

Chapter Seven

The Haftorah in Jewish Traditions: Studies of the Various Haftorah Readings with Reflection in the New Testament

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This work explains the place of the Jewish *Haftorah* to Africans and evaluates the prominent place the Jewish *Haftorah* plays in the Jewish traditions. It also evaluates how such studies apply in the general framework of the New Testament. It is hoped that this study would enlighten the church in Africa, particularly the Nigerian church and educational institutions on the significance arrogated to and associated with the Jewish *Haftorah*, particularly as reflected in the New Testament.

Key words: *Haftorah*, Torah, Jewish traditions, New Testament, *Shabbat*

Introduction

Haftorah has been one of the long components of the Jewish traditions like the *Torah*. It is a Jewish scroll, which contains various readings depending on geographical terrain in which it was compiled or written. The term *Haftorah* is the name used by the Askenazi Jews. Other Jews from other regions call it *Haftarot* or *Haftarah*. This work uses *Haftorah*, but maintains the *Haftarah* and *Haftarot* when citing from sources and sometimes it uses them interchangeably.

The *Haftorah*, like the *Torah*, was used as part of the Jewish traditions of public reading in the synagogue. It forms the last part of public reading during Jewish worship. Michael Graves states that the practices of public reading of scripture have long been a central component of Jewish practice. The special significance of this component lies partly in its great antiquity: The communal reading of Scripture is pre-rabbinic, and its earliest attestations, even in rabbinic literature, provide a unique glimpse into the world of first-century

Judaism. Beyond this, however, the public reading of Scripture is also significant because of the ways in which the Rabbis themselves shaped and formed the practices that they inherited. Much can be learned about the theology of Rabbinic Judaism from Rabbis' appropriation and development of scripture reading as part of the liturgy.⁹

The primary aim of this work is to enlighten Africans, particularly Nigerians, on *Haftorah* and the important place it plays in the life of the Jews and to show how readings from the *Haftorah* are reflected in the understanding of the New Testament. The study also states how this understanding of Jewish Haftorah would help with the understanding of the Jewish traditions in educational institutions and Churches in Africa, particularly Nigeria.

The Haftorah in Jewish Traditions

According to Judith R. Baskin, the Hebrew word *Haftorah* means “ending” and in Jewish traditions, it refers to the concluding component of the *Torah* service. These weekly and festival *Haftorah* readings from the *Ketuvim* (writings) and *Nevi'im*, the prophets' section of the *Tanach*, the Hebrew Bible, were assigned in the post-biblical rabbinic era and they are always related in some ways to the themes of the *Torah* passage. Sometimes, the connection is obvious in other cases and careful listeners have the challenge and the pleasure of speculating about the connections that prompted the juxtaposition of the *Torah* and *Haftorah* passages.¹⁰

The origins of the *Haftorah* are obscure. The earliest unambiguous evidence for the practice comes, in fact, from Luke-Acts, but in this work, it is already a matter of course.¹¹ *Haftarah* readings are chosen to parallel

⁹ Michael Graves, “The Public Reading of Scripture in Early Judaism” *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 50:3 (2007), 467.

¹⁰ Judith R. Baskin, “Haftorah D'var. First Day of Rosh HaShanah” https://www.tbieugene.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/05/HaftarahRoshHaShana_h2_Judith_Baskin.pdf (Accessed 7th June, 2019).

¹¹ On the evidence from Luke-Acts see Levine, *Ancient Synagogue*, 153-155; Michael Fishbane, *Haftarot: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2002), xxiii-xxvi; Lawrence H. Schiffman, “The Early History of Public Reading of the Torah”, in *Jews, Christians, and Polytheists in the Ancient Synagogue: Cultural Interaction During the Greco-Roman Period* (ed. Steven Fine; New York:

key elements in the section of the *Torah* being read and therefore vary from one year in the triennial cycle to the next. There are some instances where there is a discrepancy in the chapter and verse divisions between Jewish and non-Jewish editions of the Bible. *Haftarah* is fascinating in many ways, not least in the picture it represents of everyday family life in ancient Israel. It is also one of several similar biblical narratives about the seemingly miraculous births of major male figures in the history of early Israel.

Haftarah are non-*Torah* passages of Scripture. The prophetic reading came at the conclusion of the *Torah* reading segment so that the prophetic portion came to be known as the *Haftarah*. Graves has this to say:

Because the Prophets are read only selectively, are not read in order, and are not subject to the same stringent rules as the *Torah*, it is probably that the custom of reading the Prophets is later than the practice of reading through the *Torah*. This conclusion is supported by the fact that most of the prophetic readings are thematically dependent on their corresponding *Torah* portions.

Graves states that:

The first mention of the reading of the Prophets regulates that they be read on festivals and on the Sabbath: ‘On a festival-day it (the *Torah*) is read by five, on the Day of Atonement by six, and on the Sabbath by seven. They may not take from them but they may add to them, and they close with a reading from the Prophets’ (*m. Megillah* 4:2).¹²

The specific prophetic readings for festivals are given in a *baraita* in the *Babylonian Talmud* (*b. Megillah* 31a-b). *Haftarot* for the four special Sabbaths are listed in the *Tosefta*.¹³ It is possible that the practice of

Routledge, 1999), 47-48. Naomi Cohen [*Philo's Scriptures: Citations from the Prophets and Writings: Evidence for a Haftarah-Cycle in Second Temple Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 2007)] finds evidence in Philo for a 1st century C.E. *Haftarah* cycle centered around the Ninth of Ab.

¹² Graves, “The Public Reading of Scripture in Early Judaism,” 468.

¹³ The *Haftarot* for the special Sabbaths are: *Shekels*, *Haftarah* = 2 Kings 12; *Remember*, *Haftarah* = 1 Sam. 15:2; *Heifer*, *Haftarah* = Ezek. 36:25; and *Month*, *Haftarah* = Ezek. 45:18 (*t. Megillah* 3:1-4).

reading the Prophets, like that of the *Torah*, originated with festivals and special days, and then only later expanded into a weekly custom.¹⁴

The central theological motif that emerged from the rabbinic ritualization of Scripture reading is the centrality of *Torah*. The practice of reading began with the *Torah*, and the reading schedules that came into use had the completion of the *Torah* as their goal. Most *Haftorah* (prophetic readings) were selected to match their corresponding *Torah* readings, and the procedures for reading the various Scriptures passages ascribed the greatest position on the *Torah*. Furthermore, the rules governing the translation embodied the unity of the written *Torah* with the oral teaching of the Rabbis. While maintaining the written *Torah*'s distinct status, a part of what is seen in the rabbinic homilies was the desire to demonstrate coherence between the *Torah* proper (i.e. the Pentateuch) and the rest of Scripture reading. There was observably a conscious effort to present the public reading of scriptures as a re-enactment of the revelation at Sinai.¹⁵

The *hatimah* was the conclusion of the *Torah* sermon. It usually began with the first or the last verse of the weekly *Torah* portion and moved to a passage from the Prophets that emphasized comfort and hope. Often, the preacher would refer to the weekly *Haftorah* portion in his *hatimah*: "In this way, the 'consolation' at the conclusion of the homily was elegantly and artistically linked to the particular 'consolation' which concluded the reading from the Scripture, that is, the *Haftarah*."¹⁶

The *Mishnah* has no records governing the length of the *Haftorah*. The *Tosefta* lists several specific *Haftorah*, the shortest of which is only one verse, Isa. 52:3 (*t. Megillah* 3:18). In the *Talmud*, the number of required prophetic verses is lengthened to twenty-one, matching the minimum of twenty-one verses of the *Torah* on the Sabbath (i.e. 7 readers, x a minimum of 3 verses each) (*y. Megillah* 4:2, 75a). The practices of reading at least twenty-one verses for the *Haftorah* eventually became standard, although exceptions were made for older readings that were too short. In general, the rules regarding the *Haftorah* were more flexible than those for the *Torah* portions.¹⁷

¹⁴ Ismar Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History* (Trans. R. P. Scheindlin; Philadelphia: JPS, 1993), 144.

¹⁵ Graves, "The Public Reading of Scripture in Early Judaism," 486.

¹⁶ Graves, "The Public Reading of Scripture in early Judaism," 484.

¹⁷ Graves, "The Public Reading of Scripture in early Judaism," 476.

Along these lines, the translator would not give his *Targum* all at once at the end, but instead would render either verse by verse or thought by thought, depending on whether the *Torah* or *Haftarah* were being read:

He that reads the Law may not read less than three verses; he may not read to the translator more than one verse, or, in the Prophets, three verses; but if these three are three separate paragraphs, he must read them out singly (*m. Megillah* 4:4).

During the *Torah* reading, the Prophets, where less care was needed (and, perhaps, where the thought units were larger), the translator could render up to three verses at a time. Yet, even for the Prophets, if one verse constituted a single thought, so that the following verse changed topics, the translator was to render that verse by itself.¹⁸

Studies of the Various Readings

In selecting the readings for the *Haftarah*, the geographical region was put into consideration. A famous scholar who clarifies the selection is Graves, who believes the readings were selected to suite the liturgical calendar. Graves states that the *Haftarah* readings were selected with specific aims in mind. Some of the *Haftarah* portions were intended to complement the liturgical calendar. Thus, the *Haftarot* for the weeks surrounding the fast day, the Ninth of Av, address themes of mourning and consolation.¹⁹

In general, though, most *Haftarot* were chosen because of some similarity or link with the *Torah* portions that they followed (see *b. Megillah* 29b). Graves asks, “But in what way was the *Haftarah* to be similar to the *Torah* reading?” According to him, this question was answered in slightly different ways by the Palestinian and Babylonian communities. In the Babylonian tradition, the *Haftarah* was expected to share a common theme with the *Torah* portion, and this theme could express itself anywhere within the *Haftarah* reading. Since the focus was on the connection of themes, the Babylonian rite showed no preference

¹⁸ Graves, “The Public Reading of Scripture in early Judaism,” 479.

¹⁹ Ben Z. Wacholder, “Prolegomenon” in Jacob Mann, *The Bible as Read and Preached in the Old Synagogue*, Vol. 1 (New York: KTAV, 1971), xxiv.

for any particular books within the Prophets. Passages to fit the themes could be selected from almost any prophetic book.

Graves writes that for the Palestinian *Haftarot*, on the other hand, there was usually a verbal linkage between a key word in the first or second verse of the *Torah* portion and the same word in the first verse of the prophetic reading. In this system, the *Haftarah* served not as a further expression of the *Torah* theme of the day but as a messianic peroration, which summed up the reading of *Torah* with an eschatological hope. For this reason, according to Graves, almost half of the Palestinian *Haftarot* were taken from Isaiah, especially chaps. 40-66, and another one fourth derive from the Minor Prophets. One can perceive in the variations between the Babylonian and Palestinian rites a difference in the way each community viewed the overall relationship of the Prophets to the *Torah*.²⁰ Below are the various readings according to the book of the *Torah*:

Genesis: The name Genesis is the Greek rendition (origin) of the Hebrew name *Sefer Maaseh Bereshith* “Book of Creation.” The current Hebrew name is *Bereshit* as the book of the beginning, which gives account of the creation of the world and the beginning of life and society. *Bereshith* is the first word of the book and the name for chapter 1- 4, 8, the first of the fifty-four weekly *Torah* reading (*sedrahs*) on Sabbath mornings.²¹

- *Bereshit* (1:1-6:8)²²
 - A: Isaiah 42:5-43:10
 - S, AF, AH, AP: Isaiah 42:5-21
 - Portuguese (acc.²³ To Dotan, Lyons): Isaiah 42:5-21, and 61:10, and 62:5
 - I: Isaiah 42:1-21
 - Y: Isaiah 42:1-16²⁴

²⁰ Graves, 479.

²¹ J. H. Hertz ed., *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs 2nd ed.* (London: Soncino Press, 1977), 1.

²² The passages here attached to the headings refer to the book of Genesis 1:1-6:8. Similar is applied to each book of the *Torah* (Genesis to Deuteronomy) as discussed in the work.

²³ acc. is the abbreviation for ‘according to.’

²⁴ For more information on the Yemenite rites, Western rites, that is, Ashkenazi, Italian, Byzantine, and Sefardi rites (in Minor Asia, Europe and North Africa), and *Targum* sections to some *Torah* sections in Western rites of

- R: Isaiah 65:16-66:11
- K: Isaiah 65:17-66:13
- *Noach* (6:9-11:32)
 - A, Y, I, SM: Isaiah 54:1-55:5
 - Some Y communities: Isaiah 54:1-55:3
 - S, AF, AH: Isaiah 54:1-10
 - K, R: Isaiah 54:9-55:12
- *Lech-Lecha* (12:1-17:27)
 - A, S: Isaiah 40:27-41:16
 - Y, I: Isaiah 40:25-41:17
 - R: Joshua 24:3-23
 - K: Joshua 24:3-18
- *Vayera* (18:1-22:24)
 - A, Y, AH, I, Algiers: Second Kings 4:1-37
 - S, AF, AP. Second Kings 4:1-23
 - R: Isaiah 33:17-34:13
 - K: Isaiah 33:17-35:12 and verse 35:10
- *Chayei Sarah* (23:1-25:18)
 - A, S, Y, Dardai (Yemeni Orthodox) communities: First Kings 1:1-31 (some Y add at the end First Kings 40:6)
 - I: First Kings 1:1-34
 - K, R: Isaiah 51:2-22
- *Toledot* (25:19-28:9)
 - A, S, I: Malachi 1:1-2:7
 - Y: Malachi 1:1-3:4
 - K, R: Isaiah 65:23-66:18
- *Vayetze* (28:10-32:3)
 - A: Hosea 12:13-14:10 (some, including the *Perushim*, add at the end, Joel 2:26-27)
 - Some A: Hosea 12:13-14:10 and Micah 7:18-20; some other A: Hosea 12:13-14:7
 - S: Hosea 11:7-12:12
 - K: Hosea 11:7-13:5
 - Y, I, Baghdad, Djerba (Tunisia): Hosea 11:7 – 12:14

the *Haftorahs*, see David J. D. Kroeze, “List of Haftarah and Torah Sections in the Manuscripts Database” <http://www.targum.nl/pdf/Lists%20of%20Haftarot%20and%20Torah%20sections.pdf> [Accessed 7th June, 2019].

- AH: Hosea 11:7-12:1;
- R: Hosea 12:13-14:3
- *Vayishlach* (32:4-36:43)
 - A Hosea 11:7-12:12
 - S, Y, I, R, K, AH: Obadiah 1:1-21 (entire book).
 - A: Hosea 12:13-14:9
- *Vayesshev* (37:1-40:23)
 - A, S, I: Amos 2:6-3:8
 - R: Isaiah 32:18-33:18
 - K: Isaiah 32:18-33:22
 - (However, if *Vayesshev* occurs on the first Sabbath Hanukkah, which happens occasionally, the *Haftarah* is Zechariah 2:14-4:7
- *Miketz* (41:1-44:17)
 - A, S: first Kings 3:15-4:1
 - I: First Kings 3:15-28
 - R: Isaiah 29:7-30:4
 - K: Isaiah 29:7-24
- *Vayigash* (44:18-47:27)
 - A, S, I: Ezekiel 37:15-28
 - R: Joshua 14:6-15:6
 - K: Joshua 14:6-14:15
- *Vayechi* (47:28-50:26, end)
 - A, S, I: First Kings 2:1-12
 - K, R: Second Kings 13:14-14:7

Exodus: This is the second book of Moses originally called the “Book of the Going Out of Egypt.” It was known as *Ve-eleh Shemoth* “And these are the names”, but in the Western world, it became Exodus from the Greek *exodus*, stating the departure of the people of Israel out of Egypt as adopted from the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament. This book (Exodus) continues the book of Genesis and tells about Israel’s enslavement in Egypt and how the Lord delivered them. It describes the Passover, the Covenant at Mount Sinai, the organization of public worship and the life of the children of Israel in the wilderness. This book provides the foundation for the Jewish life and the Ten

Commandments, which have become the Magna Charta of religion and morality.²⁵

- *Shemot* (1:1-6:8)
 - A, some S: Isaiah 27:6-28:13 & 29:22-23
 - K, R, AH: Isaiah 27:6-28:13
 - S, I: Jeremiah 1:1-2:3
 - S, Jeremiah 1:1-1:19
 - Y: Ezekiel 16:1-14
- *Va'eira* (6:2-9:35)
 - A, S, I: Ezekiel 28:25-29:21
 - Y, I: Ezekiel 28:24-29:21
 - K, R: Isaiah 42:8-43:5
- *Bo* (10:1-13:16)
 - A, S: Jeremiah 46:13-28
 - SM, Algiers, Fez, Y: Isaiah 19:1-19:25
 - I, Bagdad, Y: Isaiah 18:7-19:25
 - R: Isaiah 34:11-36:4
 - K: Isaiah 34:11-35:10
- *Beshalach* (13:17-17:16) (also called *Sabbath Shirah*)
 - A, AH: Judges 4:4-5:31 (longest *Haftorah* of the weekly readings)
 - Y, Libya, Fez, Istanbul: Judges 4:23-5:31
 - I, (some A): Judges 4:4-5:3
 - Some A Judges 4:4-24
 - S: Judges 5:1-5:31
 - K, R: Joshua 24:7-24:26
- *Yitro* (18:1-20:26) (including the Ten Commandments)
 - A, I, Baghdad, Algiers: Isaiah 6:1-7:6 & 9:5-6
 - S, AH, some I: Isaiah 6:1-13
 - Y: Isaiah 6:1-6:13 & 9:5-6
 - R: Isaiah 33:13-34:10
 - K: Isaiah 33:13-34:8
- *Mishpatim* (21:1-24:18)
 - A, S, some I: Jeremiah 34:8-22 & 33:25-26
 - Y: Jeremiah 34:8-35:19
 - I: Jeremiah 34:8-35:11

²⁵ Hertz, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, 205

- R: Isaiah 56:1-57:10
- K: Isaiah 56:1-57:2
- (In most years, the Sabbath of *Mishpatim* is the Sabbath of Parsha Shekalim)
- *Terumah* (25:1-27:19)
 - A, S, I, Y: First Kings 5:26-6:13
 - R: Isaiah 60:17-62:3
 - K: Isaiah 60:17-61:9
- *Tetzaveh* (27:20-30:10)
 - A, S, I, Y: Ezekiel 43:10-27
 - K, R: Jeremiah 11:16-12:15
- *Ki Tissa* (30:11-34:35)
 - A: First Kings 18:1-39
 - S, AH, AF, AP & I: First Kings 18:20-39
 - I: First Kings 18:1-38
 - Y: First Kings 18:1-46
 - R: Isaiah 43:7-44:2
 - K: Isaiah 43:7-44:5
- *Vayakhel* (35:1-38:20)
 - A: First Kings 7:40-50 (AF ends at 8:1) (this is the S Haftorah for Pekudei, next week).
 - S, AH, I: First Kings 7:13-26 (in Sephardic practice, this Haftorah is very rarely read).
 - Y: First Kings 7:13-22
 - R: First Kings 8:1-8:10
 - K: First Kings 8:1-8:19
- *Pekudei* (38:21-40:38, end)
 - (in most years this haftarah is not read because it falls on the Sabbath of Parsha *HaHodesh*, or, less often, Parsha Shekalim)
 - A, AH: First Kings 7:51-8:21
 - S, Y, Baghdad, I: First Kings 7:40-50
 - AF: First Kings 7:40-8:1
- *Perushim*: First Kings 7:40-8:21
 - I: First Kings 7:40-51
 - R: First Kings 7:27-47
 - K: Jeremiah 30: 18-31:13

Leviticus: The third of Moses is called, “The Law of the Priests”. It describes the roles of the Priesthood and the duties of the priestly nation. The Jewish name is *Vayikra*, the Hebrew word for its opening, but the current name Leviticus is from the Septuagint. This book talks about sacrifices and holiness as expected from the Jewish nation. Hertz has this to say: “In ancient time, the Jewish child began the study of Scriptures with Leviticus; ‘because little children are pure and the sacrifices are pure, let those who are pure come and occupy themselves with pure things (*Midrash*).”²⁶ It was expected that Jewish sons and daughters need to be free from the ignoble and vile in the search for a higher conception of God, good health and holiness in the life of humans and the nations.

- *Vayikra* (1:1-5:26)
 - A, S: Isaiah 43:21-44:23
 - Y, I, some SM: Isaiah 43:21-44:6
 - R: Isaiah 43:21-44:13
 - K: Isaiah 43:21-44:23
- *Tzav* (6:1-8:36) (In many years this Haftorah is not read because it coincides with Shabbat Hagadol, or, less often, the Sabbath of Parsha Zachor or of Parsha Parah).
 - A, S: Jeremiah 7:21-8:3; 9:22-23
 - Y, AH: Jeremiah 7:21-28; 9:22-23
 - I, Fez: Jeremiah 7:21-28; I, adds at end Jeremiah 10:6-7
 - K, R: Malachi 3:4-3:24, & 3:23
- *Shemini* (9:1-11:47)
 - A: Second Samuel 6:1-7:17
 - S, AH: Second Samuel 6:1-19 (and some add 7:16-17)
 - Y, I: Second Samuel 6:1-7:3
 - R: Ezekiel 43:27-44:21
 - K: Ezekiel 43:27-44:16
- *Tazria* (12:1-13:59)
 - A, S, I, Y: Second Kings 4:42-5:19
 - K, R: Isaiah 66:7-66:24, & repeat 66:23
- *Tazria – Metzora*
 - Second Kings 7:3-20
- *Metzora* (14:1-15:33)
 - A, S, AH, R: Second Kings 7:3-20

²⁶ Hertz, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, 409

- Y, I: Second Kings 7:1-20 & 13:23
- K: Second Kings 7:3-18
- *Acharei Mot* (16:1-18:30)
 - A, AH: Amos 9:7-15
 - A, S, Berlin: Ezekiel 22:1-19
 - S, K, AF: Ezekiel 22:1-16.
 - R: Ezekiel 22:1-20
- *Acharei Mot-Kedoshim*
 - A, AH: Amos 9:7-15 (this is contrary to the usual rule that when weekly portions must be combined, the second week's Haftorah is read)
 - S, I: Ezekiel 20:2-20
- *Kedoshim* (19:1-20:27) (again, some confusion)
 - A: Ezekiel 22:1-16
 - A: Ezekiel 22:1-19
 - A: Amos 9:7-15
 - S, AH, Y, I: Ezekiel 20:1-20
 - S: Ezekiel 20:2-20
 - Y: Ezekiel 20:1-15
 - R: Isaiah 3:4-5:17
 - K: Isaiah 4:3-5:16
- *Emor* (21:1-24:23)
 - A, S, Y, I: Ezekiel 44: 15-31
 - K, R: Ezekiel 44:25-45:11
- *Behar* (25:1-26:2) (in most years this Parsha is combined with *Bechukotai*)
 - A, S: Jeremiah 32:6-27
 - AH: Jeremiah 32:6-22
 - Y, I: Jeremiah 16:19-17:14
 - K, R: Isaiah 24:2-23
- *Behar-Bechukotai* (in most years the *Torah* portions for both parshot are read with the *Haftorah* for Bechukotal)
 - A, S: Jeremiah 16:19-17:14
- *Bechukotai* (26:3-27:34, end)
 - A, S, AH: Jeremiah 16:19-17:14
 - Y: Ezekiel 34:1-27
 - I: Ezekiel 34:1-15
 - AP: Ezekiel 34:1-31

- K, R, Iraq: Isaiah 1:19-2:11
- S, I: Ezekiel 20:2-20

Numbers: “The fifth of the Mustersings” is the oldest title for the fourth book of the Pentateuch i.e. the book that numbers the people of Israel. It later became known for the fourth word *Bemidbar*, “In the wilderness”, a name that describes the unity of time and place to the varied happenings and laws in the wilderness. The Septuagint gives the current name, Numbers. This book deals with history and law. It records “the laws and ordinances given during that journey; laws relating to the sanctuary, the camp, and the purification of life; and such civil and political ordinances as would enable the Israelites to fulfil the task God assigned to them among the nations.”²⁷

- *Bamidbar* (1:1-4:20)
 - Hosea 2:1-22
- *Naso* (4:21-7:86)
 - A, S, I: Judges 13:2-25
 - R: Hosea 4:14-6:2
 - Y, K: Judges 13:2-24
- *Bechaalotecha* (8:1-12:16)²⁸
 - A, S, I, R, K: Zechariah 2:14-4:7
 - Y: Zechariah 2:14-4:9
 - Libya: Zechariah 2:14-4:10
- *Shlach* (13:1-15:41)
 - A, S, I, Y: Joshua 2:1-24
 - R: Joshua 2:1-21
 - K: Joshua 2:1-15
- *Korach* (16:1-18:32)
 - A, S, Y: First Samuel 11:14-12:22
 - R: Hosea 10:2-11:8
 - K: Hosea 10:2-11:9
- *Chukat* (19:1-22:1)
 - A, S, I: Judges 11:1-33
 - Y: Judges 11:1-40

²⁷ Hertz, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, 567

²⁸ This *Haftorah*, in all traditions, includes Zechariah 3:2, which contains the very rarely used cantillation accent of *mercha kefula*, under *zeh* – “this (burning stick)”.

- R: Judges 11:1-21
- K: Judges 11:1-17
- *Chukat – Balak* (this occurs only when the Sabbath falls on the 12th of Tammuz)
 - Micah 5:6-6:8
 - I: Micah 5:4-6:8
- *Balak* (22:2-25:9)
 - A, S, Y, R, K: Micah 5:6-6:8
 - I: Micah 5:4-6:8
- *Pinchas* (25:10-30:1), if before 18 Tammuz (rarely read; read only in some of the years with a Second Adar)²⁹
 - A, S, I: First Kings 18:46-19:21
 - R: First Kings 18:46-19:21
 - K, some R, Syracuse (Sicily): Malachi 2:5-3:3 (Syracuse ends at 3:4, R ends 3:8)
- *Matot* (30:2-32:42)³⁰
 - A, S, Y, R, K: Jeremiah 1:1-2:3
 - I: Joshua 13:15-33
- *Matot – Masei*³¹
 - A: Jeremiah 2:4-28, and 3:4
 - S, AH: Jeremiah 2:4-28, and 2:4-4: 1-2
 - I: Joshua 19:51-21:3
 - R: Isaiah 1:1-27
 - Y: some R: Jeremiah 1:1-19

²⁹ In most years, Pinchas falls after 17 Tammuz, and the *Haftarot* for Matot is read instead. The *Haftarot* for Pinchas is read rarely – and only in some of the years that have a Second Adar, and – because of peculiarities in observing holy days in the Diaspora – is read in the Diaspora – as it is in the summers of 2005, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2035, 2052, 2062, 2065, 2079, 2092, - only about half as often as it is read in Eretz Yisrael. See the note for the next Sabbath).

³⁰ This Sabbath, or the preceding one, begins the three Sabbaths before the Fast of the 9th of Av (Tisha B'Av), the Three Sabbaths of Calamity, whose *Haftarot*, at least for A and S, are two prophecies of Jeremiah, and one from Isaiah. In most years, Matot is combined with Masei and only the *Haftarot* for Masei is read; only in the same years that Pinchas occurs before 18 Tammuz are Matot and Masei read on separate Sabbaths.

³¹ In most years Matot and Masei are combined in one Sabbath, and as customary, only the second *Haftarot* – the one for Masei – is read.

- Algiers, some Y: Jeremiah 2:4-4:2
- Masei (33:1-36, end)
 - A: Jeremiah 2:4-28, and 3:4
 - S, AH, R, Y: Jeremiah 2:4-28, 4:1-2
 - Y: Joshua 1:1-20
 - I: Joshua 19:51-21:3
 - K: Joshua 20:1-9

Deuteronomy: This is the fifth book of Moses known with “these are the words” i.e. the opening phrase in the Hebrew Text. This title was shortened to *Devarim*, “Word.” The oldest name of the book was “the Repetition of the Torah” a phrase based on XVII, 18 but the current name means “second law” taken from the Latin Bible as *Deuteronomium*. This book restates the law of the Lord through Moses. It is oratory and distinct from the other books. It gives the “Farewell Discourses of Moses on both domestic and personal religion in Israel throughout the millennia, [and this] has never been exceeded by that of any other is Scripture.”³²

- *Devarim* (1:1-3:22)
 - A, S, I, R, K: Isaiah 1:1-27³³
 - Y: Isaiah 1:21-31
 - Libya: Isaiah 22:1-13
 - Djerba: Isaiah 22:1-14 (some Djerba add at end 1:27)
- *Va’etchanan* (3:23-7:11)³⁴
 - A, S, R, some I: Isaiah 40:1-26
 - Y: Isaiah 40:1-27 & 41:17
 - I: Isaiah 40:1-15
 - K: Isaiah 40:1-22
- *Eikev* (7:12-11:25)
 - A, S, I, Y: Isaiah 49:14-51:3
 - R: Isaiah 49:1-51:3
 - Libya: Isaiah 49:1-50:10
 - K: Isaiah 49:14-50:5

³² Hertz, 735

³³ In some congregations this is chanted to the melody of the Scroll of Lamentations until verse 25.

³⁴ Includes The Ten Commandments. This is always Shabbat Nahamu, the first Sabbath after the Fast of the 9th of Av (Tisha B’Av), and the first of the Seven Haftorahs of Consolation.

- *Re'eh* (11:26-16:17)³⁵
 - A, S, I, Y: Isaiah 54:11-55:5
 - K: Isaiah 54:11-56:1
 - a few Algerian: Isaiah 54:1-10
- *Shoftim* (16:18-21:9)
 - A, S, R, Y: Isaiah 51:12
 - I: First Samuel 8:1-22
 - K: Isaiah 51:12-52:8
- *Ki Teitzei* (21:10-25:19)
 - A, S, R, Y: Isaiah 54:1-10
 - I: First Samuel 17:1-37
 - K: Isaiah 54:1-17
 - a few Algerian: Isaiah 54:11-55:5
- *Ki Tavo* (26:1-29:8)³⁶
 - A, S, R, Y: Isaiah 60:1-22
 - I: Joshua 8:30-9:27
 - K: Isaiah 60:1-16
- *Nitzavim* (29:9-30:20)³⁷
 - A, S, R: Isaiah 61:10-63:9
 - Y: Isaiah 61:9-63:9
 - I: Joshua 24:1-18
 - Algiers: Hosea 14:2 -10, and Joel 2:15-27, and Micah 7:18-20
 - K: Isaiah 61:10-63:1
- *Nitzavim – Vayelech*
 - Isaiah 61:10-63:9

³⁵ According to the Shulchan Aruch, if Rosh Hodesh [the new moon] of Elul – which has its own *Haftorah*, namely Isaiah 66 –coincides with Shabbat Re'eh, the *Haftorah* of Re'eh, not for Rosh Hodesh Elul, is read because the Seven Sabbaths of consolation must not be interrupted.

³⁶ The person who reads the list of curse [verses 28:7-69] is called to the scroll by name, and is supposed to read the list in a whisper and as fast as possible.

³⁷ This is the last of the Seven *Haftorah* of consolation. If the Sabbath of Nitzavim coincides with Shabbat Shuvah, then this last *Haftorah* of consolation is read for Vayelech.

- *Vayelech* (31:1-30)³⁸
 - A, S, R, I, Y, Algiers, Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Syracuse: Isaiah 55:6-56:8
- Haazinu (32:1-51)
 - A, S, R: Second Samuel 22:1-51
 - I, Y: Ezekiel 17:22-18:22
 - Algiers: Isaiah 61:10-63:9
 - K: Hosea 14:2-10
- V'Zot HaBerachah (33:1-34:12, end)
 - A, AH, I: Joshua 1:1-18
 - S, K: Joshua 1:1-9
 - Y: Joshua 1:1-9 & 6:27
 - K: Joshua 1:1-10
 - Portuguese: Joshua 1:1-9, and Isaiah 61:1, and Isaiah 62:5.

Special Sabbaths, Festivals and Fast-Days: in general, on the dates below, the *Haftorah* below are read, even if that entails overriding the *Haftorah* below (that for Rosh Hodesh and that for the day preceding Rosh Hodesh) are replaced by the regular weekly *Haftarah* when the weekly reading is Masei (occurring in mid-summer) or later.

Some of these occasions also have specific *Torah* readings, which (for A and S) are noted parenthetically.

- Sabbath coinciding with Rosh Hodesh (New Moon, the beginning of a month), except Rosh Hodesh of the months of Nisan, Tevet, or Adar, and except Rosh Hashanah (Torah reading: Numbers 28:9-15)
 - A, S, K: Isaiah 66:1-24 & repeat 66:23
 - Y, AH: Isaiah 66:1-24
 - A few Djerba: Isaiah 66:5-24 & repeat 66:23

³⁸ It appears that *Vayelech* has no *Haftorah* portion of its own, because *Vayelech* either takes the *Haftorah* of Shabbat Shuvah or the *Haftorah* of Netzavim. If *Vayelech* falls between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, which usually happens, the *Haftorah* for the Shabbat Shuva is read; otherwise Shabbat Shuvah coincides with Netzavim and so the *Haftorah* of Netzavim is shifted to the week of *Vayelech*. Several editions have assigned the Shabbat Shuva reading as the customary *Haftorah* for *Vayelech*, some others have no *Haftorah* listed specifically for *Vayelech*.

- Sabbath coinciding with the day preceding Rosh Hodesh, (known as Machar Hodesh), except Rosh Hodesh of the months of Nisan, Tevet, or Adar and except Rosh Hashanah
 - First Samuel 20:18-42 (which begins, “Tomorrow is the new moon...”)
 - Fez: additionally, read the regular Haftorah
- First day of Rosh Hashanah (Torah reading” Genesis 21:1-34 and Numbers 29:1-6)
 - A, S: First Samuel 1:1-2:20
 - I, Y, AH: First Samuel 1:1-2:10
 - R: First Samuel 2:1-2:21
 - K: Joel 2:15-2:27
- Second day of Rosh Hashanah (observed in the Diaspora, outside of Eretz Yisrael) (Torah Reading: Genesis 22:1-4 and Numbers 29:1-6)
 - A, S, Y: Jeremiah 31:1-19 (Benisch begins at 31:2)
 - I, AH: Jeremiah 31:1-20
 - R: Jeremiah 31:19-31:29 (some R continue to verse 31:2)
 - Baghdad: Jeremiah 30:25-31:19
- Fast of Gedaliah, morning Haftorah
 - None
- Fast of Gedaliah, afternoon Haftorah
 - A, Y, AH, some S, SM: Isaiah 55:6-56:8 (same as used on Minchah of 9th of Av)
 - I: Hosea 14:2-10
 - (acc. to Dotan, most Sephardic congregations have no haftarah for Fast of Gedalia)
- Sabbath before *Yom Kippur* (Shabbat Shuvah) (usually the same week as Parsha Vayelech)
 - Hosea 14:2-10, also, some communities add either Joel 2:15 (or 2:11-17 or Micah 7:18-20).³⁹
 - R, Y: Hosea 14:2-10
 - A, S: Hosea 14:2-10, Micah 7:18-20, Joel 2:11-27⁴⁰

³⁹ Hirsch says, because the Hosea reading ends on a sad note, A added the passage from Joel, and S added the one from Micah. However, many communities nowadays add both these passages.

⁴⁰ Dotan notes that this is done in “some communities” although contrary to the halachic practice. ArtScroll has Joel as second, Micah as last; Dotan notes

- A, S: Hosea 14:2-10, Micah 7:18-20, Joel 2:15-27
- A: Hosea 14:2-10, and Joel 2:15-27 (Benisch lists this as the *A Haftarah* for Haazinu)
- S, & AH: Hosea 14:2-10, and Micah 7: 18-20
- The choice of the reading from Hosea is almost universal because its opening words are *Shuvah Yisrael* – “Return, O Israel, to *the Lord* your God”. “Some few congregations” read Isaiah 55:6-56:8.⁴¹
- *Yom Kippur*, morning haftarah (Torah reading: Leviticus 16:1-34 and Numbers 29:7-11)
 - A, S, AH: Isaiah 57:14-58:15 (R begin at 57:15)
 - Y, I: Isaiah 57:14-58:14 & 59:20-21
- *Yom Kippur*, afternoon Haftarah (Torah reading: Leviticus 18:1-30)
 - The entire Book of Jonah, and Micah 7:18-20 (some communities omit the part from Micah)
- First day of *Sukkot* (Torah reading: Leviticus 22:26-23:44 and Numbers 29:12-16)
 - A, S, AH, K: Zechariah 14:1-21
 - Y: Aleppo: Zechariah 13:9-14:21
- Second day of *Sukkot* (in the Diaspora, outside of Eretz Yisrael) (Torah reading: Leviticus 22:26-23:44 and Numbers 29:12-16)
 - A, S, AH, R: First Kings 8:2-21 (R ends with 8:20)
 - Y, I: First Kings 7:51-8:16
- Sabbath of the intermediate days of *Sukkot* (*Shabbat Hol Hamoed Sukkot*) (Torah reading: Exodus 33:12-34:26 and Numbers 29:17-22)
 - A, S: Ezekiel 38:18-39:16
 - Y: some I, Persia, and Aleppo: Ezekiel 38:1-38:23

this is used in “a few communities”, Hirsch says this is the practice in Eretz Israel.

⁴¹ The *Haftarah* associated with Vayelech and with the minchah of fast days) instead. Some lists or books have no specific entry for Shabbat Shuvah, leading to the supposition that the *Haftarah* usually associated with the week’s parsha – usually Vayelech – is to be read; and some apply a more complex exchange of *Haftarah* if there is – as often occurs – a Sabbath in the four days between *Yom Kippur* and the beginning of *Sukkot*; in which case that Sabbath is Parsha Haazinu.

- Some I, Posen (Poland), R: Ezekiel 38:18-39:16 (some I and Posen ends at 39:10)
Although not an actual *Haftarah*, just before the *Torah* reading on the intermediate Sabbath of Sukkot – or if there is no intermediate Sabbath, then on Shemini Atzeret, the entire scroll of Ecclesiastes (Koheleth) is read, concluding with a repetition of verse 12:13, without any specific blessings.)
- *Shemini Atzeret* (in the Diaspora, outside of *Eretz Yisrael*)
(Torah reading: Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17 and Numbers 29:35-30:1)
 - First Kings 8:54-66 (I, some A end at verse 9:1; R end at 9:5)
 - K: Jonah (entire).
- *Simhat Torah*
(Torah reading: Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12 and Genesis 1:1-2:3 and Numbers 29:35-30:1)
 - A, AH, I: Joshua 1:1-18
 - S, Y: Joshua 1:1-9 (Y add verse 6:27) (some S follow this with the Haftarah used for a bridegroom [Isaiah 61:10-62:8])
 - R, some I: First Kings 8:22-53 (this is the reading originally assigned by the Talmud for this day)
- First (or only) Sabbath of *Hanukkah*
 - A, S, Ah: Zechariah 2:14-4:7
 - Y: Zechariah 2:14-4:9⁴²
- Second Sabbath *Hanukkah*
 - A, S, Y, I: First Kings 7:40-50⁴³
 - R: First Kings 7:27-47
- Sabbath immediately preceding the second day of Adar (or of Second Adar) (Sabbath of *Parsha Shekalim*)
(Torah reading: Exodus 30:11-16)

⁴² This *Haftarah* is recommended in the *Talmud* (Megillah 31a), in all traditions, includes Zechariah 3:2, which contains the very rarely used cantillation accent of mercha kefula under zeh – “this [burning stick]”. It appears there was an ancient custom to read, or to read additionally, First Kings 7:51 – 8:21, describing the dedication of the first Temple.

⁴³ This is also the A *Haftarah* for Yayakhel, which is also very seldom read because it often coincides with Pekudei or with a special Sabbath, and in fact the two readings of this *Haftarah* will never occur in the same year.

- A, Y: Second Kings 12:1-17 (this is the selection recommended in the *Talmud, Megillah 29b*)
- S, Ah: Second Kings 11:17-12:17
- R, K: Ezekiel 45:12-46:5⁴⁴
- Sabbath immediately preceding *Purim* (Sabbath of *Parsha Zachor*)
(Torah reading: Deuteronomy 25:17-19)
 - A, AH: First Samuel 15:2-34
 - S: First Samuel 15:1-34
 - Y: First Samuel 14:52-15:33
- Sabbath *Shushan Purim* in cities that celebrate it (same as for *Parsha Zachor*)
 - A, AH: First Samuel 15:2-34
 - S: First Samuel 15:1-34
 - Y: First Samuel 14:52-15:33
- *Purim* (not an actual *Haftarah*)
 - On the Eve of *Purim*, in a festive atmosphere, and in many congregations in the regular service on the morning of *Purim*, in a more sedate mood, the entire Scroll of Esther is read, preceded by a special blessing of God “who commanded us to read the Scroll” (that command is Esther 9:21) and followed by another special blessing of God “who avenges his people Yisrael”
- Sabbath *Shushan Purim* in cities that celebrate only ordinary *Purim*
 - No special haftarah: the usual haftarah for that week’s parsha is read.
- Sabbath immediately following *Shushan Purim* (Sabbath of Parsh Parah)
(Torah reading: Exodus 12:1-20)
 - A: Ezekiel 45:16-46:18
 - S, AF and AH: Ezekiel 45:18-46:15
 - AH: Ezekiel 45:18-46:16

⁴⁴ This is the first of four Sabbaths preceding Passover. It occurs on the Sabbath that either coincides with the New Moon, or precedes the New Moon that occurs during the following week, of the month of Second Adar – or of Adar in an ordinary year. These four Sabbaths may be the oldest assigned *Haftarah*, from *Tosefta, Megillah chap.4*.

- Algiers: Ezekiel 45:18-46:15 & 47:12
- Y: Ezekiel 45:9-46:11
- I: Ezekiel 45:18-46:18⁴⁵
- Sabbath immediately preceding Passover (*Shabbat HaGadol*)
 - Malachi 3:4-24 & repeat 3:23
 - Y: some AH, AF, some SM: read the regular haftarah for that week.⁴⁶
- First day of Passover (Torah reading: Exodus 12:21-51, and Numbers 28:16-25)
 - Joshua 5:2-6:1 & 6:27
 - AH, (and A: Joshua 3:5-7, 5:2-6:1, & 6:27 (the Munkatsher Rebbe omitted verse 3:7), ('Hertz' omitted Joshua 3:5-7)
 - AF, R, and Perushim: Joshua 5:2-6:14
- Second day of Passover (in the Diaspora, outside of Eretz Yisrael) (*Torah* reading: Leviticus 22:26-23:44 and Numbers 28:16-25)
 - A, S, AH: Second Kings 23:1-9 & 23:21-25⁴⁷
 - Y: Second Kings 22:1-7 & 23:21-25
 - I: Second Kings 23:1-9 & 23:21-30
 - K: Second Kings 23:21-30

⁴⁵ If Rosh Hodesh [New Moon] for Nisan coincides with Parsha Hahodesh, then the *Haftarah* for Hahodesh, not for Rosh Hodesh, is read because the obligation of this special parsha is greater. Dotan says that if Shabbat Hahodesh coincides with Rosh Hodesh, then S and SZ add to the *Hahodesh Haftarah* the first and last verse of the *Haftarah* of Rosh Hodesh [namely, Isaiah 66:1 & 66:23], if Shabbat Hahodesh falls on the day before Rosh Hodesh, then they add the first and last verses of the *Haftarah* for the eve of Rosh Hodesh (namely First Samuel 20:18 & 20:42).

⁴⁶ Several sources report that “some communities” (including some A and Hassidic, including Chabad) read the special *Haftarah* only when Erev Pesach falls on Shabbat Hagadol (meaning the first Seder is celebrated that Saturday night) – which occurs infrequently, and “other communities” (including some other A and Hassidic) read the special *Haftarah* on Shabbat HaGadol only if Erev Pesach falls on another day of the week. Erev Pesach falls on Shabbat HaGadol in the spring of 1994, 2001, 2005, 2008, 2021, 2025, 2045, 2048, 2052, 2073, 2075, 2079, and 2099.

⁴⁷ Many, perhaps most, skip verse 23:10-20, but the Vilna Gaon recommended that verses be read – except verse 13, because it mentions a shameful deed by king Solomon. Some congregations begin the reading at 23:4

- Sabbath of the intermediate days of Passover (Shabbat Hol Hamoed Peshach)
(*Torah* reading: Exodus 33:12-34:26 and Numbers 28:19 – 25)
 - A, S: Ezekiel 37:1-17
 - AH: Ezekiel 37:1-17
 - Y: Ezekiel 36:37-37:14
 - I, R, A S: Ezekiel 36:37-37:17 (acc. to Benish, S stop at 37:14).⁴⁸
- Seventh day of Passover
(*Torah* reading: Exodus 33:12-34:26 and Numbers 28:19-25)
 - Second Samuel 22:1-51 (Aleppo begins at 21:15)
- Eighth day of Passover (in the Diaspora, outside of Eretz Yisrael)
(*Torah* reading: if not a Sabbath, Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17, if not a Sabbath Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17, and Numbers 28:19-25)
 - Isaiah 10:32-12:6 (also read on *Yom Ha'atzmaut* [Israeli Independence Day, 5th of Iyar, May 14, 1948])
 - I, K: Judges 5:1-31
- First day of *Shavuot*
(*Torah* reading: Exodus 19:1 – 20:23 and Numbers 28:26-31)
 - A, S, AH: Ezekiel 1:1-28 & 3:12
 - Y: Ezekiel 1:1-2:2 & 3:12
 - K: Habakkuk 1:1-3:19⁴⁹
- Second day of *Shavuot* (in the Diaspora, outside of Eretz Yisrael)
(*Torah* reading: if not Sabbath Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17, if on a Sabbath Deuteronomy 14:22 – 16:17, and Numbers 28:26-31)

⁴⁸ Although not an actual *Haftorah*, it is a widespread practice to read the entire scroll of the Song of Songs, without any specific blessings, before the *Torah* reading the intermediate Sabbath of Passover, or, if there is no intermediate Sabbath, then on the seventh or eighth day of Passover, whichever is a Sabbath.

⁴⁹ The Shulcan Aruch directs the reading of Ezekiel 1:1 through 3:12 continuously, but most skip all or part of chapter 2 and skip to 3:12. This *Haftorah* is customarily read and expounded by a rabbi or an esteemed scholar, in keeping with the direction of the Mishna, (*Hagigah* 2:1), because the first chapter of Ezekiel describes the Heavenly Chariot. Although not an actual *Haftorah*, immediately before the *Torah* reading in the morning service of *Shavuot* in Israel – in the Diaspora, this is in the morning service of the second day of *Shavuot* – the entire scroll of Ruth is read, without special blessings.

- Habakkuk 2:20-3:19⁵⁰
- R, some A: Habakkuk 3:1 – 3:19
- 9th of Av (Tisha B' Av), eve of (not an actual Haftorah)⁵¹
- 9th of Av (Tisha B' Av), morning Haftorah⁵²
 - A, S, AH: Jeremiah 8:13-9:23 (chanted to the melody used for the Scroll of Lamentations)
 - Y: Jeremiah 6:16-17 & 8:13 – 9:23
- 9th of Av (Tisha B' Av), minchah (afternoon) Haftorah
 - A, AH: Isaiah 55:6-56:8
 - Most S: Hosea 14:2-10⁵³
 - Y, I: Hosea 14:2-10 & Micah 7:18 – 20
- Fast days (other than those listed above), afternoon Haftorah (Torah reading: Exodus 32:11-14 and 34:1-10)
 - A, and Algiers: Isaiah 55:6-56:8 (same as used on 9th of Av, afternoon)
 - S, Y: none
 - Some S, M: Hosea 14:2-10, and Micah 7:18-20
- Sabbath coinciding with Rosh Hodesh of Elul
 - Isaiah 66:1-24 & repeat 66:23⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Many congregations, A, S, after reading the first verse of the *Haftorah* (namely 2:20), then read an Aramaic piyyut (poem), *Yetziv Pisgam*, extolling God's infinite power, after which the reading from Habakkuk resumes. A minority of congregations recite a different poem, *Ata Vedugma*, instead, and some do not interrupt the *Haftorah* with any poem.

⁵¹ The regular evening service on the eve of the Fast of Tisha B'Av, conducted in a funeral atmosphere, with the reading of the entire scroll of Lamentations, concluded with a repetition of verse 5:21, without any specific blessing at the end of the morning service.

⁵² *Torah* reading: Deuteronomy 4:25-40). Those called to read from the *Torah* Scroll are not given the usual congratulations for this honor.

⁵³ The reading from Hosea was first mentioned, as optional, for this service by Isaac Ibn Ghiyath, Spain ca. 1080, and is used by all except A.

⁵⁴ According to the Shulchan Aruch, if Rosh Hodesh [the New Moon] – which has its own *Haftorah* (namely Isaiah 66) – coincides with Shabbat Re'eh, then the *Haftorah* of Re'eh (Isaiah 54:11-55:5), not the *Haftorah* for Rosh Hodesh, is read because the seven Sabbaths of Consolation must not be interrupted. However, in Frankfurt and Eastern Europe, it is the custom in such an occurrence to read the *Haftorah* for Rosh Hodesh instead, and the second

Calendar of Torah and Haftarah Reading⁵⁵

Name	Month	5779 2018 – 19	5780 2019 – 20	5781 2020 – 21
Erev Rosh Hashanah	1 Tishiri	9 September	29 September	18 September
Rosh Hashanah – 1 st Day	1 Tishiri	10 September	30 September	19 September
Rosh Hashanah – 2 nd Day	2 Tishiri	11 September	1 October	20 September
Kol Nidre	10 Tishiri	18 September	8 October	27 September
Yom Kippur	10 Tishiri	19 September	9 October	28 September
Erev Sukkot	15 Tishiri	23 September	13 October	2 October
Sukkot – 1 st Day	15 Tishiri	24 September	14 October	3 October
Erev Sh'mini Atzeret/Simchat Torah	22 Tishiri	30 September	20 October	9 October
Sh'mini Atzeret/Simchat Torah	22 Tishir	1 October	21 October	10 October
Chanukkah – 1 st Night	25 Kislev	2 December	22 December	10 December
Tu BiSh'vat	15 Sh'vat	21 January	10 February	28 February

Sabbath afterward, which would be Parsha Ki Tetze, would double up and read first the *Haftarah* Ki Tetze (Isaiah 54:1–10) and then *Haftarah* Re'eh.

⁵⁵ “Calendar of Torah and Haftarah Readings 5779–5781 (2018–2021)” <https://www.reformjudaism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Calendar-of-Torah-and-Haftarah-Readings-5779-5781.pdf> [accessed 7th June, 2019. For more study on the Jewishness of Jesus, the seven feasts, the Passover, Pentecost, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot see Larry Hugh, *The Torah Blessing: Revealing the Mystery, Releasing the Miracle* (New Kensington: Whitaker House, 2009), 115-212.

Erev Purim	14 Adar	20 March	9 March	25 February
Purim	14 Adar	21 March	10 March	26 February
1 st Seder Night	15 Nisan	19 April	8 April	27 March
Pesach – 1 st Day	15 Nisan	20 April	9 April	28 March
Pesach 7 th Day				
Erev Pesach – 7 th Day	21 Nisan	25 April	15 April	2 April
Yom Ha-Shoah	27 Nisan	1 May	20 April	7 April (-1)
Erev Yom Ha-Atzma'ut	5 Iyar	8 May (-1)	28 April	8 April (-1)
Lag Ba-Omer	5 Iyar	9 May (-1)	29 April	15 April (-2)
Erev Shavuot	18 Iyar	23 May	12 May	30 April (-2)
Shavuot	6 Sivan	8 June	28 May	16 May
Erev Tishah B'Av	9 Av	10 August (+1)	29 July	17 July
Tishah B'Av	9 Av	11 August (+1)	30 July	18 July

Reflections of the *Haftorah* in the New Testament

Haftorah (composition and reading) is not just a practice during the Old Testament. This idea is said to have started with Ezra during the Jewish 70 years in exile. Gideon Y. Tambiyi has it that the 70 years of exile (605–535 BC) gave birth to Orthodox Judaism, which was practiced in the Synagogue. This period of exile was meant to worship God and studying of the Torah and having fellowship. It also saw the rise of the scribes (dominantly priests) since the priests were taken and they were the teachers of the Law to the people.⁵⁶

Also, during this time, the Jews enjoyed and experienced spirituality, change in language, literary production and the Psalms (74:79; 85; 102,

⁵⁶ Gideon Y. Tambiyi, *Priesthood and African Christian Thoughts* (Munster: Lambert Publishing House, 2017), 71.

etc.).⁵⁷ Tambiyi adds that it is clear that it was in exile that the priests under the leadership of Ezra started the Synagogue worship. A Synagogue was made up of about nine to twelve people mainly to study the Law and the Prophets in view of their situation as exiles.⁵⁸ With this, Robert G. Gromacki elaborates that in the centuries that followed, synagogues sprouted throughout the Mediterranean world whenever the Jews emigrated. They were never designed to become substitute for the Temple. Sacrifices were never offered in them because Jerusalem was the only God –appointed place of sacrifices.⁵⁹

It is obvious that from very early times a selection from outside the *Torah*, usually from the prophets, was read along with the weekly *Torah* portion. During the days of Jesus and Paul, such practice was common (Luke 4:17 and Acts 13:15). We shall study these two passages below:

Luke 4:16–30: One of the commonest passages is Luke 4. It looks like Jesus was handed the book of Isaiah. Was it a *Haftarah* that was handed over to him or the entire book of Isaiah? The translation states it was the book of Isaiah but it is obvious that it was during a synagogue session on a Sabbath. Although, Graves finds a tradition of giving a homily by the reader and that the homily could follow the *Haftarah*; yet, there is no way to identify any “common practice” in these matters. As with other aspects of the service, in the earliest period the sermon was probably given by anyone in the congregation who was qualified; but by the 2nd century AD, the responsibility was more often relegated to a specialist.⁶⁰ We are not certain what posture the preacher would take: for example, Jesus sat down to deliver his homily (Luke 4:20), while Paul stood up (Acts 13:16). It was expected that the homily would be based on the scriptural text for the day, as exemplified by references to sages expounding the

⁵⁷ The Psalms are individual songs in the Psalter. These are songs and they do not have chapters. For example, Psalm six verse 3.

⁵⁸ Tambiyi, *Priesthood and African Christian Thoughts*, 73.

⁵⁹ Robert G. Gromacki, *New Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974), 2. The synagogues became the center for missionary activities during the days of the apostles and out of them came the first Christian converts, believers who were Jews and Gentile-proselytes to Judaism.

⁶⁰ Graves, “The Public Reading of Scripture in Early Judaism,” 481. Ismar Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History* (trans. R. P. Scheindlin; Philadelphia: JPS, 1993), 157-58.

“passage of the day.”⁶¹ The Isaiah portion Jesus read was the portion divinely meant to be read and Jesus was asked to take the homily that day. This follows the *Bereshit* reading of the *Haftarah*.

Acts 13:27: Another passage in the New Testament is Acts 13:27. This passage gives a glimpse to the understanding of *Haftarah* and its use during rabbinic homily in the synagogue. Graves also states that many sermons were probably delivered from a high platform, called a *bimah*, which harkened back to the platform upon which Scripture was read in the days of the Temple, and which architecturally, may have developed with some influence from the church.⁶²

Graves opines that this passage should be read within the context of Torah reading from the Prophets, or what rabbinic Judaism would call the *Haftarah*. Whatever the foundational impetus for the *Haftarah rite*, Acts 13:27 appears to construe its function through the prism of the Torah reading. As the Torah is read in public so that no Jew can claim ignorance of the Law, so synagogue goers must hear the Prophets so that none can pretend to be unaware of the historical moment’s soteriological import.⁶³

⁶¹ Graves, “The Public Reading of Scripture in Early Judaism,” 481.

⁶² Graves, “The Public Reading of Scripture in Early Judaism,” 481. Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 230.

⁶³ The messianic focus of the blessings after the *Haftarah*, which occur in rabbinic sources that likely preserve materials from the Second Temple period, may support an eschatological interpretation of the reading from the Prophets. On the complex history of these blessings see Shmuel Safari, “Gathering in the Synagogue on Festivals, Sabbaths, and Weekdays,” in *Hikrei Eretz: Studies in the History of the land of Israel: Dedicated to Prof. Yehuda Feliks* (ed. Y. Friedman et al.; Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 1997), 238-239 (Hebrew). Safari contends that, because the blessings recited after the *Haftarah* are associated in rabbinic literature with other liturgical contexts connected to the Temple, contexts in which there is no reading from the prophets, we must suppose that the blessings were at first recited immediately after the reading from the *Torah*, and only at a stage was the reading from Prophets inserted between the two. Even if this reconstruction is correct, Graves is inclined to think that the reading from the Prophets and the blessings both belong to the same process of transforming the synagogue service from a purely instructional context into a prayer service, one directed first and foremost toward the

Graves opines that it is possible that Acts 13:27 implicitly reads Habbakuk 1:5 (“when it is told”) as a reference to this liturgical practice: the deed is told, most fundamentally, in the weekly reading from the Prophets. In any case, the additional step taken in Acts 13 has its root in the widespread Hellenistic Jewish understanding of the instructional function of the Torah reading, and in the tendency, exemplified by the developments at Qumran summarized to view the prophets’ forecasts in terms borrowed from reflection on Torah law.⁶⁴

Conclusion

This work presented an understanding of the *Haftorah* in the Jewish tradition. It considered the make of the Jewish *Haftorah* and the various rabbinic readings from the Pentateuch depending on the Jewish rabbinic traditions and geographical local. Such readings have been selected for the various Sabbath and the festivals and fasting days. It also became clearer that there are two instances whereby the New Testament used the *Haftorah* (Jesus – Luke 4:16-30 and Paul – Acts 13:27). This work noted that Jesus read from the *Haftorah* in Luke 4:17 not the entire book of Isaiah as reflected in the various English translations. The Church in Africa needs understanding of the *Haftorah* and should use it for specific functions and festivals as used by the Jews; hence, Christians are now the spiritual children of Abraham. Such an understanding would contribute immensely to the growth and development of the church and religious institutions in Nigeria and Africa at large.

eschaton, Tzvi Novick, “Eschatological Ignorance and the Haftarah: On Acts 13:27” *Novum Testamentum* 54 (2012), 173.

⁶⁴ Novick, “Eschatological Ignorance and the Haftarah: On Acts 13:27,” 175.