

כ"י תמוז

Isaiah, chapter 60, verses 1 to 22

Introduction

On this Shabbat, the sixth after Tisha b'Av, the prophecy continues the *sheva de-nechamta*, the “seven [haftarot] of consolation.” One more will follow, which will be recited on the Shabbat before Rosh Hashanah. (See the Introduction to the haftarah for Va'etchanan).

Connection of haftarah and Shabbat:

Consolation is the main thrust of the haftarah, as is expected during the seven Shabbatot before Rosh Hashanah. But it is doubly relevant as a counterweight to the sidra, which contains the dreaded catalogue of evils that will befall Israel if it fails to observe God's law. The haftarah lifts the gloom with a depiction of Israel's future glory.

The setting:

The Second Isaiah, the author of this prophecy, lived among his people in Babylonian exile (6th century B.C.E.). The exiles were suffering grievously; poverty and despair were their daily diet. Isaiah depicted for them a future marked by fabulous well-being, wealth, and happiness—a startling contrast to the reality the people were experiencing.

For more on Isaiah and his time, see our *General Introduction*.

*The message:*¹

1. An introduction sets forth the theme: Today may be dark, but tomorrow God's light will shine on Israel. (60:1-2)
2. A description of the glorious future the people may expect. (3-20)
3. Summation: All this will come to pass in due time, and when it does, God will hasten its fulfillment. (21-22)