

Notes: August 27, 2016

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tovv
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Jeri - Drash
8. Praise and Worship Songs
9. Message
10. Aaronic Blessing
11. Kiddush
12. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction: Seven Comforting Messages of Isaiah – Parts 1 & 2

Two weeks ago, we began a journey that will reveal truths found in Scripture that have always been right before your very eyes. Passages you have read many times, yet the connection of these events and Scriptures were not prevalent or obvious.

I told you that there is a much bigger picture and it is found in Scripture.

Likewise, I made a connection to the Haftarah as well. The Scriptures associated with the Torah readings are significant as well. The Parshah cycle, who's origins are not fully understood, yet provide pieces to a puzzle that was seen by Jewish eyes for centuries, yet not fully understood.

Not only is it found in Scripture, but it is found within the structure of the Parshah cycle, which comprises reading from Torah and the Prophets – Nevi'im.

The origin of the Haftarah reading incorporated with the Torah reading is a series of selections from the books of [Nevi'im](#) ("Prophets") of the [Hebrew Bible](#) (Tanakh) that is publicly read in [synagogue](#) as part of [Jewish religious practice](#). The Haftarah reading follows the [Torah reading](#) on each [Sabbath](#) and on [Jewish festivals](#) and [fast days](#). Typically, the haftarah is thematically linked to the [parasha](#) (Torah portion) that precedes it.

The origin of haftarah reading is lost to history, and several theories have been proposed to explain its role in Jewish practice. One of the most common views suggests it arose in response to the persecution of the [Jews](#) under [Antiochus Epiphanes](#) which preceded the [Maccabean revolt](#), wherein Torah reading was prohibited.

The [Talmud](#) mentions that a haftarah was read in the presence of Rabbi [Eliezer ben Hyrcanus](#), who lived c.70 CE.

Source – Wikipedia - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haftarah>

There is even validation of the Haftarah being read in the New Covenant writings. One that I will share with you today comes from Acts 13:

Act 13:13 Having set sail from Paphos, Sha'ul and his companions arrived at Perga in Pamphylia. There Yochanan left them and returned to Yerushalayim,

Act 13:14 but the others went on from Perga to Pisidian Antioch, and on Shabbat they went into the synagogue and sat down.

Act 13:15 After the reading from the Torah and from the Prophets, the synagogue leaders sent them a message, "Brothers, if any of you has a word of exhortation for the people, speak!"

So, at the time of Sha'ul, there was read in the Synagogue a Haftarah portion from the Nev'im in conjunction with the Torah reading for that Shabbat.

We continue this journey with our Parshah from last week, V'etchanan and this week's Parshah Ekev

Last week was *Shabbat Nachamu* ("Sabbath of comforting) taking its name from the haftarah from Isaiah in the Book of Isaiah 40:1-26 that speaks of "comforting" the Jewish people for their suffering.

It is the first of seven haftarahs of consolation (comfort received after a loss or disappointment) leading up to the holiday of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. It occurs on the Shabbat following Tisha B'av.

On Tisha B'av we began with Shabbat Chazon, "the vision" and now we are proceeding into the 7 messages of Isaiah that convey comfort to a nation. Yet, this comfort will be more than just the consoling of a nation.

Isa 40:1 "Comfort and keep comforting my people," says your God.

Isa 40:2 "Tell Yerushalayim to take heart; proclaim to her that she has completed her time of service, that her guilt has been paid off, that she has received at the hand of Adonai double for all her sins."

Through Jeremiah, Adonai provides a reason for double...

Jer 16:18 First, I will pay them back double for their crimes and sins; because they have defiled the land which is mine; they have filled my heritage with the corpses of their horrors and abominations.' "

Israel has defiled the land for ignoring the Shemittah, a time when the land is to rest every seven years and the Yovel, when the land is to also rest in the 50th year. Additionally, Israel inflicted abominations in terms of its idolatry in following other gods.

The reason for their exile is clear, yet, this is not a message that will further amplify their transgression but is in reality a message to comfort...it is a prophetic message of hope. This is a message conveyed as Israel is going through her punishment, conveying that Adonai's chastisement is not permanent, but will end. Jeremiah conveys to us the length of her punishment...

Jer 29:10 "For here is what Adonai says: 'After Bavel's seventy years are over, I will remember you and fulfill my good promise to you by bringing you back to this place.

Jer 29:11 For I know what plans I have in mind for you,' says Adonai,'plans for well-being, not for bad things; so that you can have hope and a future.

The prophet is instructed...

Isa 40:6 A voice says, "Proclaim!" And I answer, "What should I proclaim?" "All humanity is merely grass, all its kindness like wildflowers:

Isa 40:9 You who bring good news to Tziyon, get yourself up on a high mountain; you who bring good news to Yerushalayim, cry out at the top of your voice! Don't be afraid to shout out loud! Say to the cities of Y'hudah, "Here is your God!

Proclaim good news to Tzion – Here is your God!

A nation that has been in exile, because of their sin towards their God, who has removed Himself from their presence, tells the Prophet:

Proclaim good news to Tzion – Here is your God!

The message continues...

Isa 40:10 Here comes Adonai Elohim with power, and his arm will rule for him. Look! His reward is with him, and his recompense is before him.

Isa 40:11 He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering his lambs with his arm, carrying them against his chest, gently leading the mother sheep."

Then the next verses convey the magnitude of God...

Isa 40:12 Who has counted the handfuls of water in the sea, measured off the sky with a ruler, gauged how much dust there is on the earth, weighed the mountains on scales, or the hills in a balance?

Isa 40:13 Who has measured the Spirit of Adonai? Who has been his counselor, instructing him?

Isa 40:14 Whom did he consult, to gain understanding? Who taught him how to judge, taught him what he needed to know, showed him how to discern?

Isa 40:15 The nations are like a drop in a bucket, they count like a grain of dust on the scales. The islands weigh as little as specks of dust.

Isa 40:16 The L'vanon would not suffice for fuel or its animals be enough for burnt offerings.

Isa 40:17 Before him all the nations are like nothing. He regards them as less than nothing.

Isa 40:18 With whom, then, will you compare God? By what standard will you evaluate him?

There is no human standard by which God can be measured.

Yet it is this God, who will be their shepherd, who will feed them and gather them, the one who will ultimately protect them.

There is no mystery on our parts who this shepherd is...

Joh 10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

Joh 10:14 I am the good shepherd; I know my own, and my own know me —

Joh 10:15 just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father — and I lay down my life on behalf of the sheep.

Yet at the time, and as I have said many times, understanding prophecy as you are in the midst of living it, is extremely challenging. I have told you that the expectation of the Prophet was the message being conveyed was for that time, that generation. It was only as prophecies went unfulfilled did the expectation of its fulfillment grow. As more of these prophecies went unfulfilled, the expectation grew even greater, to the point that the question of who would be the one to answer, thus leading to an expectation of a Messiah, an anointed one.

Then we get to verse 21,

Isa 40:21 Don't you know? Don't you hear? Haven't you been told from the start? Don't you understand how the earth is set up?

For the answers to these questions we turn to the Torah portion associated with Isaiah 40...

This Torah portion contains the Sh'ma, the framework of Israel's love for God. As such, divine love is the subject of Isaiah 40. This portion is the first of what will be seven comforting Haftarah readings from Isaiah.

In addition to the Sh'ma, Moshe conveys to a new generation the aspects of the Covenant Adonai made with Israel when he brought them out of Egypt. Moshe will prepare this new generation for life in the land that Adonai has promised, ultimately fulfilling a promise made to Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov, some 600+ years prior.

In Parashah V'etchanan we begin with Moshe pleading with Adonai and conveying the following:

Deu 3:24 'Adonai Elohim, you have begun to reveal your greatness to your servant, and your strong hand - for what other god is there in heaven or on earth that can do the works and mighty deeds that you do?

Likewise what we are about to see is Adonai revealing His greatness and strong hand to Israel. The instruction is to listen...

Deu 4:1 "Now, Isra'el, listen to the laws and rulings I am teaching you, in order to follow them, so that you will live; then you will go in and take possession of the land that Adonai, the God of your fathers, is giving you.

Listen to everything that Moshe is going to tell you, so you will live. There is life in the Word of Adonai.

in order to not only take possession of the land but also to live in it...

And a warning...

Deu 4:2 In order to obey the mitzvot of Adonai your God which I am giving you, do not add to what I am saying, and do not subtract from it.

Before that, Moshe reminds them of what they saw and experienced...

Deu 4:3 You saw with your own eyes what Adonai did at Ba`al-P`or, that Adonai destroyed from among you all the men who followed Ba`al-P`or (Numbers 25);

Deu 4:4 but you who stuck with Adonai your God are still alive today, every one of you.

Followed by the foundation for this Covenant, the laws and ruling of Adonai...

Deu 4:5 Look, I have taught you laws and rulings, just as Adonai my God ordered me, so that you can behave accordingly in the land where you are going in order to take possession of it.

And the Godly wisdom they were to follow:

Deu 4:6 Therefore, observe them; and follow them; for then all peoples will see you as having wisdom and understanding. When they hear of all these laws, they will say, 'This great nation is surely a wise and understanding people.'

Deu 4:7 For what great nation is there that has God as close to them as Adonai our God is, whenever we call on him?

Deu 4:8 What great nation is there that has laws and rulings as just as this entire Torah which I am setting before you today?

And that which they have been reminded...

Deu 4:12 Then Adonai spoke to you out of the fire! You heard the sound of words but saw no shape, there was only a voice.

Deu 4:13 He proclaimed his covenant to you, which he ordered you to obey, the Ten Words; and he wrote them on two stone tablets.

Deu 4:14 At that time Adonai ordered me to teach you laws and rulings, so that you would live by them in the land you are entering in order to take possession of it.

And warning...

Deu 4:15 "Therefore, watch out for yourselves! Since you did not see a shape of any kind on the day Adonai spoke to you in Horev from the fire,

Deu 4:16 do not become corrupt and make yourselves a carved image having the shape of any figure - not a representation of a human being, male or female,

Deu 4:17 or a representation of any animal on earth, or a representation of any bird that flies in the air,

Deu 4:18 or a representation of anything that creeps along on the ground, or a representation of any fish in the water below the shoreline.

Deu 4:19 For the same reason, do not look up at the sky, at the sun, moon, stars and everything in the sky, and be drawn away to worship and serve them; Adonai your God has allotted these to all the peoples under the entire sky.

And additional warning...

Deu 4:23 Watch out for yourselves, so that you won't forget the covenant of Adonai your God, which he made with you, and make yourself a carved image, a representation of anything forbidden to you by Adonai your God.

Deu 4:24 For Adonai your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

And the potential outcome should Israel not follow Adonai's instructions...

Deu 4:27 Adonai will scatter you among the peoples; and among the nations to which Adonai will lead you away, you will be left few in number.

Deu 4:28 There you will serve gods which are the product of human hands, made of wood and stone, which can't see, hear, eat or smell.

Deu 4:29 However, from there you will seek Adonai your God; and you will find him if you search after him with all your heart and being.

And what they would ultimately experience, in spite of their transgressions...

Deu 4:30 In your distress, when all these things have come upon you, in the acharit-hayamim (end of days), you will return to Adonai your God and listen to what he says;

Deu 4:31 for Adonai your God is a merciful God. He will not fail you, destroy you, or forget the covenant with your ancestors which he swore to them.

They are reminded of this special relationship, one that no other people or nation has ever experienced...

Deu 4:33 Did any other people ever hear the voice of God speaking out of a fire, as you have heard, and stay alive?

Deu 4:34 Or has God ever tried to go and take for himself a nation from the very bowels of another nation, by means of ordeals, signs, wonders, war, a mighty hand, an outstretched arm and great terrors — like all that Adonai your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes?

Further expressing this magnitude...

Deu 4:36 From heaven he caused you to hear his voice, in order to instruct you; and on earth he caused you to see his great fire; and you heard his very words coming out from the fire.

Deu 4:37 Because he loved your ancestors, chose their descendants after them and brought you out of Egypt with his presence and great power,

Deu 4:38 in order to drive out ahead of you nations greater and stronger than you, so that he could bring you in and give you their land as an inheritance, as is the case today;

Deu 4:39 know today, and establish it in your heart, that Adonai is God in heaven above and on earth below - there is no other.

Drawing the conclusion, given everything that has been expressed...

Deu 4:40 Therefore, you are to keep his laws and mitzvot which I am giving you today, so that it will go well with you and with your children after you, and so that you will prolong your days in the land Adonai your God is giving you forever."

Deu 5:1 Then — Moshe called to all Isra'el and said to them, "Listen, Isra'el, to the laws and rulings which I am announcing in your hearing today, so that you will learn them and take care to obey them.

Followed by the 10 commandments

Deu 5:32 (5:29) "Therefore you are to be careful to do as Adonai your God has ordered you; you are not to deviate either to the right or the left.

Deu 5:33 (5:30) You are to follow the entire way which Adonai your God has ordered you; so that you will live, things will go well with you, and you will live long in the land you are about to possess.

Deu 6:1 "Now this is the mitzvah, the laws and rulings which Adonai your God ordered me to teach you for you to obey in the land you are crossing over to possess,

Deu 6:2 so that you will fear Adonai your God and observe all his regulations and mitzvot that I am giving you - you, your child and your grandchild - as long as you live, and so that you will have long life.

Deu 6:3 Therefore listen, Isra'el, and take care to obey, so that things will go well with you, and so that you will increase greatly, as Adonai, the God of your ancestors, promised you by giving you a land flowing with milk and honey.

At the beginning of chapter 4, 5, 6, Moshe instructs Israel to listen. Three times it is emphasized to listen.

Deu 6:10 "When Adonai your God has brought you into the land he swore to your ancestors Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya`akov that he would give you - cities great and prosperous, which you didn't build;

Deu 6:11 houses full of all sorts of good things, which you didn't fill; water cisterns dug out, which you didn't dig; vineyards and olive trees, which you didn't plant - and you have eaten your fill;

Deu 6:12 then be careful not to forget Adonai, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, where you lived as slaves.

Deu 6:17 Observe diligently the mitzvot of Adonai your God, and his instructions and laws which he has given you.

Deu 6:18 You are to do what is right and good in the sight of Adonai, so that things will go well with you, and you will enter and possess the good land Adonai swore to your ancestors,

Deu 6:19 expelling all your enemies ahead of you, as Adonai said.

- Deu 7:3** Don't intermarry with them — don't give your daughter to his son, and don't take his daughter for your son.
Deu 7:4 For he will turn your children away from following me in order to serve other gods. If this happens, the anger of Adonai will flare up against you, and he will quickly destroy you.
Deu 7:5 No, treat them this way: break down their altars, smash their standing-stones to pieces, cut down their sacred poles and burn up their carved images completely.
Deu 7:6 For you are a people set apart as holy for Adonai your God. Adonai your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his own unique treasure.
Deu 7:7 Adonai didn't set his heart on you or choose you because you numbered more than any other people - on the contrary, you were the fewest of all peoples.
Deu 7:8 Rather, it was because Adonai loved you, and because he wanted to keep the oath which he had sworn to your ancestors, that Adonai brought you out with a strong hand and redeemed you from a life of slavery under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Getting back to Isaiah 40...

Isa 40:21 Don't you know? Don't you hear? Haven't you been told from the start? Don't you understand how the earth is set up?

The Prophet ultimately answers the question this way...

Isa 40:22 He who sits above the circle of the earth — for whom its inhabitants appear like grasshoppers — stretches out the heavens like a curtain, spreads them out like a tent to live in.

Isa 40:23 He reduces princes to nothing, the rulers of the earth to emptiness.

Isa 40:24 Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely their stem taken root in the ground, when he blows on them, they dry up, and the whirlwind carries them off like straw.

With the final answer of hope and comfort to the nation of Israel found in verses 25 and 26:

Isa 40:25 "With whom, then, will you compare me? With whom am I equal?" asks the Holy One.

Isa 40:26 Turn your eyes to the heavens! See who created these things! He brings out the army of them in sequence, summoning each by name. Through his great might and his massive strength, not one of them is missing.

The answer has been with them all the time, yet they needed to be reminded. If you had paid attention to what I conveyed to Moshe, you would not be in the state you are currently in.

Parashah Ekev (Deuteronomy 7:12 – 11:25) and Isaiah 49:14 – 51:11

The Prophet speaks of God as both loving and just. He punishes Israel for their sins, yet He takes them back in compassion. Within this parashah, Adonai conveys to Moshe how He will deal with His people.

In Parashah Ekev (Deuteronomy 7:12 – 11:25) starts off with an encouragement for listening...

Deu 7:12 "Because you are listening to these rulings, keeping and obeying them, Adonai your God will keep with you the covenant and mercy that he swore to your ancestors.

Deu 7:13 He will love you, bless you and increase your numbers; he will also bless the fruit of your body and the fruit of your ground - your grain, wine, olive oil and the young of your cattle and sheep - in the land he swore to your

ancestors that he would give you.

Deu 7:14 You will be blessed more than all other peoples; there will not be a sterile male or female among you, and the same with your livestock.

Deu 7:15 Adonai will remove all illness from you - he will not afflict you with any of Egypt's dreadful diseases, which you have known; instead, he will lay them on those who hate you.

Yet the Haftarah (Isaiah 49:14 – 51:11) starts off...

Isa 49:14 "But Tziyon says, 'Adonai has abandoned me, Adonai has forgotten me.'

A very different position than was conveyed in the opening of Parashah Ekev, yet Adonai's response is anything but angry, given Israel's transgression:

Isa 49:15 Can a woman forget her child at the breast, not show pity on the child from her womb? Even if these were to forget, I would not forget you.

Isa 49:16 I have engraved you on the palms of my hands, your walls are always before me."

Isa 49:17 Your children are coming quickly, your destroyers and plunderers are leaving and going.

Isa 49:18 Raise your eyes, and look around: they are all gathering and coming to you. Adonai swears: "As surely as I am alive, you will wear them all like jewels, adorn yourself with them like a bride."

Isa 49:19 For your desolate places and ruins and your devastated land will be too cramped for those living in it; your devourers will be far away.

A message of hope, in lew of their current state.

Isa 50:1 Adonai says: "Where is your mother's divorce document which I gave her when I divorced her? Or: to which of my creditors did I sell you? You were sold because of your sins; because of your crimes was your mother divorced.

The Prophet is reminding the people that it was your sins that have put you in the hands of another. Yet as I conveyed in the previous Parashah...

Deu 4:30 In your distress, when all these things have come upon you, in the acharit-hayamim (end of days), you will return to Adonai your God and listen to what he says;

Deu 4:31 for Adonai your God is a merciful God. He will not fail you, destroy you, or forget the covenant with your ancestors which he swore to them.

A message to those with faith and those lacking faith...

Isa 50:10 "Who among you fears Adonai? Who obeys what his servant says? Even when he walks in the dark, without any light, he will trust in Adonai's reputation and rely on his God.

To The Faithful...

Isa 50:11 But all of you who are lighting fires and arming yourselves with firebrands: go, walk in the flame of your own fire, among the firebrands you lit! From my hands this *[fate]* awaits you: you will lie down in torment.

Those lacking faith and taking matters into their own hands. Adonai says...

Isa 51:1 "Listen to me, you pursuers of justice, you who seek Adonai: consider the rock from which you were cut, the quarry from which you were dug —

Isa 51:2 consider Avraham your father and Sarah, who gave birth to you; in that I called him when he was only one person, then blessed him and made him many.

Israel is reminded where they came from, thus conveying the magnitude of Adonai's capabilities to redeem Israel.

Isa 51:3 For Adonai will comfort Tziyon, will comfort all her ruined places, will make her desert like `Eden, her `Aravah like the garden of Adonai. Joy and gladness will be there, thanksgiving and the sound of music.

Adonai pleads with His people...

Isa 51:4 "Pay attention to me, my people! My nation, listen to me! For Torah will go out from me; I will calm them with my justice as a light for the peoples.

Isa 51:5 My righteousness is at hand, my salvation goes out, my arms will judge the peoples. The coastlands are putting their hope in me, trusting in my arm.

Isa 51:6 "Raise your eyes toward the skies, look at the earth below. The skies will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like clothing. Those living on it will die like flies; but my salvation will be forever, and my justice will never end.

Isa 51:7 "Listen to me, you who know justice, you people who have my Torah in your heart: don't be afraid of people's taunts, don't be upset by their insults.

Isa 51:8 For the moth will eat them up like clothing, the worm will eat them like wool; but my justice will be forever, and my salvation for all generations."

Isa 51:9 Awake! Awake! Arm of Adonai, clothe yourself with strength! Awake, as in days of old, as in ancient generations! Wasn't it you who hacked Rahav to pieces, you who pierced the sea monster? [*Rahav symbolizes Egypt; the sea monster symbolizes Pharaoh*]

Isa 51:10 Wasn't it you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep; you who made the sea bottom a road for the redeemed to cross?

Those who seek justice and pursue Adonai are the ones who paid attention and listened...

Deu 8:1 "All the mitzvot I am giving you today you are to take care to obey, so that you will live, increase your numbers, enter and take possession of the land Adonai swore about to your ancestors.

Deu 8:2 You are to remember everything of the way in which Adonai led you these forty years in the desert, humbling and testing you in order to know what was in your heart - whether you would obey his mitzvot or not.

Deu 8:3 He humbled you, allowing you to become hungry, and then fed you with man, which neither you nor your ancestors had ever known, to make you understand that a person does not live on food alone but on everything that comes from the mouth of Adonai.

Deu 8:4 During these forty years the clothing you were wearing didn't grow old, and your feet didn't swell up.

Deu 8:5 Think deeply about it: Adonai was disciplining you, just as a man disciplines his child.

Deu 8:6 So obey the mitzvot of Adonai your God, living as he directs and fearing him.

Deu 8:7 For Adonai your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with streams, springs and water welling up from the depths in valleys and on hillsides.

And were the faithful remnant that Adonai would continue to protect...

However, those that were not faithful and didn't revere Adonai, would see a much different outcome...

Deu 8:19 If you forget Adonai your God, follow other gods and serve and worship them, I am warning you in advance today that you will certainly perish.

Deu 8:20 You will perish just like the nations that Adonai is causing to perish ahead of you, because you will not have heeded the voice of Adonai your God."

So, when Tzion asked,

Isa 49:14 "But Tziyon says, 'Adonai has abandoned me, Adonai has forgotten me.'

Was it the faithful remnant or the one who did not pursue Him?

Yet Adonai answer:

Isa 51:11 Those ransomed by Adonai will return and come with singing to Tziyon; on their heads will be everlasting joy. They will acquire gladness and joy, while sorrow and sighing will flee.