

Notes: August 19, 2023

Introduction: Seven Comforting Messages of Isaiah – Parts 4 Where's Isaiah 53?

Four 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 that I have shared previously. Let me share another example of the Haftarah being read in the synagogue...

[Luk 4:14](#) Yeshua returned to the Galil in the power of the Spirit, and reports about him spread throughout the countryside.

[Luk 4:15](#) He taught in their synagogues, and everyone respected him.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

[Luk 4:16](#) Now when he went to Natzeret, where he had been brought up, on Shabbat he

went to the synagogue as usual. He stood up to read,

Luk 4:17 and he was given the scroll of the prophet Yesha`yahu. Unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it was written,

Luk 4:18 "The Spirit of Adonai is upon me; therefore he has anointed me to announce Good News to the poor; he has sent me to proclaim freedom for the imprisoned and renewed sight for the blind, to release those who have been crushed,

Luk 4:19 to proclaim a year of the favor of Adonai."

Luk 4:20 After closing the scroll and returning it to the shammash, he sat down; and the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on him.

Luk 4:21 He started to speak to them: "Today, as you heard it read, this passage of the Tanakh was fulfilled!"

Luk 4:22 Everyone was speaking well of him and marvelling that such appealing words were coming from his mouth. They were even asking, "Can this be Yosef's son?"

Luk 4:23 Then Yeshua said to them, "No doubt you will quote to me this proverb—' "Doctor, cure yourself!" We've heard about all the things that have been going on over in K'far-Nachum; now do them here in your home town!"

Luk 4:24 Yes!" he said, "I tell you that no prophet is accepted in his home town.

Luk 4:25 It's true, I'm telling you—when Eliyahu was in Isra'el, and the sky was sealed off for three-and-a-half years, so that all the Land suffered a severe famine, there were many widows;

Luk 4:26 but Eliyahu was sent to none of them, only to a widow in Tzarfat in the land of Tzidon.

Luk 4:27 Also there were many people with tzara`at in Isra'el during the time of the prophet Elisha; but not one of them was healed, only Na`aman the Syrian."

Luk 4:28 On hearing this, everyone in the synagogue was filled with fury.

Last week I presented another scenario regarding the origin of the Haftarah from another perspective...

I asked - 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?

Last week's Haftarah for Re'eh was Isaiah 54:11 – 55:5, yet this 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. In addition to flow, we will see today that an entire section was left out of these readings. And when I say a section, I am not just talking about any section but an extremely significant section of Scripture.

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

Last week, rather than doing the scheduled Haftarah for Parshah Re'eh of Isaiah 54:11 – 55:5, we actually looked at what would be this week's scheduled reading for Shoftim – Isaiah 51:12 – 52:12. Next week we will combine Isaiah 54:11 – 55:5 with the scheduled reading of Isaiah 54:1- 10.

So, now the question...what should today's Haftarah reading be if we have juggled the existing order?

The portion that is missing from this segment – Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12

In last week's Parshah, Yerushalayim was told to "awake, awake", twice...

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 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.

And to leave, leave...

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.

When a word is repeated in Scripture, it conveys greater importance than if it were only to be written once. It is meant to get your attention. Adonai, through the Prophet Isaiah intends to get Israel's attention.

Remember verse 12 again...Adonai will go ahead of you, and the God of Isra'el will be behind you. Meaning, God is with you and protecting you. This imagery should be remembered

because this very dynamic occurred during the exodus...

Exo 14:19 Next, the angel of God, who was going ahead of the camp of Isra'el, moved away and went behind them; and the column of cloud moved away from in front of them and stood behind them.

Exo 14:20 It stationed itself between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Isra'el—there was cloud and darkness here, but light by night there; so that the one did not come near the other all night long.

What is conveyed next by Isaiah is...

Isa 52:13 "See how my servant will succeed! He will be raised up, exalted, highly honored!

Isa 52:14 Just as many were appalled at him, because he was so disfigured that he didn't even seem human and simply no longer looked like a man,

Isa 52:15 so now he will startle many nations; because of him, kings will be speechless. For they will see what they had not been told, they will ponder things they had never heard."

Adonai is raising up His servant.

What transpires next is Isaiah 53, the passage of Scripture known as the "Suffering Servant" likely the most powerful prophecy found in Scripture.

A prophecy that conveys that the servant of Adonai will suffer, even at the hands of His own people, Israel, whom Adonai has identified as "His first born", "His holy people", His holy nation"

Isa 53:1 Who believes our report? To whom is the arm of Adonai revealed?

Isa 53:2 For before him he grew up like a young plant, like a root out of dry ground. He was not well-formed or especially handsome; we saw him, but his appearance did not attract us.

Isa 53:3 People despised and avoided him, a man of pains, well acquainted with illness. Like someone from whom people turn their faces, he was despised; we did not value him.

Isa 53:4 In fact, it was our diseases he bore, our pains from which he suffered; yet we regarded him as punished, stricken and afflicted by God.

Isa 53:5 But he was wounded because of our crimes, crushed because of our sins; the disciplining that makes us whole fell on him, and by his bruises [*Or: and in fellowship with him*] we are healed.

Isa 53:6 We all, like sheep, went astray; we turned, each one, to his own way; yet Adonai laid on him the guilt of all of us.

Isa 53:7 Though mistreated, he was submissive — he did not open his mouth. Like a lamb led to be slaughtered, like a sheep silent before its shearers, he did not open his mouth.

Isa 53:8 After forcible arrest and sentencing, he was taken away; and none of his generation protested his being cut off from the land of the living for the crimes of my people, who deserved the punishment themselves.

Yeshua would go through six trials, three by Rome and three by Judea. In each, He remained silent, meaning He did not offer a defense of the accusations brought against Him.

Isa 53:9 He was given a grave among the wicked; in his death he was with a rich man. Although he had done no violence and had said nothing deceptive,

Isa 53:10 yet it pleased Adonai to crush him with illness, to see if he would present himself as a guilt offering. If he does, he will see his offspring; and he will prolong his days; and at his hand Adonai's desire will be accomplished.

Yeshua's offspring? Who are they?

Israel.

Isa 53:11 After this ordeal, he will see satisfaction. "By his knowing [*pain and sacrifice*], my righteous servant makes many righteous; it is for their sins that he suffers.

Isa 53:12 Therefore I will assign him a share with the great, he will divide the spoil with the mighty, for having exposed himself to death and being counted among the sinners, while actually bearing the sin of many and interceding for the offenders."

How does Isaiah 53 relate with this week's Parshah Shoftim?

Within this week's Parshah is one of the most profound statements Adonai conveys to Moshe...

Deu 18:18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kinsmen. I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I order him.

Deu 18:19 Whoever doesn't listen to my words, which he will speak in my name, will have to account for himself to me.

Adonai conveys through Moshe that He will raise up a prophet like Him...

Adonai conveys through Isaiah in 52:13 "my servant"

Can you connect through Scripture Prophet and Servant?

1Ki 14:18 All Isra'el buried him and mourned him, in keeping with the word of Adonai spoken through his servant Achiyah the prophet.

1Ki 18:36 Then, when it came time for offering the evening offering, Eliyahu the prophet approached and said, "Adonai, God of Avraham, Yitz'chak and Isra'el, let it be known today that you are God in Isra'el, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all

these things at your word.

2Ki 14:25 He recovered the territory of Isra'el between the entrance of Hamat and the sea of the `Aravah, in keeping with the word of Adonai the God of Isra'el, which he spoke through his servant Yonah the son of Amitai, the prophet from Gat-Hefer.

Furthermore, Moshe was identified as Adonai's servant...

Deu 34:5 So Moshe, the servant of Adonai, died there in the land of Mo'av, as Adonai had said.

And would be the model by which He would establish His Prophet, who would be His Servant and is revealed to us as Yeshua.

Deu 18:20 " 'But if a prophet presumptuously speaks a word in my name which I didn't order him to say, or if he speaks in the name of other gods, then that prophet must die.'

Deu 18:21 You may be wondering, 'How are we to know if a word has not been spoken by Adonai?'

Deu 18:22 When a prophet speaks in the name of Adonai, and the prediction does not come true — that is, the word is not fulfilled — then Adonai did not speak that word. The prophet who said it spoke presumptuously; you have nothing to fear from him.

So, getting back to some of my initial questions...what happened to Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12?

Why was it removed?

In answering these questions, I can only provide a theory. I don't believe there is any documented information available that can substantiate what I am about to say. There will be no October surprise by Wikileaks whereby they reveal emails to support what I am about to say. So, what you are going to hear is anecdotal, yet I believe to be plausible when this theory is laid out to you.

Ask any Rabbi from a traditional synagogue "Who is Isaiah 53 referring to?"

The answer you will get is Israel.

In essence, Israel is the suffering servant. Yet there is one rather significant problem with this view and the problem is found in verse 10, 11 and 12:

Isa 53:10 yet it pleased Adonai to crush him with illness, to see if he would present himself as a guilt offering. If he does, he will see his offspring; and he will prolong his days; and at his hand Adonai's desire will be accomplished.

Isa 53:11 After this ordeal, he will see satisfaction. "By his knowing [*pain and sacrifice*], my righteous servant makes many righteous; it is for their sins that he suffers.

Isa 53:12 Therefore I will assign him a share with the great, he will divide the spoil with the

mighty, for having exposed himself to death and being counted among the sinners, while actually bearing the sin of many and interceding for the offenders."

Israel was never able to bear her own sin and make atonement. Hence in verse 10, it says that the servant of Adonai would "present himself as a guilt offering". Israel could not do this on her own. It was always through one who would intercede, the Cohen ha Gadol.

Israel may have suffered great pain and sacrifice, yet they were not able to bear the sins of many through their own death. As a result of death and suffering she did not make many righteous. Israel, could not make atonement for herself and on her behalf, make atonement for others.

The closest this would come and could happen was Sukkot and Israel's interceding for the nations with the 70 sacrifices, yet it was not on her own that the nation could do this, but again it was through one who would intercede. In this case Israel never bore her own sin, but the animal that was sacrificed bore the sin, whereby through the shedding of that animal's blood, atonement was made.

So, the argument falls apart through these verses of Isaiah.

Yet, why do they continue to promote this view?

I believe they continue to promote this view, because there is no other view that would suffice. In other words because Israel is Adonai's servant, this is the only plausible explanation.

So, how did we get to Isaiah 53 being about Israel and not Yeshua?

Likely it has to do with Adonai revealing continually to believers the truth of Isaiah 53, being that it is Yeshua.

Therefore, in order to remove this constant thorn in their side, this constant reminder, the Rabbis at some point in history, after the destruction of the Temple, removed Isaiah 53, split Isaiah 54 and relocated Isaiah 51 & 52.

Constantly having to hear about Isaiah 53 as part of the Parashah that conveys Adonai bringing forth a Prophet like Moshe and that Prophet being Yeshua must have ignited an anger. Remember, after the first century, the Messianic community was now growing into primarily Gentile influence.

The Jewishness was being removed and non-Jewish, pagan and worldly traits were being added. Animosity was building as many gentile believers began believing "the Jews killed Jesus", "Jesus is the Christian God", thus establishing further animosity and further removing any and all Jewishness from Yeshua, to the point whereby Christianity became an adversary to the Jewish people.

Hence the Rabbi's response to this increasingly adversarial and negative view towards the Jewish people was to remove any further and constant reminder of Yeshua as the suffering servant, hence removing Isaiah 53 from the Haftarah reading.

Yet, by removing Isaiah 53 from the Haftarah reading does not negate these truths...

Let us be further reminded what Isaiah conveyed...

Yeshua remained silent:

Mat 26:62 The cohen hagadol stood up and said, "Have you nothing to say to the accusation these men are making?"

Mat 26:63 Yeshua remained silent. The cohen hagadol said to him, "I put you under oath! By the living God, tell us if you are the Mashiach, the Son of God!"

Yeshua would be put to death:

Mat 26:66 What is your verdict?" "Guilty," they answered. "He deserves death!"

Mat 27:22 Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Yeshua, called 'the Messiah'?" They all said, "Put him to death on the stake! Put him to death on the stake!"

Yeshua would be mocked and suffer:

Mat 27:26 Then he released to them Bar-Abba; but Yeshua, after having him whipped, he handed over to be executed on a stake.

Mat 27:27 The governor's soldiers took Yeshua into the headquarters building, and the whole battalion gathered around him.

Mat 27:28 They stripped off his clothes and put on him a scarlet robe,

Mat 27:29 wove thorn-branches into a crown and put it on his head, and put a stick in his right hand. Then they kneeled down in front of him and made fun of him: "Hail to the King of the Jews!"

Mat 27:30 They spit on him and used the stick to beat him about the head.

Mat 27:31 When they had finished ridiculing him, they took off the robe, put his own clothes back on him and led him away to be nailed to the execution-stake.

Yeshua will be highly honored:

Mat 26:64 Yeshua said to him, "The words are your own. But I tell you that one day you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of HaG'vurah and coming on the clouds of heaven."

When Isaiah 53 was removed, and therefore changed the Haftarah reading is not documented. Needless to say, there is sufficient evidence found in the New Covenant writings that further verifies the identity of Isaiah's suffering servant.

There is no mistaking who the identity of Adonai's suffering servant is.

Yeshua.

Of the seven messages of Isaiah, there is no greater message of comfort than that of Adonai's suffering servant.