

Notes: August 12, 2023

Introduction: Seven Comforting Messages of Isaiah – Parts 3

Three 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, whose 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.

Let me convey another perspective of the Haftarah than what I have provided in the last few weeks. First this is what I have stated previously...

*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.

Now, let's look at the origin of the Haftarah from another perspective...

Is it possible that the Haftarah associated with the Torah portion goes back even further?

Is it possible that the selection of the Haftarah, for this week's Torah portion may have been changed at some point in history?

According to the Talmud, it was Ezra the Scribe who established the practice, which continues today and stems from Nehemiah...

**(8:1)** When the seventh month arrived, after the people of Isra'el had resettled in their towns,

**Neh 8:1** all the people gathered with one accord in the open space in front of the Water Gate and asked `Ezra the Torah-teacher to bring the scroll of the Torah of Moshe, which Adonai had commanded Isra'el.

**Neh 8:2** `Ezra the cohen brought the Torah before the assembly, which consisted of men, women and all children old enough to understand. It was the first day of the seventh month.

**Neh 8:3** Facing the open space in front of the Water Gate, he read from it to the men, the women and the children who could understand from early morning until noon; and all the people listened attentively to the scroll of the Torah.

**Neh 8:4** `Ezra the Torah-teacher stood on a wood platform which they had made for the purpose; beside him on his right stood Mattityah, Shema, `Anayah, Uriyah, Hilkiyah and Ma`aseiyah; while on his left were P'dayah, Misha'el, Malkiyah, Hashum, Hashbadanah, Z'kharyah and Meshulam.

**Neh 8:5** `Ezra opened the scroll where all the people could see him, because he was higher than all the people; when he opened it, all the people rose to their feet.

**Neh 8:6** `Ezra blessed Adonai, the great God; and all the people answered, "Amen! Amen!" as they lifted up their hands, bowed their heads and fell prostrate before Adonai with their faces to the ground.

**Neh 8:7** The L'vi'im Yeshua, Bani, Sherevyah, Yamin, `Akuv, Shabtai, Hadiyah, Ma`aseiyah, K'lita, `Azaryah, Yozavad, Hanan and P'layah explained the Torah to the people, while the people remained in their places.

**Neh 8:8** They read clearly from the scroll, in the Torah of God, translated it, and enabled them to understand the sense of what was being read.

Could it have been at this time that Ezra, the Torah teacher, comprised a weekly reading of Torah, in a new structure known as a synagogue? Rather than the reading once every seventh year?

Could it be that Ezra influenced a cycle of 54 divisions of Torah to be read within a single year?

If he influenced it, what was his intent?

Could it be, having just come out of captivity as a result of judgment by Adonai for violating His mitzvot, following after other gods, that led to the defiling of the land? They ignored the Sabbath including the Sabbath for the land.

Could Ezra have established this reading cycle in order to instill into the people Adonai's mitzvot, in order for them not to be ignorant and transgress Adonai's mitzvot.

Ignorance means – lack of knowledge or information

In other words, so that the people would not lack the knowledge of Adonai

Yet with in the word Ignorance is Ignore...

Ignore means - refuse to take notice of or acknowledge; disregard intentionally.

There is a fine line between having a lack of knowledge and intentionally refusing to take notice.

Could Ezra have begun including additional readings from the Nevi'im, the Prophets that they had in order to convey greater insight?

I have posed many questions, yet cannot provide you with definitive answers. However, in that Adonai orders the heavens and the earth, why would he not order His Word?

This week's Haftarah for Re'eh is Isaiah 54:11 – 55:5, yet next week's Haftarah for Shoftim is Isaiah 51:12 – 52:12, followed by the Haftarah for Ki Tetzah, Isaiah 54:1 – 54:10

When you read these passages and consider there seems to be an intentional disruption of the flow of the message, I believe something happened.

What that something might be, I will share with you next week, because it will be much clearer.

For this week, Isaiah 54 was split up by Isaiah 51 and 52.

This reminds me of another division I shared with you a few years ago. That division was in the ordering of the New Covenant writings.

Yochanan's gospel was placed at the end of the Gospels, dividing Luke's Gospel from the book of Acts, also his work. In dividing these two books, the flow of the narrative was interrupted thus in essence hiding something very Jewish, the division in affect hid Jewish context.

What was that context?

That context was the counting of the omer from Yeshua's resurrection until Shavuot.

Likewise, I believe the Haftarah portions for the next three Parshahs Re'eh, Shoftim and Ti

Tetzah have been altered.

What if we were to combine Isaiah 54 and attach it to Parashah Ki Tetzah

And attach Isaiah 51:12 – 52:12 with Parashah Re'eh

Your likely wondering right now, if you are combining readings and moving one reading to another week, that means there is one opening. You are correct, there is one opening and it is for next week's Parshah, for which I will talk about next week.

So, in looking at Isaiah 51:12 – 52:12 associated with this week's Parashah Re'eh we see that it starts off in a similar manner to the first week of Isaiah's 7 messages of comfort and consolation:

**Isa 51:12** "I, yes I, am the one who comforts you! Why are you afraid of a man, who must die; of a human being, who will wither like grass?

Followed by the reason Judea is where they are...

**Isa 51:13** You have forgotten Adonai, your maker, who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth. Instead, you are in constant fear all day because of the oppressor's rage, as he prepares to destroy! But where is the oppressor's rage?

Yet comforting them with the message that your exile, your captivity, your punishment is not permanent but will soon be ending.

**Isa 51:14** The captive will soon be set free; he will not die and go down to Sh'ol; on the contrary, his food supply will be secure.

**Isa 51:15** For I am Adonai your God, who stirs up the sea, who makes its waves roar — Adonai-Tzva'ot is my name.

**Isa 51:16** I have put my words in your mouth and covered you with the shadow of my hand, in order to plant the skies [*anew*], lay the foundations of the earth [*anew*] and say to Tziyon, 'You are my people.' "

It is He who is in control of their present and clears the path for their future.

**Isa 51:17** Awake! Awake! Stand up, Yerushalayim! At Adonai's hand you drank the cup of his fury; you have drained to the dregs the goblet of drunkenness.

**Isa 51:18** There is no one to guide her among all the sons she has borne. Not one of all the children she raised is taking her by the hand.

**Isa 51:19** These two disasters have overcome you — plunder and destruction, famine and sword; by whom can I comfort you?

I believe these two disasters are the destruction of the Temple and removal from the land.

**Isa 51:20** Your children lie helpless at every street corner, like an antelope trapped in a net; they are full of Adonai's fury, the rebuke of your God.

**Isa 51:21** Therefore, please hear this in your affliction, you who are drunk, but not with wine;

**Isa 51:22** this is what your Lord Adonai says, your God, who defends his people: "Here, I have removed from your hand the cup of drunkenness, the goblet of my fury. You will never drink it again.

**Isa 51:23** I will put it in the hands of your tormentors, who said to you, 'Bend down, so we can trample you,' and you flattened your back on the ground like a street for them to walk on."

Adonai used Babylon to enact out His judgment upon the southern Kingdom, yet as identified in verse 23 they went too far...as Adonai identifies them as their tormenters...

**Jer 50:17** "Isra'el is a stray lamb, driven away by lions. First to devour him was Ashur's king; and the last to break his bones is this N'vukhadretzar king of Bavel."

**Jer 50:18** Therefore Adonai-Tzva'ot, the God of Isra'el, says: "I will punish the king of Bavel and his land as I punished the king of Ashur.

This message of comfort continues in Isaiah 52:

**Isa 52:1** Awake! Awake, Tziyon! Clothe yourself with your strength! Dress in your splendid garments, Yerushalayim, the holy city! For the uncircumcised and the unclean will enter you no more.

**Isa 52:2** Shake off the dust! Arise! Be enthroned, Yerushalayim! Loosen the chains on your neck, captive daughter of Tziyon!

**Isa 52:3** For thus says Adonai: "You were sold for nothing, and you will be redeemed without money."

**Isa 52:4** For thus says Adonai Elohim: "Long ago my people went down to Egypt to live there as aliens, and Ashur oppressed them for no reason.

**Isa 52:5** So now, what should I do here," asks Adonai, "since my people were carried off for nothing? Their oppressors are howling," says Adonai, "and my name is always being insulted, daily.

**Isa 52:6** Therefore my people will know my name; therefore on that day they will know that I, the one speaking — here I am!"

**Isa 52:7** How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, proclaiming shalom, bringing good news of good things, announcing salvation and saying to Tziyon, "Your God is King!"

**Isa 52:8** Listen! Your watchmen are raising their voices, shouting for joy together. For they will see, before their own eyes, Adonai returning to Tziyon.

**Isa 52:9** Break out into joy! Sing together, you ruins of Yerushalayim! For Adonai has comforted his people, he has redeemed Yerushalayim!

**Isa 52:10** Adonai has bared his holy arm in the sight of every nation, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

**Isa 52:11** Leave! Leave! Get out of there! Don't touch anything unclean! Get out from inside it, and be clean, you who carry Adonai's temple equipment.

**Isa 52:12** You need not leave in haste, you do not have to flee; for Adonai will go ahead of you, and the God of Isra'el will also be behind you.

Throughout this week's Torah portion, Moshe continues instructing a nation preparing to enter a land, take possession of it and reside in it. This preparation that Moshe is instilling is to enable them to safely live in the land, prosper and be fruitful as a nation, ultimately leading them in becoming a light to the nations.

In Deuteronomy 12 they are instructed to breakdown any and all places where the nations they are preparing to dispose served their gods. The altars and anything associated with them.

**Deu 12:3** Break down their altars, smash their standing-stones to pieces, burn up their sacred poles completely and cut down the carved images of their gods. Exterminate their name from that place.

Then Adonai instructs them on what they are supposed to do...

**Deu 12:4** "But you are not to treat Adonai your God this way.

**Deu 12:5** Rather, you are to come to the place where Adonai your God will put his name. He will choose it from all your tribes; and you will seek out that place, which is where he will live, and go there.

**Deu 12:6** You will bring there your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tenths [*that you set aside for Adonai*], the offerings that you give, the offerings you have vowed, your voluntary offerings, and the firstborn of your cattle and sheep.

**Deu 12:7** There you will eat in the presence of Adonai your God; and you will rejoice over everything you set out to do, you and your households, in which Adonai your God has blessed you.

**Deu 12:8** You will not do things the way we do them here today, where everyone does whatever in his own opinion seems right;

**Deu 12:9** because you haven't yet arrived at the rest and inheritance which Adonai your God is giving you.

This instruction will ultimately lead to the Temple. The very place that Adonai would reside, so long as Israel would follow after Him.

The very symbol of Judea's exile, the destruction of the Temple.

Then you have Deuteronomy 15, and the Sh'mittah...

**Deu 15:1** "At the end of every seven years you are to have a sh'mittah.

**Deu 15:2** Here is how the sh'mittah is to be done: every creditor is to give up what he has loaned to his fellow member of the community — he is not to force his neighbor or relative to repay it, because Adonai's time of remission has been proclaimed.

Note – Leviticus 25

**Lev 25:2** "Tell the people of Isra'el, 'When you enter the land I am giving you, the land itself is to observe a Shabbat rest for Adonai.

**Lev 25:3** Six years you will sow your field; six years you will prune your grapevines and gather their produce.

**Lev 25:4** But in the seventh year is to be a Shabbat of complete rest for the land, a Shabbat for Adonai; you will neither sow your field nor prune your grapevines.

Throughout Deuteronomy, this theme is conveyed through Moshe by Adonai...

**Deu 12:28** Obey and pay attention to everything I am ordering you to do, so that things will go well with you and with your descendants after you forever, as you do what Adonai sees as good and right.

These two things, the Temple and the Sh'mittah are the primary elements associated with Israel's judgment and ultimate exile.

Yet the message in Isaiah, this third message of comfort conveys that their exile will come to an end and their judgment is not permanent.

In this message, Adonai is conveying...

**Isa 51:14** The captive will soon be set free; he will not die and go down to Sh'ol; on the contrary, his food supply will be secure.

**Isa 51:15** For I am Adonai your God, who stirs up the sea, who makes its waves roar — Adonai-Tzva'ot is my name.

**Isa 51:16** I have put my words in your mouth and covered you with the shadow of my hand, in order to plant the skies [*anew*], lay the foundations of the earth [*anew*] and say to Tziyon, 'You are my people.' "

Yet, in this Torah portion is also given a warning...

**Deu 13:1 (13:2)** "If a prophet or someone who gets messages while dreaming arises among you and he gives you a sign or wonder,

**Deu 13:2 (13:3)** and the sign or wonder comes about as he predicted when he said, 'Let's follow other gods, which you have not known; and let us serve them,'

**Deu 13:3 (13:4)** you are not to listen to what that prophet or dreamer says. For Adonai your God is testing you, in order to find out whether you really do love Adonai your God with all your heart and being.

**Deu 13:4 (13:5)** You are to follow Adonai your God, fear him, obey his mitzvot, listen to what he says, serve him and cling to him;

This scenario falls in line with what I have told you about knowing if what you are hearing is truly from Ruach ha Kodesh – The Spirit of Adonai.

There is every appearance that this prophet is from Adonai, performing signs and wonders, yet it is the message that shows us if it is truly from Adonai.

If it draws you closer to Him it is from Him, yet if it is to draw you away from Him, it is not from Him.

Don't be deceived. Israel was given the same warning and information, yet did not abide.

Ultimately it is Adonai who reveals Himself and it is through Yeshua that we have received this further revelation.

[Luk 24:44](#) Yeshua said to them, "This is what I meant when I was still with you and told you that everything written about me in the Torah of Moshe, the Prophets and the Psalms had to be fulfilled."

[Luk 24:45](#) Then he opened their minds, so that they could understand the Tanakh,

[Luk 24:46](#) telling them, "Here is what it says: the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day;

[Luk 24:47](#) and in his name repentance leading to forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed to people from all nations, starting with Yerushalayim.

[Luk 24:48](#) You are witnesses of these things.