We have become unrecognisable as a nation devoted to HaShem. Sadly we are a nation devoted to self and manmade institutions. Somehow this must change and change it will.

As a nation we must begin the task of “finding ourselves”. We must attach this task to our relationship with HaShem. Within this important task it is also vital that we remember Israel is the chosen nation of HaShem.

*“For you are a people consecrated to HASHEM your God; of all peoples on earth, you have been chosen by HASHEM your God to be His own people.” Deuteronomy 7:6 [NJB]*

*“But you are a chosen race, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, a people to be a personal possession to sing the praises of God who called you out of the darkness into His wonderful light. Once you were a non-people and now you are the People of God; once you were outside His pity; now you have received pity.” 1Peter 2:9-10 [NJB]*

Israel is a nation that should be sheltering under the “wings” of HaShem, HaMoshiach and Torah. Yeshua Himself touched on this point.

*“Yerushalalayim! Yerushalayim! You kill the prophets! You stone those who are sent to you! How often I wanted to gather your children, just as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you refused! Look! God is abandoning your house to you, leaving it desolate. For I tell you, from now on, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of ADONAI’”. Matthew 23:37-39 [CJB]*

Sadly we have a history of refusing to listen to our Father in heaven, HaMoshiach and Torah. This has caused us to have a distorted view of ourselves and when we view ourselves in the mirror we are failing to see ourselves for who we are. Dare I say it, but this reminds me of a story that had the question, “Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?”

This is why I have highlighted the words of Catherine of Siena. Until we have lost the damaging and inhibiting factor of “self”, we will struggle to have an intimate relationship with HaShem. In order to find our rightful place before HaShem we must “lose ourselves”. As a nation we must find ourselves crying out to HaShem with words that reflect the following:

*“We beg you, HaShem, save us, we beg you, HaShem, give us victory! Blessed in the name of HaShem is he who is coming! We bless you from the house of HaShem. HaShem is God, he gives*

*us light. Link your processions, branches in hand, up to the horns of the altar. You are my God, I thank you, all praise to you, my God. I thank you for hearing me, and making yourself my Saviour. Give thanks to HaShem for he is good, for his faithful love endures forever.” Psalm 118:25-29 [NJB]*

It is only when we come to the point of calling on HaShem as a nation that we will begin the journey of “finding ourselves”. How we should rejoice that the faithful love of HaShem, for His nation, for us, endures forever.

As a Rabbi, I try and call people to seek HaShem and experience His faithful love. Unfortunately I have to admit that the success rate is very low. However when I witness the success rate of HaShem thus far, I realise just how hard hearted we are. If HaShem, HaMoshiach and Torah have had limited success in bringing the Children of Israel to shed the pride of self, what chance have I? None the less this should not stop one from trying and importantly stop one from improving ones individual position before HaShem through self examination via the lens of Torah.

*“For the time has come for the judgment to begin. It begins with the household of God; and if it starts with us, what will the outcome be for those who are disobeying God’s Good News?” 1Peter 4:17 [CJB]*

It would be wise for us to understand that HaShem expects us to take responsibility for our behaviour and actions. I am not sure if we fully realise that HaShem continually judges our behaviour as a nation. Thus we find ourselves in the position we currently hold. This position is not one HaShem is pleased with. A question is asked in the above scripture; “*What will the outcome be for those who are disobeying God’s Good News?*” To answer this question we must ask what the “Good News” is. May I suggest the “Good News” involves the whole “package” that HaShem has for His people. It is not enough to just embrace HaMoshiach without Torah and it is not enough to embrace Torah without HaMoshiach.

Put simply the “Good News” is both HaMoshiach and Torah and to make room for both in our lives we have to be prepared to wholly lose ourselves. Let us begin or continue the difficult task of losing ourselves so we can repair our fractured relationship with HaShem and shelter under the His wings of love.

May the grace, love and wisdom of HaShem and Yeshua HaMoshiach be with you!