

## OFF-RAMP TORAH

A JUDICIOUS DEPARTURE FROM  
THIS WEEK'S TORAH PORTION

February 21, 2026



**“Fostering diverse modes of attention to textual details cultivates  
correlative forms of attention to the world and divine reality”**

Michael Fishbane (1943- ), *Sacred Attunement: A Jewish Theology*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לַעֲסוֹק בְּדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה:

### TO START: Parashat-haShavu'a Stats

Weekly Portion: T'rumah Exodus 25:1-27:19

Sequence in Torah cycle: 18<sup>th</sup> of 54

Sequence in Exodus: 7<sup>th</sup> of 11



### WHERE WE'RE GOING INSTEAD, and why

Selections from I Kings 5-7

Context: *This week's portion describes capitalization of— and the specifications for—the מִשְׁכָּן Mishkan (“[Divine] Abode”) which the Israelites are to construct in the Sinai Wilderness as the focal point for their ever-moving encampment.*

Content: *Today we focus instead on the Haftarah assignment for this week: a description of the corresponding mobilization of materiel for Solomon's construction of a permanent shrine in Jerusalem, centuries later.*

### **Background: a reverent narrative ex post facto, from the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE -**

A) Josephus Flavius (37?-100? CE), *Antiquities of the Jews*, 7:13:4-10 - Now King David had resolved to call [the threshing-floor of Ha'aravnah the Jebusite north of the city (see II Samuel 24:21ff)] “The Altar of All the People” [ὅλον βωμὸν προσαγορεύσαι τοῦ λαοῦ] and to build there a temple to God. But God sent the prophet to inform him that it should be his son who would build Him an altar— that son who was to take the kingdom after him.

After the delivery of this prophecy, **the king appointed eighty thousand workers** to be hewers of stone, **and another multitude** to carry the stones, **over all of whom he set supervisors**. He also prepared a great quantity of iron and brass for this project, together with many exceeding large cedar trees he was supplied with by the Tyrians and Sidonians.

#### Population of Israel, in David's time:

stated - 1.5 million adult males

projected - 1.2 million people

¼ (300,000) are “able-bodied”

∴ 80,000 = 27%

He then informed his courtiers that all these things had now been prepared, **that he might leave materials ready for the building of the temple** to his son, who was to reign after him.

- more over

This Week's *Haftarah*, from the 10<sup>th</sup> century BCE -

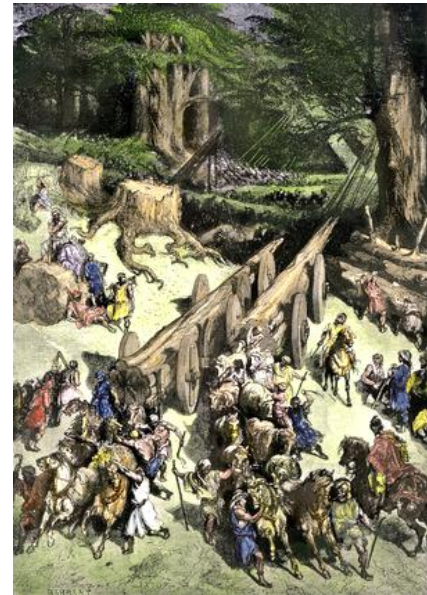
וַיְהִי נָתַן חֶכְמָה לְשֹׁלֹמֹה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לוֹ וַיְהִי שָׁלֵם בֵּין חִירָם וּבֵין שְׁלֹמֹה וַיִּכְרְתוּ  
בְרִית שְׁנֵיהֶם

B1) I Kings 5:26-6:13 - The Eternal One had given Solomon wisdom, just as promised. There was friendship between Hee-Ram [the Phoenician King of Tyre] and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty.

וַיַּעַל הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה מִסּוּמֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהִי הַמָּס  
שְׁלָשִׁים אֶלֶף אִישׁ וַיִּשְׁלְחֵם לְבָנוֹנָה עֶשְׂרֵת  
אַלְפִים בַּחֹדֶשׁ חֲלִיפוֹת חֹדֶשׁ יִהְיוּ בְּלִבָּנוֹן שְׁנַיִם  
חֳדָשִׁים בְּבֵיתוֹ וְאַדְנִיָּרָם עַל הַמָּס

King Solomon established a public-works program of 30,000 men from all over Israel, whom he sent to [hew and dress cedars in] the Lebanon [Mountain range] ten thousand a month in rotation— spending one month in the Lebanon, and two months at home. The labor coordinator was AdoniRam.

וַיְהִי לְשֹׁלֹמֹה שִׁבְעִים אֶלֶף נָשָׂא סָבֵל וּשְׁמָנִים



אֶלֶף חִצָּב בָּהֶר לְבַד מַשְׁרִי  
הַנֹּצְבִים לְשֹׁלֹמֹה אֲשֶׁר עַל  
הַמְּלָאכָה שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֶלְפִים  
וּשְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת הָרָדִים בָּעַם  
הַעֲשִׂים בַּמְּלָאכָה וַיֵּצֵאוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ  
וַיִּסְעוּ אֲבָנִים גְּדוֹלוֹת אֲבָנִים  
יְקָרוֹת לְיֹסֵד הַבַּיִת אֲבָנֵי גִזִּית

Solomon also had seventy thousand porters, with eighty thousand quarriers in the hills, to produce and transport huge blocks of choice stone, so that the foundations of the House might be laid with hewn stones.

וַיִּפְסְלוּ בְנֵי שְׁלֹמֹה וּבְנֵי חִירָם  
וְהַגְבָּלִים וַיִּכְנוּ הָעֵצִים  
וְהָאֲבָנִים לְבָנוֹת הַבַּיִת

They were shaped by Solomon's own masons, as well as those of Hee-Ram and others in Gebal [= Byblos, at the mouth of the Ibrahim River]. Thereby did they make ready the shaped timbers and hewn stones for building the House.

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וַיְהִי בִשְׁמוֹנִים שָׁנָה וָאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה לְצֵאת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בַּשָּׁנָה הָרְבִיעִית בַּחֹדֶשׁ זֶה הוּא הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁנִי לַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּבֶן הַבַּיִת לַיהוָה

So it is that— in the 480<sup>th</sup> year after the Israelites left the land of Egypt, in the month of Ziv (that is, The Second Month [= Iyyar = May]) **in the fourth year of his reign** over Israel [= 965 BCE]— **Solomon began to build** the House of The Eternal One.

וַעֲשֹׂרִים רָחֲבֹו וְהַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה לַיהוָה שְׁשִׁים אַמָּה אָרְכֹו וּשְׁלֹשִׁים אַמָּה קוֹמָתֹו

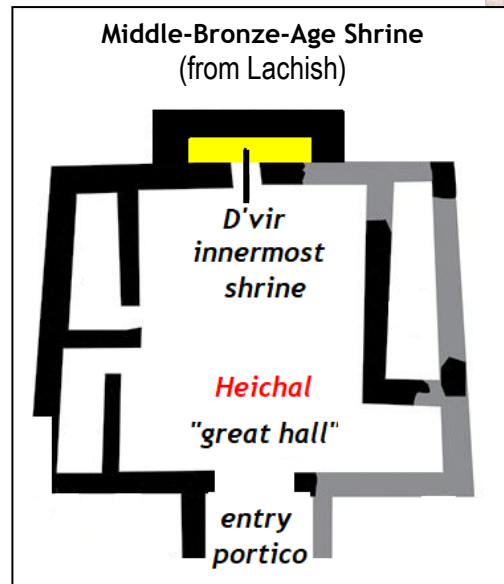
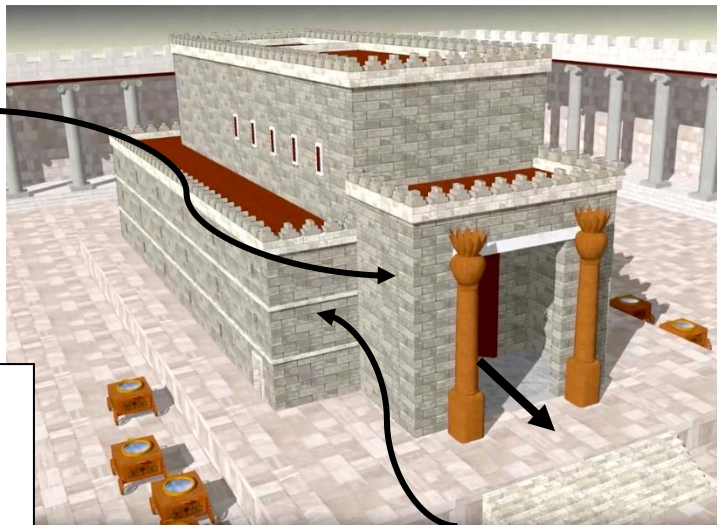
The House that King Solomon built for The Eternal One was 60 cubits [90 feet] long; 20 cubits [30 feet] wide; and 30 cubits [45 feet] high.

וְהָאוֹלָם עַל פְּנֵי הַיֵּכָל הַבַּיִת עֲשֹׂרִים אַמָּה אָרְכֹו עַל פְּנֵי רָחֲבֹו הַבַּיִת עֲשֹׂר בְּאַמָּה רָחֲבֹו עַל פְּנֵי הַבַּיִת

$$\begin{aligned} & 60 \times 20 \times 30 \text{ cubits} \\ &= (10 \times 6) \times (10 \times 2) \times (10 \times 3) \\ &= 6 \times 2 \times 3 \\ &= (5 \times 12) \times (5 \times 4) \times (5 \times 6) \\ &= 12 \times 4 \times 6 \end{aligned}$$

The entry portico in front of the **Great Hall of the House** was 20 cubits long— along the breadth of the House— and 10 cubits deep to the front of the House.

וַיִּבֶן עַל קִיר הַבַּיִת יָצִיעַ סָבִיב אֶת קִירוֹת הַבַּיִת סָבִיב לַהֵיכָל וְלִדְבִיר וַיַּעַשׂ צִלְעוֹת סָבִיב



Against the outside wall of the House— the outside walls of the House enclosing the **Great Hall** and the **Shrine**— he built a three-storied structure, **with side chambers all around**.

וְהַבַּיִת בְּהִבְנָתֹו אָבֹן שְׁלֹמֹה מִסַּע נִבְּנָה וּמִקְבֹוֹת וְהַגִּרְזֹן כָּל כָּלִי בְרָזָל לֹא נִשְׁמַע בַּבַּיִת בְּהִבְנָתֹו

While the House was being built, only finished stones cut at the quarry were used, so that **no hammer or ax or any iron tool was heard** in the House while it was being built.

פָּתַח הַצִּלְעַת הַתֵּיכָנָה אֶל כְּתָף הַבַּיִת הַיְמָנִית וּבְלוּלִים יַעֲלוּ עַל הַתֵּיכָנָה וּמִן הַתֵּיכָנָה אֶל הַשְּׁלֹשִׁים

**Exodus 20:22** - If you make Me an altar of stone, you may not build it of **hewn** stones;

**כִּי חִרְבָּךְ הִנֵּפְתָּ עָלֶיהָ וַתְּחַלְלָהּ**  
by taking your sword to it, you desecrate it.



The entrance to the middle story of the side chambers was on the right [= South] side of the House, while winding stairs led up to the middle chambers, and from the middle chambers to the third story.

וַיִּבֶן אֶת הַבַּיִת וַיְכַלֶּהוּ וַיִּסְפֹּן אֶת הַבַּיִת גְּבִים וּשְׁדֵרֹת בְּאַרְזִים וַיִּבֶן אֶת הַיָּצִיעַ  
עַל כָּל הַבַּיִת חֲמֵשׁ אַמּוֹת קוֹמָתוֹ וַיֹּאחֲזוּ אֶת הַבַּיִת בַּעֲצֵי אֲרָזִים


When he finished building the House, he paneled the House with beams and panels of cedar. He built the storied structure against the entire House— each story 5 cubits high— so that the whole House was encased with wood of cedar.

Leviticus 14:2 -	used in purification ritual for the healed <i>M'tzora</i> .
Numbers 19:6 -	burned with the red heifer to make the Water of Purification.
Aromatherapy -	insect repellent; astringent; antiseptic. purifying aura. soothing calming fragrance (cf. רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ “an ameliorative scent”).
folklore -	connect with the Divine, while cleansing negative energy.

### A painful epilogue -

וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל קְהֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּדְבְּרוּ אֶל רְחַבְעָם לֵאמֹר אֲבִיךָ הִקְשָׁה אֶת עֲלֵנוּ  
וְאַתָּה עָתָה הֵקֵל מֵעֲבֹדֶת אֲבִיךָ הִקְשָׁה וּמַעֲלֹ הַכָּבֵד אֲשֶׁר נָתַן עָלֵינוּ וְנַעֲבֹדְךָ

C) I Kings 12:3-4, 12:14, 12:18 - All the assemblage of the Israelites came and addressed [Solomon's son and heir] R'hav'Am as follows: “Your father made our yoke heavy. “But if you will now alleviate the harsh labor your father laid on us, and his heavy yoke he placed upon us, we will serve you.”



**Solomon's "Chariot Cities"**

*mobile-force garrisons*

**וַיְהִי מִקְצֵה עֲשָׂרִים שָׁנָה אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה שְׁלֹמֹה**  
I Kings 9:10, 9:15 - At the end of the twenty years during which Solomon was building . . . .

**וַזֶּה דְבַר הַמָּס אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלָה הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה**  
This was the purpose of the forced labor that Solomon imposed:

**לִבְנוֹת אֶת בַּיִת יְהוָה וְאֶת בַּיְתוֹ וְאֶת הַמִּלּוֹא וְאֶת חוֹמַת יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאֶת חָצֹר וְאֶת מִגְדוֹ וְאֶת גִּזְרֵן**  
to build the House of The Eternal One; his own palace; the Millo and the wall of Jerusalem; and [to fortify] Chatzor, M'gido, and Gezer.



- continued

וַיִּדְבֹר אֲלֵיהֶם כַּעֲצַת הַיִּלָּדִים לֵאמֹר אָבִי הַכְבִּיד אֶת עַלְכֶּם וְאֲנִי אֲסִיף עַל עַלְכֶּם

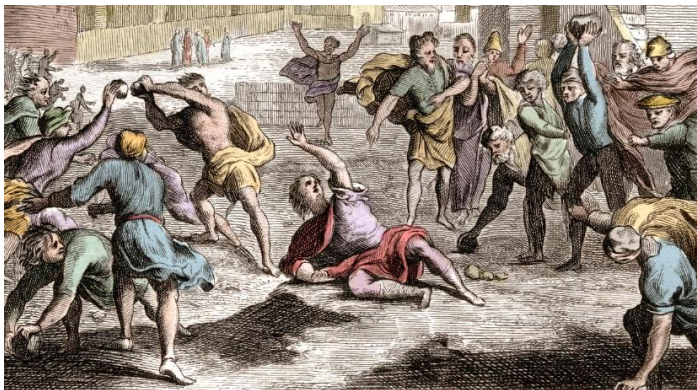
[Against the counsel of his advisors, but] as goaded by the prompting of his younger followers, [R'hav'Am] replied to them: "My father [Solomon] made your yoke heavy, yet **I will increase your burden!**

אָבִי יִסֹר אֶתְכֶם בְּשׁוּטִים וְאֲנִי אֲיִסֹר אֶתְכֶם בְּעִקְרָבִים

"My father lashed you with whips, but **I will flog you with scorpions!**"

וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ רְחַבְעָם אֶת אֲדֹנִי רָמ אֲשֶׁר עַל הַמַּס וַיִּרְגְּמוּ כָל יִשְׂרָאֵל בּוֹ אֲבָן וַיָּמָת וְהַמֶּלֶךְ רְחַבְעָם

הִתְאַמֵּץ לַעֲלוֹת בַּמֶּרְכָּבָה לָנוֹס יְרוּשָׁלַם



King R'hav'Am brought forth **AdoniRam, who was the labor coordinator**— but all Israel pelted him to death with stones, at which R'hav'Am hastened to mount his chariot and flee to Jerusalem.

The death of AdoniRam  
unknown illustrator, 1811

An emphasis on what truly matters -

וַיְהִי דְבַר יְהוָה אֶל שְׁלֹמֹה לֵאמֹר הַבֵּית הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֶתָּה בֹנֶה **אִם תִּלְדוּ בְחֻקָּתַי** וְאֶת מִשְׁפָּטֵי תַעֲשֶׂה וְשִׁמְרָתָה אֶת כָּל מִצְוֹתַי לִלְכֹת בָּהֶם

B2) I Kings 6:13 - Then the word of The Eternal One came to Solomon, "With regard to this House you are building—**if you follow My laws and observe My rules and faithfully keep all of My commandments, comporting yourself thereby,**

**וְהִקְמַתִי אֶת דְּבָרִי אֲתָךְ אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי אֶל דָּוִד אָבִיךָ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** וְלֹא אֶעְזֹב אֶת עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל

"**then** I will fulfill for you the promise that I gave to your father David: 'I will abide among the children of Israel, and I will never forsake My people Israel'."

A corresponding background narrative -

וַיְהִי כִּי יָשָׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּבֵיתוֹ וַיְהוָה הֵנִיחַ לוֹ מִסָּבִיב מִכָּל אִיָּבּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל נָתָן הַנָּבִיא רְאֵה נָא אֲנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּבֵית אֲרָזִים וְאֶרְוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים יֹשֵׁב בְּתוֹךְ הִרְיָעָה

D) II Samuel 7:1-16 - Once [David] was settled in his palace, and The Eternal One had granted him safety from all the enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan: "Here I am dwelling in a cedar palace, while the Ark of The Eternal One abides in a tent!"

וַיֹּאמֶר נָתָן אֶל הַמֶּלֶךְ כָּל אֲשֶׁר בִּלְבָבְךָ לַעֲשֹׂה כִּי יְהוָה עִמָּךְ

- more over

Nathan said to the king, “Go and do whatever you have in mind, for The Eternal One is with you.”

וַיְהִי בַלַּיְלָהָ הַהוּא וַיְהִי דְבַר יְהוָה אֶל נָתָן לֵאמֹר לֵךְ וְאָמַרְתָּ אֶל עַבְדִּי אֶל דָּוִד כֹּה  
אָמַר יְהוָה הֲאֵתָה תִּבְנֶה לִּי בַּיִת לְשִׁבְתִּי

Yet that very night the word of The Eternal One came to Nathan: “Go and say to My servant David: “Thus said The Eternal One: “**Are you the one to build Me** a house to dwell in?

כִּי לֹא יִשְׁבְּתִי בַּבַּיִת לַמַּיִם הָעֲלֹתִי אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם וְעַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה  
וְאֶהְיֶה מִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּאֶהֱלִי וּבְמִשְׁכְּנִי בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי בְּכָל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַדָּבָר  
דִּבַּרְתִּי אֶת אֶחָד שְׂבָטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי לְרִעוּת אֶת עַמִּי אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר  
לָמָּה לֹא בִּנִיתֶם לִי בַּיִת אֲרָזִים

““From the day that I brought the people of Israel out of Egypt to this day I have not dwelt in a house, but have moved about in Tent and Tabernacle. As I moved about wherever the Israelites went, **did I ever speak, to any of the tribal leaders whom I appointed to care for My people Israel, a single word, asking ‘Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?’**”

וְעַתָּה כֹּה תֹאמַר לְעַבְדִּי לְדָוִד כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֲנִי לִקְחָתִיךָ מִן הַנֶּגֶז מֵאַחֵר  
הַצֹּאן לְהִיּוֹת נָגִיד עַל עַמִּי עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר תֵּלַכְתָּ וְאֶכְרַתְּהָ אֶת  
כָּל אֹיְבֶיךָ מִפְּנֶיךָ וְעָשִׂיתִי לְךָ שֵׁם גָּדוֹל כְּשֵׁם הַגְּדֹלִים אֲשֶׁר בְּאַרְצְךָ וְשִׁמְתִּי מְקוֹם  
לְעַמִּי לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְנִטְעַתִּיו וְשָׁכַן תִּחְתָּיו וְלֹא יִרְגְּזוּ עוֹד וְלֹא יִסִּיפוּ בְנֵי עוֹלָה לַעֲנוֹתוֹ  
כְּאֲשֶׁר בְּרִאשׁוֹנָה וּלְמִן הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי שְׂפָטִים עַל עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהִנֵּחְתִּי לְךָ  
מִכָּל אֹיְבֶיךָ

“Further, say thus to My servant David: “Thus said The Eternal One of Hosts: ‘I took you from the pasture, from following the flock, to be ruler of My people Israel, and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut down all your enemies before you. Moreover, I will give you great renown like that of the greatest men on earth. I will establish a home for My people Israel and will plant them firm, so that they shall dwell secure and shall tremble no more. Iniquitous people shall not oppress them any more as in the past, ever since I appointed chieftains over My people Israel. I will give you safety from all your enemies.

וְהִגִּיד לְךָ יְהוָה כִּי בַּיִת יַעֲשֶׂה לְךָ יְהוָה  
כִּי יִמְלְאוּ יָמֶיךָ וְשָׁכַבְתָּ אֶת אֲבֹתֶיךָ  
וְהִקִּימְתִּי אֶת זֶרְעֶךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא  
מִמֶּיךָ וְהִכִּינְתִּי אֶת מַמְלַכְתּוֹ

“ “The Eternal One declares to you: “The Eternal One will establish a house for you. When your days are done and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own issue, and **I will establish his monarchy.**

הוא יבנה בית לשמי וכוננתי את כסא

ממלכתו עד עולם אני אהיה לו לאב והוא יהיה לי לבן אשר בהעלותו והכחתו

**Nathan confers with King David**



American cigarette card – c. 1905



בְּשֶׁבֶט אֲנָשִׁים וּבִנְגָעֵי בְּנֵי אָדָם וְחִסְדֵּי לֹא יִסּוּר מִמֶּנּוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר הִסְרָתִי מֵעַם שְׂאוֹל  
אֲשֶׁר הִסְרָתִי מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וְנֶאֱמַן בֵּיתְךָ וּמִמְלַכְתְּךָ עַד עוֹלָם לְפָנֶיךָ כִּסֵּאֲךָ יִהְיֶה נָכוֹן  
עַד עוֹלָם

““““**He shall build a house for My name**, and I will establish his royal throne forever.  
I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to Me. **When he does wrong, I will chastise him (with the rod of mortals, and the blows of humankind)**— but I will never withdraw My favor from him, as I withdrew it from Saul, whom I removed to make room for you. Your house and your kingship shall ever be secure before you; **your throne shall be established forever**””””.

שְׁמִיחָנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַלְיָהוּ הַנְּבִיא עֲבָדְךָ, וּבְמַלְכוּת בֵּית דָּוִד מְשִׁיחָךָ, בְּמַהֲרָה  
יָבֹא וְיַגְלֵל לִפְנֵינוּ

E) Ashkenazic blessing after the *Haftarah* - Give us joy— O Eternal One, our God—  
with the coming of Your servant, the prophet Elijah, to proclaim **the sovereignty of the House of David, Your anointed one** (may he soon come, to rejoice our hearts!).

עַל כִּסְאוֹ לֹא יֵשֵׁב זָר וְלֹא יִנְחֻלוּ עוֹד אֲחֵרִים אֶת כְּבוֹדוֹ

Let no outsider sit upon his throne, nor any others secure the legacy of his glory.

כִּי בְשֵׁם קְדֻשְׁךָ נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לוֹ שֶׁלֹּא יִכָּבֶה נֵרוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

For You have sworn— by Your Own Name!— that his light would never go out.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מֶגֶן דָּוִד

Praised are You, Shield of David.

לָמָּה לִּי רַב זְבָחִיכֶם יֹאמַר יְהוָה

G) Isaiah 1:11-17 [*Haftarah* for Shabbat “*D’varim*”] -

“What need have I of all your sacrifices?” asks The Eternal One.

שְׁבַעְתִּי עֲלוֹת אֵילִים וְחֶלֶב מְרִיאִים וְדָם פְּרִים  
וּכְבָּשִׁים וְעִתוּדִים לֹא חִפְצָתִי כִּי תִבְאוּ לִרְאוֹת פָּנַי  
מִי בִקֵּשׁ זֹאת מִיָּדְכֶם רִמַּס חֲצָרִי

“I have had My fill of burnt-offerings of rams;  
of suet of fatlings, of the blood of bullocks;  
And I take no delight in your lambs and he-goats  
when you come to appear before Me.

**Who requested such of you? Trample My courts no more.**

לֹא תוֹסִיפוּ הָבִיא מִנְחַת שָׁוְיָ קִטְרֶת תוֹעֵבָה הִיא לִּי  
חֲדָשׁ וְשֶׁבֶת קָרָא מְקָרָא לֹא אוֹכַל אֶן וְעֲצָרָה


“Bring no more your grain-offering of **corruption**;  
your incense is an affront to Me!

Your service for New-Moon, and Sabbath, and holidays—

**these I cannot abide, together with transgression and iniquity!**

חֲדָשֵׁיכֶם וּמוֹעֲדֵיכֶם שְׁנָאָה נַפְשִׁי הָיוּ עָלַי לְטָרַח נִלְאִיתִי נִשְׂא  
וּבִפְרָשְׁכֶם כְּפִיכֶם אֲעֲלִים עֵינֵי מִכֶּם  
גַּם כִּי תִרְבוּ תִפְלָה אֵינֶנִּי שֹׂמֵעַ  
יְדֵיכֶם דָּמִים מְלֹאוּ

- more over

I loathe your New-Moon and holiday feasts;  
they are, to Me, a wearying burden.  
Thus when you raise your hands,   
I will turn My eyes away from you;  
Even should you pray at length,  
I will pay no heed—

**Your hands are full of blood!**

Supplication to Heaven



Canaanite stele from Chatzor,  
13<sup>th</sup> century BCE

הִירָצָה יְהוָה בְּאַלְפֵי אֵילִים  
בְּרַבְבוֹת נְחָלֵי שָׁמֶן

H) Micah 6:7-8 [*Haftarah* for Shabbat “*Balaq*”] -

Would The Eternal One be pleased with [an offering of] thousands of rams,  
or tens of thousands of rivers of precious oil?

הֲאֶתֵּן בְּכוֹרֵי פִשְׁעֵי פָרִי בִטְנֵי חַטָּאת נִפְשֵׁי

Shall I offer my first-born, [to make expiation] for my transgressions;

the fruit of my womb, as an atonement-offering for my soul?

הֲגִיד לָךְ אָדָם מֶה טוֹב וּמָה יְהוָה דּוֹרֵשׁ מִמֶּךָ

**He has told you, O mortal, what is good,**

and what The Eternal One expects of you:

כִּי אִם עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד וְהִצְנַע לְכַת עִם אֱלֹהֶיךָ

Only to do justly; to love kindness; and to walk in dedication to your God.

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲלוֹתֵיכֶם סָפוּ עַל זִבְחֵיכֶם וְאָכְלוּ בָשָׂר

I) Jeremiah 7:21-23 [*Haftarah* for Shabbat “*Tzav*”] - Thus says The Eternal One of Hosts, the God of Israel: “Add your burnt-offerings to your sacrificial offerings, and you eat the meat.

כִּי לֹא דִבַּרְתִּי אֶת אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם וְלֹא צִוִּיתִים בְּיוֹם הוֹצִיאִי אוֹתָם מִמִּצְרָיִם  
עַל דְּבָרֵי עוֹלָה וְזֶבֶחַ

“For I did not speak to your forebears— nor instruct them, when I brought them out of Egypt— about matters of burnt-offerings or sacrificial offerings.

כִּי אִם אֶת הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה צִוִּיתִי אוֹתָם לֵאמֹר  
שִׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹלִי

“Rather, it was this that I instructed them: ‘**hearken to My Voice.**’

וְהִיִּיתִי לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ לִי לְעָם

וְהִלַּכְתֶּם בְּכָל הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶה אֶתְכֶם לַמַּעַן יִיטֵב לָכֶם

“Then I will be your God, and you will be My people— **when you conduct yourselves in the manner that I have instructed you**, that it may be well with you’!”

Exodus 19:5 -

אִם שָׁמוֹעַ תִּשְׁמָעוּ בְּקוֹלִי  
וְשִׁמַּרְתֶּם אֶת בְּרִיתִי  
וְהִיִּיתֶם לִי סֹגְלָה