



After the Temple's destruction described in the Haftarat of the "Three of Affliction" (תלת דפורענותא) and Tisha B'Av, the "Seven of Comfort" (שבע דנחמתא) comforted the exiled Jewish people, assuring their eventual glorious redemption. Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, the "Two of Repentance" (Aramaic: תרתוי דתשובה)- recited on Tzom Gedaliah (by Ashkenazim only) and Shabbat Shuva (by all)- encourage the people to repent in order to achieve the promised redemption.

## Two of Repentance #2 (Shuva<sup>1</sup>/Vayeilech - Sepharadim): Hosea 14:2-10, Micha 7:18-20

The Haftarah consists of two sections, both of which emphasize God's merciful forgiveness for His people. Its first section is Hosea's final prophecy. The prophet calls for the Northern Kingdom, "Ephraim", to abandon its idolatry and military dependence upon mighty Assyria and return to God. In return, God will shower them with love, protect them, and ensure they flourish lushly.

The second section is the conclusion of Micha's final prophecy. It describes God's great forgiveness and kindness for the repentant remnant of His people, in keeping with His promises to the nation's forefathers, Abraham and Jacob.

### Haftarah Breakdown

**Hosea, verses 14:2-4:** The prophet calls for Israel to abandon their idolatry and their alliance with Assyria's military. Their words of confession, return, and reliance upon God will suffice; sacrifices are not needed.

Hosea 14:3	הושע י"ד:ג
Take words with you and return to the Lord. Say to Him, "Forgive all iniquity and accept what is good, and we will pay [for offerings of] bulls, [the offering of] our lips..."	קחו עִמָּכֶם דְּבָרִים וְשׁוּבוּ אֵלֶיהָ אִמְרוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ כָּל-תְּשׁוּבָה עֲוֹן וְקַח-טוֹב וְנִשְׁלַמָּה פְּרִים שְׁפָתֵינוּ:

**Verses 14:5-9:** When the people renounce their idols, God's anger for His people will end. In love, God will forgive and protect them, causing them to flourish and nourishing them until they are glorious and delightful.

Hosea 14:6	הושע י"ד:ו
I [God] will be like dew to Israel, which will blossom like a rose and shall strike its roots like the [cedars of] Lebanon.	אֶהְיֶה כְּטֶל לְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִפְרַח כַּשֹּׁשַׁן וְיִגַּד שְׂרָשׁוּי כַּלְבַּנוֹן:

**Verses 14:10:** Although sinful Israel stumbled (v. 2) on God's straight paths, righteous Israel trods them wisely.

Hosea 14:10	הושע י"ד:ט
Whoever is wise, let him understand these things: whoever is understanding, let him know them. For the Lord's ways are straight- the righteous walk in them, but transgressors stumble on them.	מִי חָכֵם וְיָגֵד אֵלֶיהָ נְבוֹן וְיַדְעֵם כִּי-יִשְׁרָיִם דְּרָכֵי ה' וְצַדִּיקִים יֵלְכוּ בָּם וּפְשָׁעִים יִכְשָׁלוּ בָּם:

<sup>1</sup>The Haftarah's opening word (ה' אלקיך כי כשלת בעונך) **שובה/Return**, O Israel, to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled in your iniquity) gives this Sabbath its name, "Shabbat Shuva (Sabbath of Return/Repentance)".

**Micah**, verses 7:18-20: God will grant great forgiveness and kindness to the faithful remnant of His people, fulfilling His oaths to Israel's forefathers, Abraham and Jacob.

Micah 7:18	מיכה ז:י"ח
Who is a God like You, Who pardons iniquity and passes over transgression for His heritage's remnant? He [God] does not maintain His anger forever, for He desires lovingkindness.	מִי־קֵל כְּמוֹךָ יְשׂוּא עֹוֹן וְעֵבֶר עַל־פְּשָׁע לְשֹׂאֲרֵית נְחֻלְתּוֹ לֹא־הִתְעַזִּיק לְעַד אֲפֹו כִי־תִפְּצֵן חֶסֶד הוּא:

## Haftarah Halakhah

The Talmud explains why **this Haftarah can consist of passages from two different prophets**: its second section, from Micha, follows its first section, from Hosea, among the books of the “Twelve Prophets.”

Megillah 24a	מגילה כ"ד עמוד א
It is taught in a Baraita: One may not skip from [the book of one] prophet to [another] prophet. [However,] one may skip amongst the twelve books of Prophets provided that one does not skip from the book's end to its beginning.	תניא אידך אין מדלגין מנביא לנביא ובנביא של שנים עשר מדלג ובלבד שלא ידלג מסוף הספר לתחילתו:

## Connections

Reish Lakish bases astonishing statements about the **power of repentance** upon the Haftarah's first verse:

Yoma 86b	יומא פ"ו עמוד ב
Reish Lakish said: “Great is repentance, as [one's] intentional sins are counted for him <i>as unwitting transgressions</i> , as [Hosea 14:2] states: ‘Return, Israel, to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled in your iniquity’ [...] [The Gemara asks:] But didn't Reish Lakish say: “Great is repentance, as one's intentional sins are counted for him <i>as merits</i> , as [Ezekiel 33:19] states: ‘And when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does justice and righteousness he shall live?’” [The Gemara reconciles:] This is not difficult: Here [when one repents] out of love, [his sins become merits]; there [when one repents] out of fear, [his sins become unwitting transgressions.]	אמר ריש לקיש גדולה תשובה שזדונות נעשות לו כשגגות שנאמר (הושע יד, ב) שובה ישראל עד ה' אלהיך כי כשלת בעוונך ... והאמר ריש לקיש גדולה תשובה שזדונות נעשות לו כזכויות שנאמר (יחזקאל לג, יט) ובשוב רשע מרשעתו ועשה משפט וצדקה עליהם (חזיה) יחיה לא קשיא כאן מאהבה כאן מיראה

Hosea 14:3 is a basis for establishing **prayer as a substitute for the Temple service**:

Sefer HaChinukh 185	ספר החינוך קפ"ה
This commandment [of the Yom Kippur service] is practiced at the time of the [Temple]. Now that, due to our iniquities, we have neither Temple nor high priest, neither [priestly] garments nor sacrifices, all of Israel are accustomed on this day [of Yom Kippur] to serve [God] through prayers and supplications as [Hosea 14:3] states, "Let us render [for] bulls [offered in the Temple], [the offering of] our lips."	ונוהגת כל מצוה זו בזמן הבית. ועכשיו בעונותינו שאין לנו לא מקדש ולא כהן גדול ולא בגדי שרד ולא קרבנות, נהגו כל ישראל לעבד ביום זה בתפלות ובתחנונים, וכמו שכתוב (הושע יד ג) 'ונשלמה פרים שפתינו'.

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