

HAFTORAH SUMMARY FOR CHANUKAH

by Rabbi Aron Tendler

Zechariah 2:14

This week's Haftorah relates to the theme of Shabbos Chanukah.

At the end of the Babylonian exile, 9 years before the story of Purim (3390-371 b.c.e), 40,000 Jews, lead by Zerubavel and Yehoshua the Kohen Gadol, returned to Israel. They began to rebuild the Bais Hamikdash, but Cyrus withdrew his permission and the construction was halted. Following the story of Purim and a prophecy from Chagay, the rebuilding resumed 18 years later (3408-353).

This week's Haftorah is the prophecy of Zechariah which preceded the inauguration of the second Bais Hamikdash. It describes the status of the Kohen Gadol and the people as seemingly unfit to carry out the service. Hashem (G-d) relates to Zechariah that in fact, Yehoshua and the nation are ready to resume full service in the Bais Hamikdash. The prophecy includes a vision of the Menorah with a continuous supply of olive oil, reminiscent of the miracle of Chanukah.