

# Haftarah Helper 5780: Shoftim

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## Isaiah 51:12-52:12

In this fourth of the seven haftarot of consolation (Aramaic: שבע דנחמתא), God addresses the Jewish people directly, as well as Jerusalem. He speaks of redemption from multiple angles. As the creator of the world, God has the power to redeem His people. Therefore His people have nothing to fear from their earthly oppressors from whom He will free them. God also speaks of the sins that led to the exile but promises that it is coming to an end, permanently. God will personally return to Zion, accompanying His people home.

### Haftarah Breakdown

Verses 51:12-16: God created the world, and therefore can redeem his people.

Isaiah 51:16	ישעיהו נ"א:ט"ז
And I placed My words into your mouth, and with the shadow of My hand, I covered you; I, who planted the skies and made firm the earth say to Zion [that] you are My people.	וְאֲשִׁים דְּבַרִי בְּפִיךָ וּבְצֵל יְדֵי כִסִּיתִיךָ לְנֹטַע שָׁמַיִם וְלִיסֹד אֲרֶץ וְלֵאמֹר לְצִיּוֹן עִמִּי-אַתָּה: (ו)

Verses 51:17-21: Although they have physical oppressors, truly God has afflicted Jerusalem and the Jewish people due to their sins...

Isaiah 51:17	ישעיהו נ"א:י"ז
Awaken, awaken, arise, Jerusalem, for you have drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of His wrath; the dregs of the cup of weakness you have drained.	הַתְּעוֹרְרִי הַתְּעוֹרְרִי קוּמִי יְרוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר שָׁתִיתִי מִיַּד ה' אֶת-כּוֹס חֲמָתוֹ אֶת-קִבְעַת כּוֹס הַתְּרַעְלָה שָׁתִיתִי מִצִּית:

Verses 51:22-23 ... but He will redeem them, and ensure they will never suffer again. Rather, their enemies will suffer.

Isaiah 51:22	ישעיהו נ"א:כ"ב
So said your Master, the Lord, and your God Who shall judge His people, "Behold, I took from you the cup of weakness; the dregs of the cup of My wrath-you shall no longer continue to drink it.	כֹּה-אָמַר אֲדֹנָיךָ ה' וְאֱלֹקֶיךָ יְרִיב עִמּוֹ הִנֵּה לְקַחְתִּי מִיָּדְךָ אֶת-כּוֹס הַתְּרַעְלָה אֶת-קִבְעַת כּוֹס חֲמָתִי לֹא-תוֹסִיפִי לְשָׁתוֹתָהּ עוֹד:

Verses 52:1-6: God will release the bondage of Israel and Jerusalem, for his glory.

Isaiah 52:2	ישעיהו נ"ב:ב
Shake yourselves from the dust, arise, sit down, O Jerusalem; free yourself of the bands of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion.	הַתְּנַעֲרִי מֵעַפְרָתְךָ קוּמִי שְׁבִי יְרוּשָׁלַם הַתְּפַתְחוּ [הַתְּפַתְחִי] מוֹסְרֵי צוּאְרֵיךָ שְׁבִיָּה בַת-צִיּוֹן: (ו)

## Haftarah Breakdown (cont.)

Verses 52:7-10: God himself will come back to Jerusalem, His reputation restored...

Isaiah 52:9	ישעיהו נ"ב:ט
Burst out in song, sing together, O ruins of Jerusalem, for the Lord has consoled his people; He has redeemed Jerusalem.	פָּצְחוּ רִנְנוּ יַחְדוֹ חֲרוֹבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם כִּי־נִחַם ה' עַמּוֹ גָּאֵל יְרוּשָׁלַם:

Verses 52:11-12: ... and lead the Jewish people back with Him.

Isaiah 52:12	ישעיהו נ"ב:י"ב
For not with haste shall you go forth and not in a flurry of flight shall you go, for the Lord goes before you, and your rear guard is the God of Israel.	כִּי לֹא בְחַפְזוֹן תֵּצְאוּ וּבְמְנוּסָה לֹא תֵלְכוּן כִּי־הֵלֵךְ לְפָנֵיכֶם ה' וּמֵאִסְפְּכֶם אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

### Important Themes

**Permanent Redemption:** God promises Jerusalem and the Jewish people that they will not merely be comforted and redeemed, but that this redemption will be permanent. They need not fear exile any longer. See verses 51:12,14,17-23 and 52:1-2, 6-10

### Other Connections

The Haftarah is the source of multiple stanzas of “Lekha Dodi”, the famed poem that introduces Shabbat. For example, 52:1 (below) and 52:2 (above), are the basis of the 5th stanza of the poem:

Isaiah 52:1	ישעיהו נ"ב:א
<b>Awaken, awaken</b> , put on your strength, O Zion; <b>put on the garments of your beauty</b> , Jerusalem the Holy City, for no longer shall the uncircumcised or the unclean continue to enter you.	עוּרֵי עוּרֵי לְבָשִׁי עֲזְרֵי צִיּוֹן לְבָשִׁי אֲבַגְדֵי תְפָאֲרֵתֵךְ יְרוּשָׁלַם עִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ כִּי לֹא יוֹסִיף יְבֹא־בְךָ עוֹד עַרְל וְטָמֵא:

Lekha Dodi 5	לְכָה דוּדֵי ה'
<b>Shake yourself free, rise from the dust/Dress in your garments of splendor</b> , my people/By the hand of Jesse's son of Bethlehem/Redemption draws near to my soul.	הַתְנַעֲרֵי מֵעַפָּר קוּמֵי/לְבָשִׁי בְגְדֵי תְפָאֲרֵתְךָ עַמִּי/עַל יַד בֶּן יִשִׁי בֵּית הַלְחָמִי/קִרְבָּה אֵלַי נַפְשִׁי גְאֻלָּה

The sixth stanza is also based in 52:1, as well as 51:17 (above)<sup>1</sup>.

Lekha Dodi 6	לְכָה דוּדֵי ו'
Awaken yourselves! Awaken yourselves!/For your light has come! Get up, my light!/Awaken! Awaken! Utter a song!/The glory of the Lord is revealed upon you	הַתְעוֹרְרֵי הַתְעוֹרְרֵי/כִּי בָא אֹרֶךְ קוּמֵי אֹרֵי/עוּרֵי עוּרֵי שִׁיר דְּבַרִי/כְבוֹד ה' עֲלֶיךָ נִגְלָה

With emendations, biblical translations are by Rabbi A. J. Rosenberg and other translations are from Sefaria.org.

To dedicate, comment, or subscribe, email [zbeer570@gmail.com](mailto:zbeer570@gmail.com).

<sup>1</sup> The line “for your light” is based upon the opening verse of the sixth Haftarah of consolation (read two weeks from now, Parashat Ki Tavo), Isaiah 60:1. See its Haftarah Helper at <https://outorah.org/series/4081>.