



# B'NAI DAVID-JUDEA

## *Shabbat Shorts*

Last time on Shabbat Shorts we discussed the origins of the Haftarah reading.

Today we have rules of where Haftarah is read-- namely when a minyan is present and following the Torah reading. And we also have a consistent schedule of when which Haftarot are read in the calendar, including times of year when the Haftarot reflect the general tenor of the time, such as the Tlat DePuranuta (the Three of Destruction) which we read during the Three Weeks.

But there is a fascinating practice that the Rema records, which reflects how there used to be an element of flexibility and even personalization in the Haftarot. The Rema explains that when a groom was present, ונוהגין להפטיר, בחתונה שוש אשיש, "We have the practice of reading the haftarah of 'Sos Asis' for the wedding" (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 428:8). He clarifies that this was only permitted when it didn't conflict with a special Haftarah, such as that of Chanukah, which needed to be read.

The significance of 'Sos Asis' is that it is the last of the Sheva DeNechemata (the Seven Haftarot of Consolation) that we read between Tisha B'Av and Rosh Hashanah. 'Sos Asis' leads into Rosh Hashanah. It is fitting for a wedding as its opening words from Isaiah 61:10 are: "I will rejoice with the Lord; my soul shall exult with my God, for He has attired me with garments of salvation, with a robe of righteousness He has enwrapped me; **like a bridegroom, who, priestlike, dons garments of glory, and like a bride, who adorns herself with her jewelry.**" What a beautiful way to celebrate marriage by having the text of the day be read in honor of the couple!

Sefer Shaarei Binah (chapter 11) reports that this custom changed because previously weddings were on work days when most people could not attend,

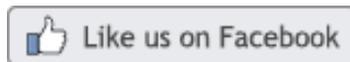
and so instead people would have their celebration with the whole community at shul on Shabbat. This celebration included a special Haftarah. But once weddings started to happen on days off, this fell out of practice since a full celebration was being held. We see a remnant of this in the custom for the chatan to be called up for Maftir and to read the Haftarah on his Shabbat Chatan.

This is a fascinating example of how our tradition is both fixed and also ever-evolving! We see here in the Rema's tradition that our Shabbat davening experience is meant to be communal and deeply personal. It's not a spectator sport. May learning this tradition, even if it has fallen out of practice, encourage us to tap into the personal and communal experience that Shabbat morning davening can be.

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