

Haftarah for Tisha B'av Morning (Jeremiah 8:13 to 9:23)

based on the translations of

Robert Alter, Aryeh Kaplan, Stone Edition Tanach, JPS, Jerusalem Bible, New English Bible, New King James Bible
modeled after the (particularly lovely) recording using **Lamentations trope**, in *Navigating the Bible II*:

<https://bible.ort.org/books/haftarotd4.asp?action=displaypage&book=6&chapter=8&verse=13&portion=86>

8:13 *Them* I will gather—to put an end to them, [thus says YHWH].

[Indeed, there are no] grapes on the vine, [and there are also] no figs [on the fig tree any more]. [Even the leaves] are withered, and I will give them [to those whom they shall serve]*. *reading *ya'avdum* (those they shall serve) instead of *ya'avrum* (they will pass them). (Alter)

14 [For what reason] [are we] [sitting here]? [Let us all gather now], [that we may go into] the towns that are fortified [and be silent there], [because indeed] YHWH [our God] [has subdued us], [making us drink waters] of gall, [since we have sinned] [against YHWH].

15 The hope was for peace, [but there is] [nothing good]; [for a time of healing], but lo—there is terror.

16 [From Dan] was heard the snorting [of his horses]*. *Some texts have trope *re'via* here.

[At the sound] of the neighing [of his stallions], [there is trembling] [all across the land].

[Since they will certainly come]—[they will consume] the land and its fullness, the city and those who live in it.

17 [For this you must know]: I am about to send forth—to incite against all of you—serpents, [venomous vipers], [for which there is no way] [to charm them]. They shall surely bite you, [says YHWH].

18 I tried to cheer myself [to hold back sorrow]. [And yet against me] my heart was sickened.

19 [Do you not hear the sound] of the crying [of the daughter of My people] [from a land] [that is far away]. [Is YHWH] no longer in Zion? [Is her king] not [within her]? [Why have they done this thing]?

[Me they have provoked] [with their carved images], worthless and alien.

20 No more, is the harvest. Gone is the summer. [Yet we ourselves] have not been rescued.

21 For the wound of My people, [I am wounded]. [I am clothed in black]. Desolation [has taken hold of Me].

22 [Healing balm]—[is there none] in Gilead? A physician—[is there none] [in that place]?

[For indeed], [why then] [has there not] arisen the recovery of My people?

23 [Who will turn] my head into water; [turn my eyes] to a fountain of tears, [that I might weep] all day and night [for the slain ones] of My people?

9:1 [Who would give me] [in the wilderness] a shelter [made for travelers],
[that I might abandon] My people—[that I might] [get away from them]?
Indeed [all of them] [are only] adulterers, an assembly [of treacherous people].
2 They bend their tongue like a bow made of falsehood. It was not for truth that they prevailed [upon the land].
Indeed, [from one evil] [to another evil] [is the way that they proceed]. Yet Me they do not know, [thus says YHWH].
3 [Each man]—of his fellow, [must be on guard]. [In any brother], [he must not] [put his trust].
Indeed every brother acts quite perversely. [And every fellow man] as a slanderer, goes about.
4 Each man [treats his neighbor], [insincerely]. [The truth indeed] [no man] [ever speaks].
[They have accustomed] [their very tongues] [to speak falsehoods]. Iniquity wears them out.
5 [Your dwelling place] is in deceitfulness. [On account of their deceit] they refuse to acknowledge Me, [says YHWH].
6 [Because of all of this]—thus [there speaks] YHWH *Ts'vaot* (the Lord of Hosts), watch Me melt them down [and refine them].
What else [could I do], [on account of] [My poor people]*? *JPS translates *bat 'ami* as “My poor people”
7 [Like an arrow]—[one that is well-honed] [is their tongue]. Deceit [is what it speaks].
[With his mouth], [words of peace] [to his neighbor] [one speaks] [and yet within] he lays a trap for him.
8 For these things shall I not punish them? [says YHWH]. [Upon a people]—one [such as this], [should I not] [avenge Myself]?
9 Over the mountains [I will take up] a weeping [and a wailing too]. [For the pastures] of the desert [I will raise a dirge],
since they [are laid waste] [so that no one] [goes through them]. There, there is not heard the lowing of cattle.
[From the birds] of the heavens to the beasts: [they all wandered off], [and they are no more].
10 [I will make] [of Jerusalem] [a heap of ruins], a den of jackals.
[All of the cities] [of the land of Judah], I will make a desolation, without inhabitant.
11 [Who is the man] that is wise, who would [understand this]—
that which [has in fact been spoken] [by the mouth of YHWH] [to him], [that he might tell of it]?
[For what cause] has it perished—this land?
[Laid waste like a wilderness], that no one passes through?

9:12 This is [the word of YHWH]: [Since they have forsaken] [My teaching]—My Tōrah: (the law that I set forth) [before them];
they did not heed My voice, and did not walk therein;
13 instead [they did follow] after the dictates [of their hearts] and after the Bāalim, as they had been taught by their fathers;
14 [because of all of this], [this is the word] of YHWH Ts'vaot (the Lord of Hosts), the God of Israel:
[This is what I] [will be feeding them]—I will feed this people [with wormwood], and I will make them drink [water of gall],
15 [And I will disperse them] [among the nations]—nations [that were not known] by themselves [or by their fathers],
[and I will send] [after them] the sword, till I have consumed them utterly.
16 Thus was declared by YHWH Ts'vaot (the Lord of Hosts): [Consider all this well], and call for the wailing women,
[so that they may come]; for the skilled ones, send out: [now they need to come].
17 [Let them come hastily], and raise up upon us a wailing. [Running down] [from our eyes] are tears, [and our eyelids] [flow with water].
18 [For indeed], a voice of lamentation is heard out of Zion, “How [we are ruined]! [Ashamed we are] greatly for forsaking our land.
They have cast us down [from our very homes].
19 [Hear now], O women, [the word of YHWH]. Receive in your ears [the word of His mouth].
[And teach to] your daughters lamentation: each woman to her neighbor [teach a dirge].
20 [Rising up has come] death [through our windows]. [It has come] [into our citadels],
[to snatch away] children [from the streets], [and young men] [from the open squares].
21 [The word is now declared]: thus [speaks YHWH], “Fallen [will be the corpses] of humans, [like manure] on [the open field],
[and just like a sheaf] behind the harvester, with none to gather it.

Verses 22 & 23 are chanted with regular haftarah trope:

22 [This is the word] | spoken [by YHWH], “[Let not boast] [the wise man] in his wisdom. [Let not boast the warrior] in his valor.
Let not boast the rich man [in his wealth].
23 [But rather this]: [in this way] may boast [he who would take pride]: [that he has true understanding] and knowledge of Mē.
Indeed, I am YHWH. I [exercise kindness], justice, and righteousness [on the earth].
[end melody] For in this I take pleasure. [Thus speaks YHWH].

Len Fellman's English readings with tropes

The purpose of this project is to translate *THE SONG OF THE TORAH* into English.

I work by comparing as many as ten English translations of a *pasuk* and creating a cantillated English sentence that sounds as much as possible like the Hebrew. They follow the Hebrew as closely as possible, word for word and trope by trope. The English language has an amazing flexibility, making it possible to make the English word order match that of the Hebrew quite well, allowing for some “poetic licence”, and some willingness on the part of the listener to be “carried” by the melody more than by the English syntax. The translation needs to sound good when *chanted*, but not necessarily when *spoken or read*.

Unlike most translations, these “transtropilations” are not intended to be a substitute for the Hebrew. On the contrary, they are meant to provide a “window” into the Hebrew text and its musical expression. My ideal listener knows enough Hebrew and has enough interest to follow the Hebrew in a bilingual text while the *leyner* is chanting the English version, to bring the Hebrew text to life, both *verbally* and *musically*. For this purpose I use *exactly* the same tropes in the English as in the Hebrew (almost always on the corresponding English word).

The texts can be used to do **consecutive translation**, i.e. leyning a phrase in Hebrew, followed by the corresponding phrase sung in English. Some of my recordings demonstrate this. I do this frequently when leyning for groups that either know little Hebrew, or that don't have a *chumash* in front of them.

I favor literal translations (e.g. “cut a covenant”) to call attention to Hebrew idioms, and towards simpler (even if less accurate) words (e.g. Ex. 12:7 “beam above the door” rather than “lintel”) to be easier to follow. If my readings provoke a discussion of the Hebrew, I consider that as justification for using less-than-idiomatic English. I try to find just the right balance between “literalness” and “listenable-ness”. A primary goal is throwing light on the Hebrew syntax.

In order to adapt the trope symbols to a left-to-right language like English, I *reversed* the direction of the trope symbols:

mercha tipcha munach tevir mapakh *or* yetiv kadma *or* pashta geresht gershayim telisha katana telisha gedola

(Generally speaking the *conjunctive tropes* such as mercha, munach, mapakh, kadma, and telisha katana “lean toward” the words they “conjoin” to, while the *disjunctive tropes* such as tipcha, geresht, gershayim, and telisha gedola “lean away” from the words that follow, so as to create a sense of separation.)

The trope symbol is normally placed under the accented syllable, unless it is a *pre-positive* accent (telisha gedola, placed *at the beginning* of the word or phrase) or a *post-positive* one (telisha katana or pashta, placed at the *end* of the word or phrase).

The Hebrew text frequently puts a *makkeph* (which is like a hyphen) between words in order to treat them as a single word to be chanted. I use a different system for English: If an entire English phrase is to be chanted to a single trope melody, I place it between grey brackets, as in this phrase from the Book of Lamentations:

[clings to her skirts]

The *leyner* is invited to fit this phrase to the *Eicha* “rivi'i” melody in whatever way seems most natural.

As a variant of the “grey bracket” device, I indicate the following pairs of tropes by “wrapping them around” the phrase which will have the combined melody:

mercha/tipcha	kadma/geresh (<i>or</i> : azla, etc.)	mercha siluk
⏟ Renew our days	⏟ (She weeps bitterly)	⏟ a fire-offering to God

Again, the *leyner* should decide on the most natural way to fit the phrase to the combined trope melody.

I put words in gray which I consider essential but which don’t strictly match the Hebrew. I also “pad” some phrases with extra words in gray to fill out a musical phrase nicely. Different trope systems vary widely in the length of the musical phrase used, so the words in gray may or not be used depending on the *leyner*’s cantillation system. In particular, the tropes *telisha g’dola* (ר), *legarmeh*, *metigah-zakef*, and *pazer* vary widely in the musical phrases used for chanting. (And please indulge me in my whimsical treatments of *shalsholet*.)

“*Metigah-zakef*” is a special trope combination which can be recognized by a kadma and a zakef katon appearing on the same Hebrew word (again, a *makkeph* makes two words into one). (There are several examples in Genesis 18 & 19, beginning with 18:16). I indicate this by placing the corresponding English phrase in grey brackets:

[Take heed—take care for yourself]

In some trope systems (notably cantor Moshe Haschel in “Navigating the Bible II”) this is given a very distinctive melody—for which purpose extra syllables fill out the musical phrase (as in “take care” in this example). Haschel’s system also chants the trope *munach* as *legarmeh* more often than other systems do.

I don’t write a single word of translation without first hearing the melody of the phrase in my mind, following one of two trope systems: The one by Portnoy and Wolff (*The Art of Cantillation*) or the one by Joshua R. Jacobson (*Chanting the Hebrew Bible*).

I transcribe the name יהוה as YHWH (in small caps). I almost always chant this as *yud-hey-vav-hey*, which I have discovered fits marvelously into several of the trope melodies. But of course the *leyner* can choose to pronounce it as “*God*” or “*Adonai*”.

The English translations I mostly use (besides several scholarly commentaries) are the following:

Aryeh Kaplan, ‘The Living Torah’ (1981) (also my source for proper names & transliterations)
Richard Elliott Friedman, ‘The Bible With Sources Revealed’ (2003)
Everett Fox, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (1997)
The Stone Edition ‘Tanach’ (1996)
JPS ‘Hebrew-English Tanach’, (2nd Ed. 2000), *along with* Orlinsky, ‘Notes on the New Translation of the Torah’ (1969)
Robert Alter, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (2004)
Commentaries in the ‘Anchor Bible’ series
Rotherham, The Emphasized Bible (1902)
The Jerusalem Bible (1966) (also my source for topic headings)
The New King James Bible (1982)