

## Isaiah 63:8-16 + 65:9

This is the haftarah for **Deuteronomy 14-15**.

**Isaiah 63:8-9** - "For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Savior. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."

"In all their affliction he was afflicted" - Perfectly applies to Christ as the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 bearing our griefs and carrying our sorrows. But this phrase can be interpreted in contrasting ways:

The Jewish translation has "In all their trouble, He did not trouble [them]"

Targum: "and he afflicted them not"

Or "in all their afflictions there was no affliction" - "In all their affliction, He is afflicted" – wherever they were exiled, the Divine Presence was with them (Megillah 29a).

Alternately, "In all their affliction, there is no affliction" - there is so much love in the afflictions of God's people, and they work so much for their good, and they are so soon delivered out of them, that they scarce deserve the name of afflictions. - (R' Yosef Hayyim of Bagdad (1832–1909), known as the Ben Ish Chai)

Talmud, Sotah 31a - "But is it true that anywhere that the word *lo* is written *lamed alef*, its meaning is: Not? If that is so, then in the verse: "In all their affliction He was [*lo*] afflicted" (Isaiah 63:9), where the word *lo* is written *lamed alef*, so too, does it mean: Not, i.e., God was not afflicted in the afflictions of the Jewish people? ... but isn't it written in the continuation of that same verse: 'And the angel of His Presence saved them,' which clearly indicates that God was concerned with their afflictions? Evidently, the word *lo* in that verse means: "In all their affliction He was afflicted."

### The Angel of the Presence

Angel = messenger, sent one

"the angel of his presence (or 'face')" - this is usually speaking of the pre-incarnate Christ, the Messiah.

- **Exodus 23:20-22** - "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries."

Rashi - the angel of His presence - i.e., Michael the prince of the Presence, of those who minister before Him saved them always as an agent of the Omnipresent.

“The agent of the ruler is like the ruler himself.” (Baba Kama 113b, cf. Chagigah 10b, Nedarim 72b)

Jew considered the angel of the face or presence a mysterious being called "Metatron" who is sometimes depicted as participating in God's own being or divinity.

“For [Metat's] name is like that of his Master's, as it is written (**Exodus 23:21**) “because my name is in Him.” This is the lower unification. In other words, the Holy One, blessed-be-He, clothes Himself in Metat during the six days of the week and rules the world through him.” (Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, Likutey Moharan 11.5)

Philo called Him the *Logos* (Word) - "the Eldest of his angels, as the Great Archangel of many names; for he is called the Authority, and the Name of God, and the Word, and Man according to God's image, and he who sees Israel" - (Philo, On the Confusion of Tongues 28) John adopts this association to describe Christ as the Logos in **John 1**.

See <https://ladderofjacob.com/2016/01/31/metat/>

"The angel of his presence" = Messenger of God's divine countenance. Some saw the archangel Metatron, the Shekhinah (or immanent divine presence), or the redeeming angel and was understood by some to be an extension of God and a manifestation of the Holy Spirit."

Appearances of The Angel of His Presence were the pre-incarnation instances in which Christ manifested Himself. The only-begotten Son of the Father became the Angel or Messenger of His love.

**Isaiah 63:10** - "But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them."

The Targum is, "and his Word became their enemy"

**Isaiah 63:11** - "Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?"

or "His people remembered the ancient days of Moses..."

Israel remembers, and repents.

Rashi - Today in exile, His people remembers the days of old, the days of Moses, and in its trouble, it says, Where is Moses our shepherd, who drew us up from the Reed Sea? Where is he who placed within Israel the Holy Spirit of the Holy One, blessed be He, and taught us statutes and ordinances?

"where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?" or rather "within it (Israel)" The Holy Spirit and the Shekinah Glory rested in the Tabernacle's Holy of Holies, within the camp of Israel.

The gift of the Spirit was not just to Moses, but also to Bezaleel (**Exodus 35:31**), to the Seventy Elders (**Numbers 11:25**), to Joshua (**Deuteronomy 34:9**). God gave to the people in the wilderness "his good Spirit to instruct them" (**Nehemiah 9:20**), and guide them (**Haggai 2:4, 5**), and govern them (**Numbers 11:17**).

**Isaiah 63:12-14** - "That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name."

Rashi - So did the spirit of the Lord guide them to the deep and make therein a paved road.

**Isaiah 63:15** - "Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained?"

"sounding of thy bowels = *hamown* - rumbling, rage, emotional tumult

"bowels" or "intestines" were associated with tenderness. "Kidneys" ("reins" in the KJV) were associated with emotions and desires, along with the heart.

See **Colossians 3:12** - "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;"

**Isaiah 63:16** - "Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting."

Rashi - "for Abraham did not know us": in the trouble of Egypt. "neither did Israel recognize us": in the desert, for they had already passed away from the world.

The Haftarah ends with an upbeat verse:

**Isaiah 65:9** - "And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there."

The Seed is Christ! If we are in Him, then we are the elect, and God's servants.

- **Galatians 3:16** - "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

