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**Haftara for first Parsha for Genesis**  
**by Julie Zhuk on 2024**

The Haftara for first Parsha of Genesis opens with a statement coming from G-d saying, G-d created the heavens and stretched them out. He laid the earth and made it grow from it. After six days of waiting, the earth grew. In the Haftara for this week, G-d speaks to the prophet Isaiah. G-d reminds Isaiah of his life's purpose which was to keep the Jewish people on their toes, it was their job "to be a light onto the nation." Isaiah's prophecy continued, with the final discussion about the Final Redemption for the Jewish people.

There would be a song sung about creation on the final day. G-d also promised to punish all nations that would send the Jewish people into exile. Isaiah wanted the people to proclaim the glory of G-d. He told the people, "Let the desert and the villages rejoice." He told the people to shout out when they were standing out on the mountaintops. Also at the right time, he rebuked the Jewish people for their arrogant ways. This was all happening at a horrible time for the Jewish people, they had been kicked out by the Babylonians. The year was 605 BCE and they were no longer allowed to live in their homeland, the Holy Land of Israel. The Jewish people had been overthrown by other armies. The Jewish people were hoping they would be allowed to go back to the land of Israel. Isaiah the prophet, kept telling them that G-d was coming and would help them. Isaiah the prophet told them, that G-d was like a soldier in a fury who was ready for a battle. G-d was telling the Jewish people through Isaiah, Long enough have I held My Peace. I have kept still and held Myself back. Now I cry out like a woman who is in labor. Isaiah also rebuked some of the Jewish people, meaning anyone who was worshipping idols.

Isaiah gives the Jewish people a description that frightens them, saying G-d will sweep through the land to reclaim Israel for His people. By doing this He will destroy many of the mountains and rivers. At the same time, He will lead the blind and guide them along the roads that they had never traveled along before. When Isaiah said this, he was not referring to physical blindness. He was talking about a spiritual blindness. He was referring to the people who chose to believe in any kind of idol worship. He was giving a warning to the Jews who believed in idols. He was telling Isaiah to tell the Jewish people to fall back in shame if they were going to choose to believe in idols. This is when Isaiah reprimanded the Jewish people for their own exile for believing in idols. Isaiah still reminded the Jewish people that G-d was always going to be around. Isaiah assured the Jewish people it was important to stay on the correct path. This way the Jewish people could always be redeemed by G-d. The Haftara was talking about Isaiah's praise and not his punishment for the Jewish people.

The whole focus of the Haftara was to remind the Jewish people that G-d really did have a promise of a better future for all of them. Isaiah reminded the Jewish people that G-d said, "Have no fear, for I will redeem you; I have called you by name, you are Mine." This text is all found in the book of Isaiah chapter 43 verse 1. The Jewish people did mess up quite a bit and for that, G-d did punish them. He did this by sending them to the Babylonian Exile. G-d also promised them to have a safeguard of hardships. G-d told Isaiah to let the Jewish people know, "When you walk through fire you will not be scorched." What he meant by these words is there would be a final redemption. Isaiah was now saying to the Jewish people, "G-d says to have no fear I will bring your offspring from the east and I will gather you in from the west. Remember that I am G-d and I alone can deliver you.