

דברים

**(Shabbat Chazon)**

*Isaiah, chapter 1, verses 1 to 27*

**Introduction**

*Connection of haftarah and sidra:*

There is no connection between the two; rather, this is the third and last of three haftarot that are read between the seventeenth day of Tammuz (when the Babylonians breached the city walls) and the ninth of Av (when they razed the Temple). All three haftarot deal with the punishment that will be meted out to a people that forgets the God of the Covenant, and are known to tradition by an Aramaic name, תלת דפרענותא (*t'lat d'fur'anuta*), the "three [haftarot] of affliction."<sup>1</sup>

The haftarah is always read on the Shabbat before Tisha b'Av and, since it begins with the word *chazon* (vision), the Shabbat is called *Shabbat Chazon*.

*The setting:*

We cannot determine at which particular period of Isaiah's career these words were spoken. In view of verses 5-9 it would appear that the Northern Kingdom (with Samaria as its capital) had already been destroyed, and that the Assyrian troops had also invaded and devastated parts of Judah and were threatening Jerusalem.

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

*The message:*

1. After the introductory sentence, part I (verses 2-9) conveys an image of devastation.
2. A detailed list of spiritual remedies. (10-17)
3. A prophecy on what will happen if Israel does not heed the divine call. (18-25)
4. Conclusion. Verses 26 and 27 take up the theme foreshadowed in verse 18: Return to God and make Zion a city of righteousness; then true redemption will be yours.