



# HAFTORAH INSIGHTS

BY REBBETZIN DR.  
ADINA SHMIDMAN



## Don't Be Caught Off Guard

על־חומתיה יְרוּשָׁלַם הַפְּקֻדָּתִי שְׁמָרִים כָּל־הַיּוֹם  
וְכָל־הַלַּיְלָה תָּמִיד לֹא יִחְשׂוּ הַמְּזַכְרִים אֶת־ה' אֶל־  
דְּמֵי לָכֶם

*Upon your walls, Yerushalayim, I have appointed watchmen; all day and all night, constantly, they must never be quiet; those that remind Hashem, do not keep quiet!*

The Navi declares, “On your walls, Yerushalayim, I have set watchmen that will never be silent by day or by night.” Who are these appointed watchmen guarding the walls of Yerushalayim? The Radak suggests that these watchmen are the mourners of Zion who daven for the restoration of Yerushalayim day and night. These watchmen, unlike sentry guards who take turns in their shift, take no rest or breaks. Day and night, day in and day out, וְכָל־הַיּוֹם וְכָל־הַלַּיְלָה, their constant and consistent presence maintains guard over our precious Yerushalayim. Despite generations of distance from the holy city, the guards have never reneged on their duty maintaining their role from afar.

And what are the words recited on their watch? It is the prayers which reverberate in the spiritual and physical sphere, words recited through the generations. The watchmen plead for rebuilding of Yerushalayim and the restoration of the House of David as they recite the words of Shemoneh Esrei thrice-daily. In the Birkat HaMazon, the

watchmen request Hashem’s mercy in the restoration of the monarchy of the House of David and rebuilding the holy city of Yerushalayim. The Navi Yeshayahu beseeches the Jewish people, the watchmen of each generation to not be silent - הַמְּזַכְרִים אֶת־ה' אֶל־דְּמֵי לָכֶם - to continue praying for Yerushalayim.

But does Hashem need to be “reminded” to bring the Geulah asks Rav Schwab. He responds poignantly that it is not Hashem that needs to be reminded but rather we need the constant reminder. During the night watch, in times of despair and tragedy, it is natural to cry out to Hashem for redemption. It is during the day’s watch, when the watchmen have a clear perspective and confidence in their ability to maintain safe guard, that prayers may lag. It is specifically then that the Navi reminds us that our *tefillot* will bring the redemption and we must continue to pray.

Like the dutiful watchmen of each generation, we cry out to Hashem day and night to remember His city, His people and His world. We pray for the day of redemption, as stated in our Haftorah,

לְמַעַן צִיּוֹן לֹא אֶחְשֶׂה וּלְמַעַן יְרוּשָׁלַם לֹא אֶשְׁקוּט  
עַד־יֵצֵא כְנֶגְהָ צְדָקָה וְיִשׁוּעָתָה כָּל־פֶּיַד יִבְעָר

For the sake of Tzion, I will not keep quiet and for the sake of Yerushalayim, I will not be silent until its righteousness shines brightly, and its salvation burns like a torch. ■