

TLATA DEPURANUTA & SHIVA DENECHEMTA

Three Haftarat of Punishment,
Seven Haftarat of Consolation

Anochi, Anochi, Hu Menachemchem

This haftara picks up where Vatomer Tziyon left off... kind of.

End of that portion:

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שִׁמְעוּ אֵלַי רְדֹפֵי צֶדֶק מְבַקְשֵׁי יְיָ הַבֵּיטוּ
אֶל-צִוֵּר הַצִּבְתֶּם וְאֶל-מִקְבַּת בּוֹר גִּשְׁרֹתָם:

הַבֵּיטוּ אֶל-אַבְרָהָם אֲבִיכֶם וְאֶל-שָׂרָה
תְּחוֹלְלֶכֶם כִּי-אֶחָד קָרָאתִיו וְאֶבְרָכְהוּ
וְאֶבְרַכְהוּ:

כִּי-נָחַם צִוֵּן נָחַם כָּל-חֲרִבְתָּיהָ וַיִּשֶׂם
מִדְבָּרָהּ כְּעֵדֶן וְעֶרְבָתָהּ כְּגֹן שִׁשְׁוֹן
וַשְׂמָחָה יִמְצָא בָּהּ תוֹדָה וְקוֹל
זִמְרָה: (ס)

Listen to Me, you who pursue justice,
You who seek GOD:
Look to the rock you were hewn from,
To the quarry you were dug from.

Look back to Abraham your father
And to Sarah who brought you forth.
For he was only one when I called him,
But I blessed him and made him many.

Truly GOD has comforted Zion,
Comforted all her ruins—
Made her wilderness like Eden,
Her desert like the Garden of GOD.
Gladness and joy shall abide there,
Thanksgiving and the sound of music.

Next few pesukim are not in our haftara:

3 him many. Truly GOD has comforted Zion, Comforted all her ruins— Made her wilderness
like Eden, Her desert like the Garden of GOD. Gladness and joy shall abide
4 there, Thanksgiving and the sound of music. Hearken to Me, My people, And give ear to
Me, O My nation, For teaching shall go forth from Me, My way for the light of
5 peoples. In a moment I will bring it: The triumph I grant is near, The success I give has
gone forth. My arms shall provide for the peoples; The coastlands shall trust in Me, They
6 shall look to My arm. Raise your eyes to the heavens, And look upon the earth
beneath: Though the heavens should melt away like smoke, And the earth wear out like a
garment, And its inhabitants die out as well, My victory shall stand forever, My triumph
7 shall remain unbroken. Listen to Me, you who care for the right, O people who lay My
8 instruction to heart! Fear not mortals' insults, And be not dismayed at their jeers; For the
moth shall eat them up like a garment, The worm shall eat them up like wool. But My
9 triumph shall endure forever, My salvation through all the ages. Awake, awake, clothe
yourself with splendor. O arm of the ETERNAL One! Awake as in days of old, As in former
10 ages! It was you that hacked Rahab in pieces, That pierced the Dragon. It was you that
dried up the Sea, The waters of the great deep; That made the abysses of the Sea A road the
11 redeemed might walk. So let GOD's ransomed return, And come with shouting to
Zion, Crowned with joy everlasting. Let them attain joy and gladness, While sorrow and
12 sighing flee. I, I am the One who comforts you! What ails you that you fear Man who must

What do we skip in starting with 51:12?

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multiplied their descendants. 4–5: God is the source of teaching, and thus God can indeed save. 4: *Teaching*, Heb “torah.” Cf. Isa. 2.3. 6–7: Two metaphors emphasize the enduring nature of the salvation that God brings.

51.9–52.12: Lament and response. In the first part of this composition, the people pray for deliverance, bemoaning God's apparent abandonment of them. In the second part, God responds at length, assuring them that they have not been forgotten. 9–11: **The people's entreaty.** These vv. contain the people's words to God. As in many psalms of lament, the people recall God's glorious victories in the past in an attempt to goad the LORD to action now. 9: *Arm of the LORD*, a figure of speech referring to God's strength. 9–10: *Rahab . . . Dragon . . . abysses of the Sea*: These refer to mythical beings whom God defeated to create the world; cf. 50.2 n. The people argue that the God who defeated the forces of evil at the beginning of time and who split the Reed Sea to liberate the Israelites from Egyptian bondage should use the same divine power to liberate Israel now.

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Each part of the haftarah is characterized by a double proclamation. At the outset, God tells the people that “*I, I am He* who comforts you” (Isa. 51:12); then Jerusalem is exhorted to “*Rouse, rouse yourself*” from the travail of sorrow and to “*Awake, awake*” to her new destiny of splendor (51:17 and 52:1); and finally, the exiles are called upon to “*Turn, turn away*” from Babylon and begin their journey to the homeland (52:11). These repetitions intensify the proclamation and exhort the nation to new action.

12 I, I am He who comforts you!
 What ails you that you fear
 Man who must die,
 Mortals who fare like grass?
 13 You have forgotten the LORD your Maker,
 Who stretched out the skies and made firm the
 earth!
 And you live all day in constant dread
 Because of the rage of an oppressor
 Who is aiming to cut [you] down.
 Yet of what account is the rage of an oppressor?
 14^b Quickly the crouching one is freed;
 He is not cut down and slain,
 And he shall not want for food.
 15 For I the LORD your God—
 Who stir up the sea into roaring waves,
 Whose name is LORD of Hosts—
 16 ^cHave put My words in your mouth
 And sheltered you with My hand;^c
 I, who planted^d the skies and made firm the earth,
 Have said to Zion: You are My people!
 17 Rouse, rouse yourself!
 Arise, O Jerusalem,
 You who from the LORD's hand
 Have drunk the cup of His wrath,
 You who have drained to the dregs
 The bowl, the cup of reeling!

18 She has none to guide her
 Of all the sons she bore;
 None takes her by the hand,
 Of all the sons she reared.^a
 19 These two things have befallen you:
 Wrack and ruin—who can console you?
 Famine and sword—^bhow shall I^b comfort you?
 20 Your sons lie in a swoon
 At the corner of every street—
 Like an antelope caught in a net—
 Drunk with the wrath of the LORD,
 With the rebuke of your God.
 21 Therefore,
 Listen to this, unhappy one,
 Who are drunk, but not with wine!
 22 Thus said the LORD, your Lord,
 Your God who champions His people:
 Herewith I take from your hand
 The cup of reeling,^c
 The bowl, the cup of My wrath;
 You shall never drink it again.
 23 I will put it in the hands of your tormentors,
 Who have commanded you,
 "Get down, that we may walk over you"—
 So that you made your back like the ground,
 Like a street for passersby.

51.12–52.6: God's positive response. The divine answer echoes the language of the request; see esp. 51.17; 52.1, which echo 51.9. This section borrows vocabulary from several older prophecies: Jer. 4.20; 15.2–5; Isa. 29.9–10. Those passages predicted disaster for Zion and her people; now Deutero-Isaiah at once confirms the accuracy of the older predictions and reverses their message, telling Zion that the period of suffering is coming to an end. This passage also reverses the description of Zion's suffering found in Lam. 2.13–19. This highly allusive passage became the source for another highly allusive poem written 2,000 years later: "Lekha Dodi" (the hymn recited in Jewish liturgy at the outset of the Sabbath) borrows phrasing from these vv. **51.12–16:** God speaks to the nation Israel. Language that described the prophet Jeremiah in Jer. 1.9–10; 11.19–21 is applied to the nation as a whole here. **17–23:** God addresses Jerusalem. Zion, portrayed as a bereaved mother, gets her children back.

a Names of primeval monsters.

b Meaning of verse uncertain. Emendation yields (cf. Jer. 11.19; Job 14.7–9) "Quickly the tree buds anew; / It does not die though cut down, / And its sap does not fail."

c-c I.e., I have chosen you to be a prophet-nation; cf. 49.2; 59.21.

d Emendation yields "stretched out"; cf. Syriac version and v. 13.

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PART 1. DIVINE COMFORT (Isaiah 51:12–16)

The Lord announces that He is the comforter of Zion and the people and exhorts them not to fear. He is the creator and able to redeem the oppressed. Reinforcing this assertion is God's affirmation to Zion: "You are My people!" (v. 16).

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PART 2. AROUSAL AND RENEWAL (Isaiah 51:17–23)

Jerusalem is called upon to arouse herself, for the Lord has removed the cup of wrath from her and given it to her tormentors. She who is reeling with woe shall arise to new dignity. No more shall Zion be oppressed and walked over "like a street for passersby" (v. 23).

who comforts you Hebrew *menahemkhem*. This expression counterpoints the lament that “Zion spreads out her hands, she has no one to comfort her [*’ein menahem lah*]” (Lam. 1:17).

In this verse, the divine voice shifts from the collective plural “you” (*menahemkhem*) to the feminine singular “you” (“What ails you that you fear?” *mi ’at va-tir’i*); and in the next verse, the addressee shifts to the masculine singular “you” (“You have forgotten the LORD your Maker,” *va-tishkah* ~~THWN~~ *’osekha*). This variation evokes a sense of totality that includes the people and city of Zion. R. David Kimḥi tried to formulate a comprehensive principle: “When [Scripture] speaks in the plural, the individuals [of the community of Israel] are addressed; when it utilizes the masculine singular form, the group as a whole is meant; and when the feminine singular form is used, the addressee is the ‘synagogue.’”⁵ In the haftarah, and generally in the prophecies of comfort in the Book of Isaiah, this “synagogue” is the personified city or people of Zion.

13, 16. Who stretched out the skies . . . who planted the skies The former phrase (*noteh shamayim*) is an image of the creation that is common in Isaiah’s rhetoric (also 40:22; 42:5; 44:24) and elsewhere (Zech. 12:1; Ps. 104:2; Job 9:8). It has a central position in the *Aleinu* prayer. The latter phrase (*linto’a shamayim*) in verse 16 is difficult. Many modern commentators assume that *linto’a* is an error for *lintot* (to stretch), from the same stem as *noteh* in verse 13.

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[17–23] The picture of Jerusalem as a woman lying stupefied on the ground, who has been forced to drink the cup of God's wrath, is often thought to be simply a continuation of Israel's communal lament. Westermann converts the third person address into a first person one in order to highlight the original nature of the complaint. Yet by careful attention to the larger context the reader can sense that this is not just more of the same. In v. 16 the faithful community of Israel has been given a prophetic role akin to that of the commissioning of the servant. The execution of this role is then seen in vv. 17–23 as the message of impending deliverance, and restoration is brought to prostrate Jerusalem by those first addressed in 51:5ff.

Dame Jerusalem is first encouraged to rouse herself and to stand. The imagery is the exact opposite of that given to the daughter of Babylon (chapter 47), who is ordered to sit on the ground and to strip in order to reveal her shame. Next, Jerusalem in her present condition is described with words of the conventional lament: wrack and ruin, starvation and sword. She has been forced to drink the cup of God's wrath, described in Ps. 75:9 and Jer. 15:7, which is a metaphor greatly expanded in the postexilic writings (Lam. 4:21; Ezek. 23:31ff.). Jerusalem has been snared like an animal caught in a hunter's net. However, this description of Jerusalem and present desolate state serves only as background for the actual divine word of deliverance that begins in vv. 21ff. Using the messenger's convention of direct address, the prophetic oracle announces to Jerusalem the turn of events and the radical reversal of her fortunes. The cup of wrath will be taken from Jerusalem and forced upon her oppressors as God intercedes for his people.

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19. how shall I comfort you? Hebrew *mi 'anahamekh*. Medieval commentators saw here an elliptical expression and rendered it: “by means of whom shall I comfort you?” (cf. Rashi; Ibn Ezra). The large Isaiah scroll from Qumran reads *mi yenahamekh*, “who shall comfort you?” Such a reading parallels the preceding query, *mi yanud lakh*, “who can console you?”

On to 52 (Childs translation)

52:1 Awake, awake, O Zion,
 clothe yourself in strength.
Put on your robes of splendor,
 Jerusalem, holy city.
For the uncircumcised and the unclean
 will never again enter you.
2 Shake off the dust, arise,
 sit enthroned, Jerusalem.
Loosen the chains from your neck,
 O captive daughter of Zion.
3 For thus says the LORD:
 “You were sold for nothing,
and without a payment you will be redeemed.”
4 For thus says the Lord GOD:
 “At first my people went down to Egypt to live.
Later Assyria oppressed them,
 giving nothing in return.
5 Now what do I gain here, says the LORD,
 for my people have been carried off for nothing.
Their rulers howl,^e says the LORD, and
 all day long constantly my name is blasphemed.
6 Therefore, my people will know my name,
 surely in that day they will learn
that it is I who promised. Here I am.”
7 How lovely on the mountains
 are the footsteps of the herald
announcing good news,
who proclaims peace,
 who brings good tidings,

 who proclaims salvation,
 who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”
8 Listen, your watchmen lift up their voices,
 together they sing for joy;
for with their own eyes they will see
 the Lord return to Zion.
9 Break out together into singing,
 you ruins of Jerusalem,
for the LORD has comforted his people,
 he has redeemed Jerusalem.
10 The LORD will bare his holy arm
 in the sight of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth will see
 the salvation of our God.
11 Turn away, turn away, go from there!
 Touch no unclean thing.
Come away from it and keep pure,
 you who carry the vessels of the LORD.
12 But you will not depart in haste
 or leave in flight,
for the LORD will go before you
 and the God of Israel is your rear guard.

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PART 3. ZION AWAKENED AND GOD'S RETURN (Isaiah 52:1–10)

a. Isaiah 52:1–6 Again Zion is bidden to arise from her sorrow; and the people who have been “carried off” (v. 5) to exile are told that the moment of deliverance is nigh (v. 6).

b. Isaiah 52:7–10 The advent of the “herald announcing happiness” and “good fortune” to Jerusalem is portrayed, and his proclamation to Zion “Your God is King!” is announced (v. 7). God’s redemption of Zion and His return to it are proclaimed: even “all the nations . . . shall see the victory of our God” (v. 10).

PART 4. BACK TO ZION (Isaiah 52:11–12)

Earlier themes are reemphasized in the conclusion: The Lord will be the vanguard and rear guard of the people as they leave their exile. Protection and presence are the signs of the new exodus.

Jewish Study Bible

52.1–6: God speaks again to Zion, telling her that her nightmare is over. **2:** *Shake off the dust:* As a captive, the city sat in dirt, humiliated. **3:** God did not sell Judah to a creditor (cf. 50.1), and hence Judah still belongs to God. There is no impediment to Judah's redemption.

the nation. **6:** *I . . . am now at hand,* Heb "hineru." Elsewhere in the Bible this word is used by human beings responding to a divine call (e.g., Gen. 22.1, 11; Exod. 3.4).

Only in Deutero-Isaiah does God call "here I am" to humans (see also 58.9; 65.1). **7–12: A concluding prophecy of restoration.**

God's response to the nation's prayer ended in v. 6, and now the prophet sums up the message: Redemption is at hand. **7–10:** God's own Presence will return to Jerusalem; the prophet imagines that the lookouts in Jerusalem's higher buildings or fortifications will see God's Presence as it comes toward the city. Cf. 40.3–5 n. This passage was composed after some Judeans had already returned to Jerusalem but before the full-fledged redemption that Deutero-Isaiah anticipated had come to pass.

11–12: An exhortation to exiles still in Babylonia to come to Jerusalem, bearing the Temple vessels that the Babylonians had taken from the Temple. Because they will accompany the divine Presence in its journey, they must maintain ritual purity. **12:** The earlier exodus from Egypt is contrasted with the imminent exodus from Babylonia. The former took place in haste and confusion (see Exod. 12.11; Deut. 16.3), but the new exodus will be more stately.

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name. Jerusalem is to become the holy city, a dwelling that reflects the nature of God's holiness. For that reason, the uncircumcised and unclean will not be allowed in the city to profane the name of God (v. 1). In contrast, Israel, which was once oppressed and exploited by foreigners, will find in a purified city the environment in which to come to know its God. Holy city and divine name are indissolubly joined, and this unimpaired unity is constitutive of the new eschatological order

The striking feature of this oracle is its close relation to the prologue of Second Isaiah (40:1–21). Again we hear of the herald of good tidings announcing the return of God to Zion in might, and the leading of his flock before him. In a very real sense, vv. 7–10 form a suitable conclusion to the eschatological drama first announced in chapter 40 and then unfolded in chapters 40–55. God has forgiven his people and announces his imminent salvation to the exiles languishing in Babylonian captivity.

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For the uncircumcised . . . shall never enter you again This assertion that the foreigners will never again “enter” (*yavo*) Jerusalem inverts the ancient lament. “The foe has laid hands on everything dear to her [Zion]. She has seen her Sanctuary invaded [*ba’u*] by nations which You have denied admission [*‘asher tzivvita lo’ yavo’u*] into Your community” (Lam. 1:10).

2. sit [on your throne], Jerusalem This paraphrastic rendition of *shevi* (sit) is an attempt to relate to the preceding call to “arise.” The divine imperative would then be a call to Zion to rise from her mourning and sit in royal splendor (Targum; Rashi). Kimḥi, however, does not regard *shevi* as a verb, but as a noun. Compare “the captives [*shevi*], the booty” in Num. 31:12. On this basis, the phrase should be rendered: “O captive, Jerusalem.” This (masculine) noun would thus be a variant of the parallel line, “O captive one [*shivyah*], Fair Zion” (Isa. 52:3), where another form of the noun (feminine) occurs.

11. Keep pure . . . You who bear the vessels of the LORD Compare Ezra 1:7–8; 5:14–15: “King Cyrus . . . released the vessels of the LORD’s house which Nebuchadnezzar had taken away from Jerusalem . . .” [Transl.].

vv11-12

geography. Rather, the coherence of these verses is established with 52:1–6. The addressees are those in the service of God, “who carry the vessels of the LORD.” Those who bear the holy name of יהוה are admonished to go from that place where God’s holiness is not respected. Then unlike the ancient departure from Egyptian captivity, they are not to flee in haste, but deliberately in full confidence because God serves as Israel’s rear guard (cf. Ex. 14:19). In sum, these final verses draw out the effect of the hymn of praise in vv. 7–10, and demonstrate that the torah of God to Israel is being observed by those who bear his name in accordance with the righteous reign of God in holiness.