

Haftarah - Parshat Mattot (Jeremiah 1-2.3)

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 recording in *Navigating the Bible II*:

<http://www.bible.ort.org/books/haftarotd4.asp?action=displaypage&book=4&chapter=1&verse=1&portion=46>

1:1 The words of Jeremiah, son of Hilkiyah, [who was one of the priests] that were in Anátoth [in the land] of Benjamin.
2 To whom there came [the word of YHWH] [to him] [in the days] of Josiah son of Ammon, king of Judah,
in the thirteenth year of his reign.
3 [And it was] in the days of Jehoiakim, [son of Josiah], king of Judah,
[until the end] of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the captivity of Jerusalem in the fifth month.
4 And the word of YHWH came to me saying:
5 Before I formed you [in the womb] [I knew you], [and even before] you emerged from the womb [I sanctified you];
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.
6 [Then I said]: “Ah, Adonai *Elohim* (YHWH)! Behold, I don't know how to speak, [for but a child] [I am indeed].”
7 But [said YHWH] [to me]: “[Do not say], ‘I am a child’, [since you must know this]:
to whomever [I send you], [you will go], [and whatever words] (that I command you), [you will speak them].
8 [Have no fear] [when you face them] [I am with you]—[I am indeed], [to deliver you]”, (thus speaks YHWH.
9 [God put forth]—YHWH—[stretched out His hand] and touched my mouth.
[Then spoke] YHWH [to me, saying]: “[You must know this]: I have put My words in your mouth.
10 [Now you will see], [that I have set you] | on [this very day] [over nations] [and over kingdoms],
(to root up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.”
11 [And the word] of YHWH [came to me], saying: “What do you see, Jeremiah?”
[And I replied], “A rod of an almond tree (a *sha-ked'*) do I see.”
12 [Then there spoke] YHWH to me: “Well [have you seen]. [For indeed] [I do watch] (*ki sho-ked' ani*) [over my word] to perform it”.

1:13 And [the word of God] [came to me] [a second time], saying: “(What is it [that you do see])?”
 [And I replied]: “A boiling pot [is what] I see, [that is facing] [toward the north].”
 14 Then said YHWH to me: “[From the north] [will come forth] evil on all who dwell on the land.
 15 [Because indeed] lo, [I will summon forth] [all the families] of the kingdoms of the north”, [thus speaks YHWH].
 “[And they will come], [and will place] (each one his throne) [at the entrance] |
 of the gates [of Jerusalem] and along its walls, [all around], [and against] all the cities of Judah.
 16 [And I will utter] my judgments against her, for all her wickedness,
 for they [have forsaken me], [burning incense] [to other gods], and worshipping the work [of their own hands].
 17 So now, gird up your loins. Arise, and say to them [all the words]—that which I [command you].
 [Do not be dismayed] [by them], [lest I dismay you] [before them].
 18 [And I]—behold—[I have made you] [this very day] (a fortified city),
 [a pillar that is] [made of iron] and walls of bronze, [against the whole land],
 [against the kings] of Judah, [against its princes], [against its priests], against the people of the land.
 19 They will fight against you, [but they will not prevail] [against you].
 [I am with you]—[I am indeed],” [thus speaks YHWH], “to deliver you”.

2:1 And the word of YHWH came to me, saying:
 2 “[You must now go], [and you must proclaim] in the ears of Jerusalem, [saying these words]:
 Thus says YHWH, ‘I remember you: the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride,
 [how you followed] me in the desert, in a land that was not sown.
 3 Holy is Israel to YHWH, [the first fruits] of his harvest. [All that devour him] [will be held guilty];
 [misfortune indeed] [final melody:] will come upon them”, [thus says 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 gersh 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, gersh, 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)