

Notes: August 26, 2023

Introduction: The Seven Comforting Messages of Isaiah – Part 5

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:

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.

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, Hodiya, 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 ever 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 with Parshah Shoftim, we looked at Isaiah 52:13 – 53:13, one of the most powerful Messianic passages of Scripture.

This week for Parshah Ki Tetzah, we are combining Isaiah 54:1 – 54:10 and Isaiah 54:11 – 55:5 and will look at it in its totality.

In Isaiah's fifth message of comfort, the focus now shifts to the the barren woman.

Just who is the barren woman?

When he says...

Isa 54:1 "Sing, barren woman who has never had a child! Burst into song, shout for joy, you who have never been in labor! For the deserted wife will have more children than the woman who is living with her husband," says Adonai.

Who is Isaiah referring to?

The barren woman could be referring to the city Jerusalem in that while Israel was in exile, she was abandoned, meaning without inhabitants, but is likely referring to Israel as a whole.

In the Haftarah associated with Parshah Ekev, Isaiah identifies Israel as Adonai's bride...

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.

There will be another time in an upcoming Haftarah portion that Adonai will refer to Israel as His bride.

The message that Adonai is conveying through Isaiah is one of Israel's restoration.

Yes you are barren, without people, but you will no longer remain barren, to the point you will have many children.

Isa 54:2 Enlarge the space for your tent, extend the curtains of your dwelling; do not hold back, lengthen your cords, make your tent pegs firm.

Isa 54:3 For you will spread out to the right and the left, your descendants will possess the nations and inhabit the desolated cities.

The imagery of the woman relates to Israel's restoration as a people, coming back to the land, inhabiting the cities that are currently desolate. As a nation, they will once again flourish and prosper.

The deserted wife will be fully restored to her husband.

Isa 54:4 Don't be afraid, for you won't be ashamed; don't be discouraged, for you won't be disgraced. You will forget the shame of your youth, no longer remember the dishonor of being widowed.

Isa 54:5 For your husband is your Maker, Adonai-Tzva'ot is his name. The Holy One of Isra'el is your Redeemer. He will be called the God of all the earth.

Adonai is your redeemer, your husband, your maker. In other words He is the one who has established you and will ultimately redeem you from your transgression...

Just as Adonai had established from the very beginning the husband would be the covering, protector of the wife, so to, Adonai the husband, is the protector and redeemer of Israel, His bride.

Isa 54:6 For Adonai has called you back like a wife abandoned and grief-stricken; "A wife married in her youth cannot be rejected," says your God.

Isa 54:7 "Briefly I abandoned you, but with great compassion I am taking you back.

Isa 54:8 I was angry for a moment and hid my face from you; but with everlasting grace I will have compassion on you," says Adonai your Redeemer.

Isa 54:9 "For me this is like Noach's flood. Just as I swore that no flood like Noach's would ever again cover the earth, so now I swear that never again will I be angry with you or rebuke you.

Isa 54:10 For the mountains may leave and the hills be removed, but my grace will never leave you, and my covenant of peace will not be removed," says Adonai, who has compassion on you.

Never again would Adonai be angry with His bride, thus establishing a New Covenant with her therefore restoring the union with her.

Jer 31:31 (31:30) "Here, the days are coming," says Adonai, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Y'hudah.

Jer 31:32 (31:31) It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them by their hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt; because they, for their part, violated my covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them," says Adonai.

Adonai the husband, Israel His bride.

Through Isaiah, Adonai conveys further assurances, not only will Adonai redeem her, but will in essence restore her to her once prominent and radiant position...

Likely talking of Jerusalem, the very heart of the bride of Adonai...

Isa 54:11 "Storm-ravaged [*city*], unconsoled, I will set your stones in the finest way, lay your foundations with sapphires,

Isa 54:12 make your windows shine with rubies, your gates with garnet, your walls with gemstones.

Isa 54:13 All your children will be taught by Adonai; your children will have great peace.

Isa 54:14 In righteousness you will be established, far from oppression, with nothing to fear; far from ruin, for it will not come near you.

Isa 54:15 Any alliance that forms against you will not be my doing; whoever tries to form such an alliance will fall because of you.

Isa 54:16 It is I who created the craftsman who blows on the coals and forges weapons suited to their purpose; I also created the destroyer to work havoc.

Isa 54:17 No weapon made will prevail against you. In court you will refute every accusation. The servants of Adonai inherit all this; the reward for their righteousness is from me," says Adonai.

This is most certainly a message for those returning from exile, yet could this also be a message for today?

“Make your tent pegs firm” (verse 2) refers to a nation that will never again be removed from their land.

Israel would once again be dispersed, yet would again be regathered by Adonai and returned to the land some 1900 years later. Could this be the final time they are removed from the land, hence leading to the return of Yeshua?

Yet, the second part of this fifth message of comfort from Isaiah, conveys

Isa 55:1 "All you who are thirsty, come to the water! You without money, come, buy, and eat! Yes, come! Buy wine and milk without money — it's free!

Isa 55:2 Why spend money for what isn't food, your wages for what doesn't satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and you will eat well, you will enjoy the fat of the land.

Isa 55:3 Open your ears, and come to me; listen well, and you will live — I will make an everlasting covenant with you, the grace I assured David.

Isa 55:4 I have given him as a witness to the peoples, a leader and lawgiver for the peoples.

Isa 55:5 You will summon a nation you do not know, and a nation that doesn't know you will run to you, for the sake of Adonai your God, the Holy One of Isra'el, who will glorify you."

Yet, a short 5 weeks after this Haftarah portion is read, all who are gathered in Jerusalem for Sukkot will hear these words...

Joh 7:37 Now on the last day of the festival, Hoshana Rabbah, Yeshua stood and cried out, "If anyone is thirsty, let him keep coming to me and drinking!

Joh 7:38 Whoever puts his trust in me, as the Scripture says, rivers of living water will flow from his inmost being!"

To which Yochanan inserted the following to the reader to further understand what Yeshua was actually saying, in that His account was written long after this had occurred.

Joh 7:39 (Now he said this about the Spirit, whom those who trusted in him were to receive later — the Spirit had not yet been given, because Yeshua had not yet been glorified.)

Taking us back all the way to Genesis 1:2:

Gen 1:2 The earth was unformed and void, darkness was on the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God hovered over the surface of the water.

To which the very people who had read Isaiah 55 just a short time ago responded...

Joh 7:40 On hearing his words, some people in the crowd said, "Surely this man is 'the prophet' ";

Joh 7:41 others said, "This is the Messiah." But others said, "How can the Messiah come from the Galil?"

Joh 7:42 Doesn't the Tanakh say that the Messiah is from the seed of David and comes from Beit-Lechem, the village where David lived?"

Joh 7:43 So the people were divided because of him.

To some, their eyes had been opened, while for others, there was still doubt.

Ultimately, in referencing a theme to these verses of Isaiah would be one of redemption.

In this week's Parashah, Ki Tetzah (When you go out), 74 of the 613 mitzvot are found, 12% of Adonai's instructions to Israel are found in this one Parshah. The passage that best relates to the Haftarah portion we just read is Deuteronomy 24:1 - 4

- Divorce – 24:1 – 4

Deu 24:1 "Suppose a man marries a woman and consummates the marriage but later finds her displeasing, because he has found her offensive in some respect. He writes her a divorce document, gives it to her and sends her away from his house.

Deu 24:2 She leaves his house, goes and becomes another man's wife;

Deu 24:3 but the second husband dislikes her and writes her a get, gives it to her and sends her away from his house; or the second husband whom she married dies.

Deu 24:4 In such a case her first husband, who sent her away, may not take her again as his wife, because she is now defiled. It would be detestable to Adonai, and you are not to bring about sin in the land Adonai your God is giving you as your inheritance.

This very document was referenced in a previous Haftarah portion...Ekev (Isaiah 49:14 – 51:3)...

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.

Israel left Adonai's house and became another man's wife through her adulterous actions, thus sending her away.

Adonai is not able to restore His bride through the existing covenant, because it has been defiled. The sin of His bride has forever defiled their first covenant...

Jer 31:31 (31:30) "Here, the days are coming," says Adonai, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Y'hudah.

Jer 31:32 (31:31) It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took

them by their hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt; because they, for their part, violated my covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them," says Adonai.

It would be through one's death that ultimately closes one covenant, and makes way for Adonai to redeem His bride with a New Covenant.

Adonai redeemed His bride, by Himself dying and then redeeming His bride through a New Covenant.

Heb 9:15 It is because of this death that he is mediator of a new covenant [*or will*]. Because a death has occurred which sets people free from the transgressions committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.

Heb 9:16 For where there is a will, there must necessarily be produced evidence of its maker's death,

Heb 9:17 since a will goes into effect only upon death; it never has force while its maker is still alive.

Heb 9:18 This is why the first covenant too was inaugurated with blood.

Heb 9:19 After Moshe had proclaimed every command of the Torah to all the people, he took the blood of the calves with some water and used scarlet wool and hyssop to sprinkle both the scroll itself and all the people;

Heb 9:20 and he said, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has ordained for you."

A death means you are no longer bound by the covenant that was made. Death releases the parties from their obligation of the covenant.

So, it was through Yeshua's death that He absolved the first covenant between Adonai and Israel, allowing Him to establish His New Covenant with them, thus giving to Israel a better and more powerful covenant. Through their transgressions, He made His relationship with them stronger.

Other mitzvot that offer further relevance to this Haftarah are:

- Defiant son – 21:18 – 21

Deu 21:18 "If a man has a stubborn, rebellious son who will not obey what his father or mother says, and even after they discipline him he still refuses to pay attention to them;

Deu 21:19 then his father and mother are to take hold of him and bring him out to the leaders of his town, at the gate of that place,

Deu 21:20 and say to the leaders of his town, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he doesn't pay attention to us, lives wildly, gets drunk.'

Deu 21:21 Then all the men of his town are to stone him to death; in this way you will put

an end to such wickedness among you, and all Isra'el will hear about it and be afraid.

A defiant child who would continually rebel against his parents was punishable by death.

You had a defiant nation, who in all likelihood should have been put to death for their transgressions, yet Adonai, who so deeply cared for His bride, not to mention the promises He made with their ancestors chose to redeem her instead.

- Death on a stake – 21:22 – 23

Deu 21:22 "If someone has committed a capital crime and is put to death, then hung on a tree,

Deu 21:23 his body is not to remain all night on the tree, but you must bury him the same day, because a person who has been hanged has been cursed by God - so that you will not defile your land, which Adonai your God is giving you to inherit.

A reminder of Yeshua's death.

- A vow – 23:22 – 24

Deu 23:21 (23:22) "When you make a vow to Adonai your God, you are not to delay in fulfilling it, for Adonai your God will certainly demand it of you, and your failure to do so will be your sin.

Deu 23:22 (23:23) If you choose not to make a vow at all, that will not be a sin for you;

Deu 23:23 (23:24) but if a vow passes your lips, you must take care to perform it according to what you voluntarily vowed to Adonai your God, what you promised in words spoken aloud.

Adonai not only made this mitzvah, but also followed it. His promise to Avraham was an everlasting promise.

- Justice for all – 24:17 – 18

Deu 24:17 "You are not to deprive the foreigner or the orphan of the justice which is his due, and you are not to take a widow's clothing as collateral for a loan.

Deu 24:18 Rather, remember that you were a slave in Egypt; and Adonai your God redeemed you from there. That is why I am ordering you to do this.

A further reminder to Israel of Adonai's heart towards His people.