

Tell a story
Haftarah Ki Teitzei
by Julie Zhuk on 2022-09-10

Comments

Isaiah 54:1-10

This week's haftara is the fifth of a series of seven haftarot of Consolation for the Jewish people. These seven haftarot started on the Shabbat of following Tisha b'Av. These haftarot will continue through the beginning of the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashana. Since the Jews have been in exile, Jerusalem itself feels pretty forsaken. Jerusalem feels like a barren woman who has been devoid of having children, obviously G-d sees this and enjoins her to think there is still hope out there for her. G-d wants Jerusalem to rejoice with Him. He tells the Jewish people that the time will soon come for them to return to Jerusalem and they will proliferate. Jerusalem will repopulate and once this happens, it will no longer be desolate as it once was. The prophet comes into the picture and assures the Jewish people, that G-d has not truly forsaken the Jewish people.

It is true that G-d did hide His countenance from them, but this was only for a short while. The prophet was telling the Jews to fear no more and He will gather them from their period of exile using His great mercy. This haftarah compares the final Redemption to the pact that G-d had with one of the first human beings on earth, Noah. G-d promised Noah to never bring another flood onto earth, He was now making a promise He would never be angry at the Jewish people. G-d tells the Jewish people something important. "The mountains may move, and the hills can collapse, but My kindness shall not depart from you, lastly neither shall the covenant of My peace." This haftarah is read twice a year, once in the Parsha of Noah and in this week's Parsha.

This reading is important now, because it is five weeks after the 9th of Av. It has verses that are uplifting of consolation for the Jews. These words are found at the end of the book of Isaiah. Isaiah, the prophet is poetically directing his words towards the Jerusalem now. It wants to personify her and addressing her as a loving mother and wife. G-d's promise of never being angry at the Jewish people also included them never suffering in the way that they did when in exile. G-d wanted the Jewish people to know that Jerusalem would dwell in prosperity and peace forever. While the Jews were in exile, Jerusalem had become so desolate and alone it would be hard for anyone to look around or let alone recognize that once a group of people lived there. There would be cities of Jerusalem's enemies that would be filled with masses of people. It would look like there were many married women with lots of children around. Jerusalem would be compared to a mother who was childless. It would be as if Jerusalem's children were so lost to her, that the Divine presence had continually stayed within her and was now gone. The pain this barren woman, Jerusalem was feeling would be doubled and she would feel as if her husband had abandoned her and she was now a widow.

Reading this can make anyone person Jew or not want to cry. These words are not to be taken to happen for a lifetime, as mentioned before G-d wanted Jerusalem to hold onto hope. Jerusalem will see her missing children and her husband again. Her numbers and joy will far surpass those of her adversaries in the past. She will no longer need to remember the

mortifications of her loneliness. Jerusalem and her neighboring towns will start to flourish with multitudes. It will burst forth beyond the boundaries it never had. Jerusalem was encouraged to, "Prepare, Strengthen yourself, For your children are coming home!" When G-d's presence is no longer there, it will feel like a temporary and fleeting moment. We know that when two people get married, the husband is extremely devoted to his wife.

The point here is, G-d is so connected to the Jewish people, He too will never forsake His beloved land nor His people. It is explained in this Haftara that the sinfulness of the city made G-d depart the land for a while. It was with a lot of sadness that He left it. The city went through a mourning period, for it was very sad. G-d is returning now to the land of Jerusalem with so much intensity. G-d wanted all the Jews to know, the entire negative experience will be lost and forgotten and the best part is it is no longer significant. The fulfillment of the prophecy, along with many others as this one, will be realized as soon as Mashiach makes his presence to Jerusalem.

G-d used the words for Jerusalem... "Sing you barren woman, who has not yet borne children. For the children of the one who was once desolate are more than the children of one married woman." There are two parts for this explanation, there was an earlier verse that referred to when the Jews were in a period of exile. The second part of the verse refers to the time of redemption. The way the verse is read is peculiar, because in present tense it is saying that the woman was once barren. At the same time, she was desolate with many children. Used this source for this:

https://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/3761932/jewish/Haftarah-Companion-for-Ki-Teitzei.htm