

הַפְטָרָה לַיּוֹם שֵׁנִי שֶׁל רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה

HAFTORAH FOR THE SECOND DAY OF ROSH HASHONNOH

The Haftorah for the second day of Rosh HaShonnoh is taken from Sefer Yirmiyohu, from Chapter 31, verse 1 till verse 19.

1. As has been explained elsewhere (*see INTRODUCTION TO THE HAFTORAH OF THE WEEK*) when our Chachommim instituted the reading of the Haftorah, it was so that through the Haftorah, the Torah portion which would have been read on that Shabbos but was proscribed by edict of the anti-Jewish government of the time, would be recalled and through this, all of Jewry would know the current Sidra of any particular week. That was its main purpose, to be sure. But there was another outcome, too and that was that the Haftorah — and this is true especially concerning the Haftoras of the Yommim Tovim — presented an opportunity to expand on a related theme of the day. The Haftorah of the Second Day of Rosh HaShonnoh is an example of this.
2. Rosh HaShonnoh is the day in the year when we, the Chosen People of HaShem, declare HaShem's Sovereignty. The Gemorroh explains that we are commanded to proclaim HaShem as the Sovereign of all Creation, before Whom nothing is forgotten for He remembers every human's deeds, to reward them or not. We are commanded further that these declarations are to be made together with a series of Shofar sounds, giving us the three themes of Rosh HaShonnoh, Sovereignty, Remembrance and Shofar — מַלְכֵיּוֹת, זְכוֹרוֹת, שׁוֹפְרוֹת .
3. These three themes of the day are each recalled by a set of Pesukkim taken from TeNaCH (that is, Holy Scripture) comprising three Pesukkim taken from Torah, three taken from the Books of the Prophets and three from the Books of the Writings, with a tenth Possuk for each of the three taken once again from Torah.
4. The Gemorroh explains that this Haftorah was chosen for the Second Day of Rosh HaShonnoh also because it has within it the Possuk in which HaShem declares His love for us, His People and indeed constantly recalls and remembers His favourite People, whom he calls by the term of endearment "Efrayyim."
5. In this Haftorah there is also that memorable passage which portrays Mother Rochel weeping at the exile of her children. HaShem tells her to cease her weeping for her children will return from their exile. One purpose of reading this on Rosh HaShonnoh is obviously to awaken in us emotions of reconciliation and Teshuvah so that each of us should resolve to return to HaShem with all our hearts. When we all shall have thus returned to HaShem, He, for His part, will take us back again within the sight of all the nations of the world and He will bestow His blessings upon us all.