

Isaiah 50:10 – 51:7 + 11

This haftarah contains the last part of the second reading in the “Seven of Consolation”

The “Seven of Consolation” are readings for the seven weeks between the Fast of Ab and Rosh Hashanah.

1. Isaiah 40:1-26
2. Isaiah 49:14-51:3
3. Isaiah 54:11-55:5
4. Isaiah 51:12-52:12
5. Isaiah 54:1-10
6. Isaiah 60:1-22
7. Isaiah 61:10-63:9

The true consolation of Israel is Jesus, the promised Messiah, who many scholars say was born around the time of Rosh Hashanah.

Luke 2:25-26 - “And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.”

The reading begins with a promise and a warning:

Isaiah 50:10-11 - “Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.”

Or, as in the NET translation: “you will lie down in a place of pain.”

Isaiah 51:1 - “Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.”

i.e. examine Abraham and Sarah to see the kind of faith God requires, and to see that his promises are true.

Isaiah 51:3 - For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

After this word of consolation, an apocalyptic vision:

Isaiah 51:6 - “Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the

heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.”

Compare:

Hebrews 1:10-12 - “And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.”

Isaiah 51:7 - “Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.”

This is the connection with **Psalm 35** (the psalm for this week’s Torah reading) and the false accusations, opposition and enmity of the world against the Messiah described there.

Finally,

Isaiah 51:11 - “Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.”