

Haftarah for

Yom HaAtzma-ut

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SERIES EDITOR Hara E. Person

MASORETIC HEBREW TEXT EDITOR David E. S. Stein, from *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*, revised edition

HAFTARAH TRANSLATOR Chaim Stern ל"י, from *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*, revised edition

PHILOLOGICAL EDITOR FOR TRANSLATION Philip D. Stern, from *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*, revised edition

HAFTARAH INTRODUCTION Carolyn Bricklin, with material adapted from Family Shabbat Table Talk by Barbara Kadden and from *The Haftarah Commentary* by W. Gunther Plaut

DESIGN David E. S. Stein

COMPOSITION El Ot Pre Press & Computing Ltd. (Tel Aviv)

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Online publication was made possible through the generosity of
Dorothy and Leonard Teitelbaum, in honor of their grandchildren.

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• Haftarah for Yom HaAtzma-ut: Introduction •

FROM HOLIDAY TO HAFTARAH

Connecting the Text with the Occasion

Yom HaAtzma-ut, or Israel Independence Day, celebrates the establishment of the modern-day State of Israel in 1948. In the years just before and after that event, hundreds of thousands of Jews from around the world settled there. Israel encompasses much of the territory that Jews have historically thought of as their national homeland.

The haftarah dwells on these twin themes of ingathering and of homeland. It envisions a time when those Israelites who had been exiled from the Land of Israel will be able to return in peace and prosperity.

(The Torah reading for this occasion is either Deuteronomy 8:1–18, 11:8–21, 26:1–11, or 30:1–16.)

THE PROPHET

Although our haftarah portion is found in the Book of Isaiah, it is probably not the work of the prophet Isaiah. Most scholars agree that the Book of Isaiah

contains the work of more than one author. Apparently a later prophet lived circa 540 B.C.E., two hundred years after Isaiah himself. Scholars refer to

this second, unnamed prophet as Second Isaiah or Deutero-Isaiah; they believe that he lived in Babylonia and composed the poetry in chapters 40–66.

Deutero-Isaiah is God's spokesperson, addressing the people of Israel as though God speaks through his lips. His

main message is of hope and consolation to that portion of the people exiled in Babylonia.

OVERVIEW

Decades earlier, the Babylonian army had taken leading residents of Judah into captivity. That army had also destroyed Jerusalem and its great Temple. Some of the exiled Judeans had since been praying for the opportunity to return to their homeland; others had despaired of ever doing so.

This prophecy addresses the exiled Israelites. It imagines a time when they will be restored to

“As once you were
abandoned and hated,
with no one passing through,
so now I make you a pride forever,
the joy of all generations.”

Isaiah 60:15

their homeland. People will come from all corners of the earth to rebuild the cities that had been destroyed.

While in the past, the Israelites were exiled as a punishment for their sins against God, Isaiah envisions a time when God will forgive them and bring them back to their land in joy.

Throughout this passage, light is used as a symbol of God's presence and divine favor.

CONSIDER THIS

1. The ancient prophet imagined a time when the Israelites would make their home in the Land of Israel. How has the establishment of the modern-day State of Israel been a fulfillment of this vision? In what way is the vision not yet fulfilled?
2. What more can be done to make the State of Israel a source of light for all the world?



• Haftarah (Isaiah 60:1-22) •

ס קוּמִי אֲוִרִי

כִּי בֵּא אֲוִרְךָ וּכְבוֹד יְהוָה עֲלֶיךָ זָרַח:

2 כִּי־הִנֵּה הַחֹשֶׁךְ יִכָּסֶה־אֶרֶץ

וְעֵרְפָל לְאֻמִּים

וְעֲלֶיךָ יִזְרַח יְהוָה

וּכְבוֹדוֹ עֲלֶיךָ יֵרָאֶה:

3 וְהָלְכוּ גוֹיִם לְאֲוִרְךָ

וּמַלְכִים לְנִגְהַ זָרְחֶךָ:

4 שְׂאִי־סָבִיב עֵינֶיךָ וּרְאִי

כָּל־שֵׁם נִקְבְּצוּ

בְּאוֹלָךָ

בְּנֵיךָ מֵרְחוֹק יָבֹאוּ

וּבְנוֹתֶיךָ עַל־צֵד תִּתְאַמְנָה:

5 אַז תִּרְאִי וְנִהַרְתְּ

וּפָתַח וּרְחַב לְבָבְךָ

כִּי־יִהְיֶה־פֶּךָ עֲלֶיךָ הַמִּזֵּן לָם

חֵי־ל גוֹיִם יָבֹאוּ לָךְ:

60:1] Arise, shine, [O Jerusalem,]
for your light has come, the glory of the Eternal is
shining upon you!

2] Though darkness may cover the earth,
thick darkness [the] peoples—
upon you the Eternal will shine,
over you God's Presence will appear.

3] Nations shall walk toward your light,
and kings toward your sunrise.

4] Raise your eyes and see!
They are gathering, all of them,
they are coming to you.

Your sons shall come from afar,
your daughters borne securely.

5] You shall see it and beam with joy,
your heart will thrill with pride,
the sea's abundance shall shower you,
the wealth of nations shall come your way.

6 שִׁפְעַת גְּמָלִים תִּכְסֹּף
 בְּכַרִּי מִדִּין וְעִיפָה
 כָּל־מִשְׁבָּא יִבְאוּ
 זֶהָב וְלַבֹּנָה יִשְׂאוּ
 וַתִּהְלֹת יְהוָה יִבְשְׂרוּ:
 7 כָּל־צֶאֱן קָדָר יִקְבְּצוּ לָךְ
 אֵילֵי נְבוֹת יִשְׂרָתוֹנֶךָ
 יַעֲלוּ עַל־רָצוֹן מִזְבְּחֵי
 וּבֵית תִּפְאֲרֹתַי אֶפְאֵר:
 8 מִי־אֵלֶּה כַּעֲב תַעֲוִפִּינָה
 וְכִיּוֹנִים אֶל־אַרְבַּתֵּיהֶם:
 9 כִּי־לִי אֵיִם יִקְוּ
 וְאֲנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ בְּרֹאשׁוֹנָה
 לְהִבִּיא בְנֵיךָ מִרְחֹק
 כִּסְפָם וְזָהָבִם אֲתָם
 לְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
 וְלִקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל
 כִּי פִאֲרֶךְ:
 10 וּבְנוּ בְנֵי־נֹכַח חֲמֹתֶיךָ
 וּמִלְכֵיהֶם יִשְׂרָתוֹנֶךָ

6] A horde of camels shall cover your land,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah,
all coming from Sheba
bearing gold and frankincense;
proclaiming the praises of God!

7] The flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you,
the rams of Nevayot shall serve your need—
a sacrifice welcome on My altar,
adding glory to My glorious house.

8] Who are these that fly like a cloud,
like doves to their cotes?

9] The coastland[s' vessels] wait for Me,
the ships of Tarshish in the lead,
to bring your children from afar,
along with their silver and gold,
to please the Eternal your God,
the Holy One of Israel,
who has given you glory.

10] Foreigners shall rebuild your walls,
and their kings shall serve you.

כִּי בְקֶצְפִי הִכִּיתִיךָ

וּבְרִצּוֹנִי רַחַמְתִּיךָ:

11 וּפְתַחוּ שְׁעָרֶיךָ תָּמִיד

יוֹמָם וּלְיָלֵה לֹא יִסְגְּרוּ

לְהָבִיא אֵלֶיךָ חֵיל גּוֹיִם

וּמַלְכֵיהֶם נְהוּגִים:

12 כִּי־הֵגוֹי וְהַמַּמְלָכָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יַעֲבֹדוּךָ

לְאָבְדוּךָ

וְהַגּוֹיִם חָרַב יִחַרְבוּ:

13 כְּבוֹד הַלְּבָנוֹן אֵלֶיךָ יָבֹוא

בְּרוֹשׁ תִּדְהָר וּתְאֲשׁוּר יִחַדּוּ

לְפָאֵר מְקוֹם מְקַדְּשֵׁי

וּמְקוֹם רַגְלֵי אֲכַבֵּד:

14 וְהֵלְכוּ אֵלֶיךָ שְׁחוֹחִי

בְּנֵי מַעֲנִיךָ

וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ עַל־כַּפּוֹת רַגְלֶיךָ

כָּל־מִנְאֲצִיךָ

וְקָרְאוּ לָךְ עֵיר יְהוָה

צִיּוֹן קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל:

15 תַּחַת הָיִוְתָךְ עֲזוּבָה וּשְׁנוּאָה

For in anger I struck you down,
but in favor I show you love again.

11] Your gates shall be open always,
day or night they shall not be shut,
to bring in the wealth of nations,
their kings led as in procession.

12] Nations and kingdoms that refuse to serve you
shall vanish,
their people utterly destroyed.

13] The pride of Lebanon shall come to you—
juniper, box-tree, and cypress together,
to beautify the place of My sanctuary,
to glorify the place where I rest.

14] They shall come bowing before you—
the children of those who oppressed you;
they shall bow down at the soles of your feet,
all those who despised you.

They shall call you the City of God,
Zion, [abode] of Israel's Holy One.

15] As once you were abandoned and hated,

וַאֲיֵן עוֹבֵר
 וְשִׁמְתִּיךָ לְגֵאוֹן עוֹלָם
 מְשׁוֹשׁ דּוֹר וְדוֹר:
 16 וַיִּנְקַתְּ חֵלֶב גּוֹיִם
 וְשֵׁד מְלָכִים תִּינָקִי
 וַיִּדְעַתְּ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה מוֹשִׁיעֶךָ
 וְגֵאֲלֶךָ אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב:
 17 תַּחַת הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אָבִיא זָהָב
 וְתַחַת הַבְּרוֹזֶל אָבִיא כֶּסֶף
 וְתַחַת הָעֵצִים נְחֹשֶׁת
 וְתַחַת הָאֲבָנִים בְּרוֹזֶל
 וְשִׁמְתִּי פְקֻדָּתְךָ שְׁלוֹם
 וְנִגְשִׁיךָ צְדָקָה:
 18 לֹא-יִשְׁמַע עוֹד חֶמְס בְּאַרְצֶךָ
 שֵׁד וְשֹׁבֵר בְּגִבּוֹלֶיךָ
 וְקִרְאֵת יִשׁוּעָה חוֹמֹתֶיךָ
 וְשַׁעֲרֶיךָ תִּהְיֶה:
 19 לֹא-יִהְיֶה-לָּךְ עוֹד הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְאוֹר יוֹמָם
 וּלְנֵגֶה הַיָּרֵחַ לְאִי-יָאִיר לָךְ
 וְהָיָה-לָּךְ יְהוָה לְאוֹר עוֹלָם

with no one passing through,
so now I make you a pride forever,
the joy of all generations.

16] You shall suck the milk of nations,
suck the breast of kingdoms,
and you shall know that I, the Eternal, am your
Savior,

your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

17] Instead of copper I will bring gold,
instead of iron, silver,
instead of wood, copper,
and iron instead of stones.

I will make Peace your government,
and Righteousness your rulers.

18] No more shall [the noise of] violence be heard in
your land,

desolation and destruction within your borders.

You shall name your walls *Deliverance*,
and your gates *Praise*.

19] No more shall the sun be your light by day,
nor shall the moon's glow brighten [your night];
the Eternal will be your everlasting light,

וְאֵלֶיךָ לְתַפְאֲרֶתְךָ:
 20 לֹא־יָבֹא עוֹד שְׁמִיךָ
 וַיִּרְחֹק לֹא יֵאָסֶף
 כִּי יִהְיֶה יִהְיֶה־לְךָ לְאֹר עוֹלָם
 וְשָׁלְמוּ יָמֵי אָבְלֶךָ:
 21 וְעַמֶּךָ כֻּלָּם צְדִיקִים
 לְעוֹלָם יִירְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ
 נֹצֵר מִטְעוֹ מִטְעֵי
 מַעֲשֵׂה יָדַי
 לְהַתְּפָאֵר:
 22 הֶקְטַן יִהְיֶה לְאַלֶּף
 וְהִצְעִיר לְגוֹי עָצוּם
 אֲנִי יִהְיֶה בְּעֵתָהּ אַחִישָׁנָה:

and your God [will be] your glory.

20] No more shall your sun go down,

or your moon disappear;

for the Eternal will be your everlasting light,

and your days of mourning shall be ended.

21] Your people shall be righteous, all of them,

and possess the land forever:

they are the shoot that I have planted,

the work of My hands,

to display My glory.

22] The least of them shall become a thousand,

and the smallest a mighty nation;

I, the Eternal, will hasten it when the time has come.

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