



Carnegie Shul Chatter

July 18, 2023



Message of Comfort

This week's haftorah commentary concludes with a powerful message to us, "Hashem is forever waiting for His people to return. He patiently awaits that glorious moment when all of His people will finally proclaim, "You are our father and we are Your sons!" May this day come speedily in our times."

In a time in which we are increasingly subject to anti-Semitic remarks, like this week's slurs from Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and baseball Hall of Famer Johnny Bench (see article later in this Chatter), and when a jury is debating a possible death sentence for the heinous Tree of Life murder whose name I will not utter, the message of this week's haftorah and the redemption of the Jewish people should be a message of comfort and hope for all of us.

Shabbat Services

Join us in the sanctuary, providing you have been vaccinated for Covid 19, or attend virtually. Watch your email for a Zoom link or contact Rosalyn Hoffman at rjlynman@yahoo.com. The complete Torah reading, in Hebrew and English, can be found at https://www.chabad.org/parshah/torahreading_cdo/aid/2495789/jewish/Devarim-Torah-Reading.htm

Devarim in a Nutshell

From Chabad.org

Deuteronomy 1:1–3:22

The name of the Parshah, “Devarim,” means “the words” and it is found in Deuteronomy 1:1.

On the first of Shevat (thirty-seven days before his passing), Moses begins his repetition of the Torah to the assembled children of Israel, reviewing the events that occurred and the laws that were given in the course of their forty-year journey from Egypt to Sinai to the Promised Land, rebuking the people for their failings and iniquities, and enjoining them to keep the Torah and observe its commandments in the land that G-d is giving them as an eternal heritage, into which they shall cross after his death.

Moses recalls his appointment of judges and magistrates to ease his burden of meting out justice to the people and teaching them the word of G-d; the journey from Sinai through the great and fearsome desert; the sending of the spies and the people’s subsequent spurning of the Promised Land, so that G-d decreed that the entire generation of the Exodus would die out in the desert. “Also against me,” says Moses, “was G-d angry for your sake, saying: You, too, shall not go in there.”

Moses also recounts some more recent events: the refusal of the nations of Moab and Ammon to allow the Israelites to pass through their countries; the wars against the Emorite kings Sichon and Og, and the settlement of their lands by the tribes of Reuben and Gad and part of the tribe of Manasseh; and Moses’ message to his successor, Joshua, who will take the people into the Land and lead them in the battles for its conquest: “Fear them not, for the L-rd your G-d, He shall fight for you.”



Haftorah in a Nutshell

Isaiah 1:1-27

This week’s haftorah is the third of a series of three “haftarot of affliction.” These three haftarot are read during the Three Weeks of mourning for Jerusalem, between the fasts of 17 Tammuz and 9 Av.

Isaiah relays to the Jews a G-dly vision he experienced, chastising the residents of Judah and Jerusalem for having rebelled against G-d, criticizing them for repeating their errors and not abandoning their sinful ways — even after having been reprimanded and punished. “Woe to

a sinful nation, a people heavy with iniquity, evildoing seed, corrupt children. They forsook G-d; they provoked the Holy One of Israel.” Harsh words are employed, comparing the Jewish leaders to the rulers of Sodom and Gomorrah. G-d states his distaste for their sacrifices and offerings which were flavored with pagan customs. “How has she become a harlot, a faithful city; it was once full of justice, in which righteousness would lodge, but now it is a city of murderers...”

Isaiah then speaks gentler words, encouraging the people to repent sincerely and to perform acts of justice and kindness towards the needy, orphans and widows, and promising them the best of the land in return for their obedience. “If your sins prove to be like crimson, they will become white as snow; if they prove to be as red as crimson dye, they shall become as wool.” The haftorah concludes with a promise that G-d will eventually reestablish Israel’s judges and leaders, when “Zion shall be redeemed through justice and her penitents through righteousness.”

Haftorah Commentary

By Rabbi Dovid Siegel

Yeshaya 1:1

This week’s haftorah concludes the three week series regarding the Jewish people’s exile and the destruction of their Bais Hamikdash. This final reading of rebuke goes down in history as the strongest message of reprimand ever delivered to the Jewish people. The prophet Yeshaya depicts the moral conduct of the Jews to be the most corrupt and wicked since the days of Sedom and Gemorah. He declares the Jews worse than the animals, and says in the name of Hashem, “The ox knows his master and the donkey his owner’s feeding tray but My nation doesn’t know and doesn’t even consider Me. Woe guilty people, heavy with sin, evil and corrupt children who forsook Hashem and disgraced Israel’s Holy One.” (1:3,4) Yeshaya continues with harsh words of chastisement, and says, “Why should you continue to be beaten if you just increase your straying? From head to toe there is no clear spot, only stabs, bruises and open wounds. But you have not treated them, not bandaged them or even softened them.” (1:5,6) The prophet indicates that after all the beatings they have received the Jewish people haven’t even made an attempt to rectify their faults.



Yeshaya then concentrated on the Jewish service in the Bais Hamikdash and attacked them even on that count. He expressed that Hashem was displeased with their sacrifices and lacked interest in their service. Hashem says, “When you come to see Me who asked you to trample on My courtyard? Don’t continue bringing useless offerings; your incense is disgusting to Me. I cannot tolerate your gatherings on Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh, and I despise your festivals

and celebrations; they're too much bother for Me." (1:12,13) The Jewish people were going through the motions of Judaism but lacked any level of sincerity. They assembled in the Bais Hamikdash during the holiday seasons but did not dedicate their efforts to Hashem, rather to themselves. Hashem therefore referred to those gatherings as theirs rather than His. Even their prayers, their direct line to Hashem, were being rejected. Yeshaya said in the name of Hashem, "When you stretch out your hands in supplication I will ignore you; even when you increase your prayers I won't listen because your hands are full of blood." (1:15) These last words refer to the increasing number of murders and crimes that were taking place amongst the Jewish people, even in the Bais Hamikdash proper. Yeshaya said that Hashem had literally closed the door on His people and was not interested in seeing or hearing from them anymore.

Suddenly, we discover a complete change in nature and the prophet extends the Jewish people an open invitation. Hashem says, "Please go and reconcile, if your sins are likened to scarlet they will be whitened like snow and if they are like deep red crimson they will be like white wool. If you consent and listen then you will eat the goodness of the land." (1:18,19) This seems to indicate a total reversal of direction. Moments earlier, the prophet proclaimed that Hashem had absolutely no interest in His people and despised their trampling on His property. Hashem was so angry and disgusted with them that He severed all lines of communication. And now, one passage later Hashem was prepared to brighten and whiten the Jewish people to the extent of glistening snowflakes?!

The answer to this perplexing message is found in the insightful words of Chazal in explanation of a puzzling passage in Shir Hashirim. Shlomo Hamelech presents the overall status of the Jewish people shortly before their bitter exile from their homeland. They project themselves to Hashem in the following manner, "I am asleep but my heart is awake." (Shir Hashirim 5:2) Rashi (ad loc.) quotes the comment of Chazal in the Pesikta explaining the Jewish people's response. They said that they fell into a deep slumber and basically abandoned their service of Hashem but their heart, Hashem himself says, would always remain awake. He doesn't permit them to disappear from the scene and continuously sends them opportunities to return to Him. He consistently sends His prophets to awaken His people even from their deep comatized state.

This is the hidden secret of the Jewish people's eternal existence. From the vantage point of their actions, the Jews at that time fell into a deep coma and developed the most corrupt and



immoral standards conceivable. They did not demonstrate any inner interest of being with Hashem or any sincerity regarding their service to Him. But Hashem, the heart and pulse of the Jewish nation retained His interest in His people. His love for them is so great that He never gives up on them. And so, when their actions were so corrupt that they didn't even deserve "the time of day" from Hashem, He didn't forget His people. He beckoned them to reconcile their ways and informed them that He was prepared to cleanse them from all of their sins. This experience reinforces the fact that Hashem is forever waiting for His people to return. He patiently awaits that glorious moment when all of His people will finally proclaim, "You are our father and we are Your sons!" May this day come speedily in our times.

Jews in Baseball

Let's start first with the negative. This week baseball Hall of Famer Johnny Bench made an incredibly insensitive, anti-Semitic remark for which he later apologized. Here is what happened according to The Guardian:

"Hall of Famer Johnny Bench apologized for an antisemitic comment made at an event to honor former Cincinnati Reds general manager Gabe Paul, who was Jewish, and others.

Bench made the remark at an event attended by Paul's daughter, Jennie Paul, on Saturday. Paul, who died in 1998, and former Reds pitchers Danny Graves and Bronson Arroyo were being inducted into the team's Hall of Fame.

Pete Rose recalled signing a deal worth "400 bucks a month" in his first contract negotiation with Gabe Paul.

Jennie Paul joked that it was "cheap".

"He was Jewish," Bench responded, drawing laughs from the audience."

I'm sorry Johnny, if you thought that was funny, it was not. Apology not accepted.

Now for the positive, from jta.org:

Zack Gelof becomes the 18th Jewish MLB player this year — a likely record

By Jacob Gurvis July 14, 2023 10:25 am

(JTA) — When Zack Gelof makes his MLB debut for the Oakland Athletics, which could happen as soon as Friday night, he will become the 18th Jewish player to appear in the big leagues this season.

That is likely an all-time record, topping last season's group of 17, according to info compiled by the Jewish Baseball News, a site that tracks Jewish baseball players.

Gelof, who played for Team Israel in this year's World Baseball Classic, entered the season as

Oakland's No. 3 prospect. The 23-year-old infielder excelled in Triple-A, posting a .304 batting average with 12 home runs, 44 runs batted in and 20 stolen bases. His .930 on-base-plus-slugging-percentage led the Las Vegas Aviators.

The Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, native joins the A's just two years after being selected 60th overall in the 2021 MLB Draft. Zack's younger brother Jake, a fellow alum of the University of Virginia, was taken 60th overall last weekend by the Los Angeles Dodgers. He was one of six Jewish players drafted this year.



Zack Gelof bats during a World Baseball Classic game between Team Venezuela and Team Israel in Miami, March 15, 2023.

J. the Jewish News of Northern California reported earlier this year that Gelof did not have a bar mitzvah but grew up attending Hebrew school in their Seaside Jewish Community. He and Jake could both represent Israel in 2026.

Gelof will join a talented group of Jewish players who have played in the MLB this year. Some, like Max Fried and Alex Bregman, are considered among the best players in the game. Others, like Spencer Horwitz and Zack Weiss, played in only a handful of games before being sent back down to the minor leagues.

Here are the other 17 Jewish players, with the team for which they most recently played:

- ◆ Pitchers: Jake Bird (Colorado Rockies), Richard Bleier (Boston Red Sox), Fried (Atlanta Braves), Dean Kremer (Baltimore Orioles), Eli Morgan (Cleveland Guardians), Ryan Sherriff (Boston Red Sox), Jared Shuster (Atlanta Braves), Weiss (Los Angeles Angels)
- ◆ Infielders: Bregman (Houston Astros), Matt Mervis (Chicago Cubs), Garrett Stubbs (Philadelphia Phillies), Rowdy Tellez (Milwaukee Brewers)
- ◆ Outfielders: Harrison Bader (New York Yankees), Dalton Guthrie (Philadelphia Phillies), Kevin Pillar (Atlanta Braves)
- ◆ Designated Hitters: Horwitz (Toronto Blue Jays), Joc Pederson (San Francisco Giants)

Jewish fans celebrated the news of Gelof's historic call-up.

When @ZackGelof makes his MLB debut for the Oakland A's tomorrow, he will become the 18th Jewish player to appear in at least one big league game this season, topping last year's single-season record of 17 players.

With several months remaining in the MLB season, it's possible Gelof will not be the last Jewish player to appear this year. There are more than a dozen Jewish players currently playing in Triple-A, including many with previous MLB experience.

Fellow Team Israel alumni Brandon Gold, a pitcher in the Rockies system, and Evan Kravetz,

a pitcher in the Cincinnati Reds organization, could make their debuts later this season when MLB rosters expand in September. Pitcher Zack Leban, infielder Jake Scheiner and infielder Chase Strumpf are also playing in Triple-A and have yet to appear in the major leagues.

Scott Effross, a relief pitcher for the New York Yankees, could have added to the historic total but has been out all season after undergoing elbow surgery.

Yahrtzeits

This week the Carnegie Shul acknowledges the yahrtzeits of:

Gertrude Bales
Philip Perlman

Isaac Peresman
Caroline Brunner

Saul S. Lipman
Joseph Stern

May their memories be for a blessing.

Donations

The Carnegie Shul is most grateful for the following recent donations:

Lawrence And Sharon Block
In memory of Fred Block

Lawrence And Sharon Block
In memory of Dr. Harry W Cooper

Betty Joyce Kruman
In memory of Joel Kruman

