

Textual Innovation in Times of Crisis: Understanding Isaiah 13

Lecture in honor of Rabbi Sacks Z"l

Chananya Rothner

First and foremost, **Thank you to Lady Sacks** for attending this event. It is truly a privilege and a זכות to be able to honor the memory and legacy of Rabbi Sacks Zichrono Livracha with you.

Thank you to Dr. Harry Sieratzky who not only organized this entire event, but also provides constant friendship and generous support to Hebrew University and the Revivim Program specifically. I would also like to mention Harry's mother Barbara Sieratzky Zichrona Livracha, who dedicated her life to encouraging Jewish education. Barbara also graciously contributed to Revivim, and had wonderful relationships with students throughout the years.

Thank you to Rabbi Daniel Epstein and the Marble Arch Synagogue for hosting this event and welcoming us to your community so warmly.

Thank you to the Hebrew University in general and the **Revivim program** specifically. Revivim is a unique teachers program. On the one hand the program pushes us to academic excellence, while on the other hand ensures that we stay grounded, stay relevant, and stay sensitive to each and every student that we come in contact with.

Thank you to Professor Noam Mizrachi who meticulously guided me throughout every step of my research.

Thank you to my wife Penina who constantly supports, challenges, and encourages me and us to take on new challenges.

And of course **thank you all** for coming and joining us here tonight.

It is a great honor, and a truly humbling experience to be standing and speaking where Rabbi Sacks once stood. One of the first pieces of his that I ever came across was a small booklet for Yom Kippur called *Letters to the Next Generation*, and there was one particular paragraph which stuck with me both out of my appreciation for its sensitivity to the meaning of a single word in Hebrew and for its profound meaning. The word in question is MASHBER, about which Rabbi Sacks writes the following:

The Chinese ideogram for 'crisis' also means 'opportunity'. Perhaps that's why the Chinese have been around so long. Only one language I know goes one further, and that is Hebrew. The Hebrew word for 'crisis' is mashber, which also means a birthing-stool. In Hebrew, crises are not just

opportunities; they are birthpangs. Something new is being born. That's why Jews have survived every crisis in 4,000 years and emerged even stronger than they were before.

Viewing crisis as an opportunity and as birthpangs has served the Jewish people for thousands of years, and has manifested itself through different avenues. It is my hope that the following findings of my research can give voice to one such avenue. The avenue which I would like to explore is how a crisis can spur a dialogue between texts- specifically, Isaiah chapter 13.

To provide some context, the book of Isaiah tells stories and prophecies of the prophet Isaiah, who is lives in Jerusalem. Moreover, the prophecies in his book cover almost 200 years of history, both before and after the destruction of the first Temple. My research focuses on the 13th chapter of Isaiah.

I would like to ask two central questions:

- 1) **What** is the crisis that Isaiah 13 is referring to?
- 2) **How** does Isaiah 13 grapple with this crisis?

In order to answer the first question, we must begin by understanding the context of Isaiah 13. Isaiah 13 is an oracle or prophecy of doom directed to Babylon. In all the books of the latter prophets, there is a section dedicated to foreign nations, as you can see enumerated in the tables on the screen. Also, as can be seen, Babylon is the opening oracle of this large unit in the book of Isaiah.

Furthermore, as we will elaborate in a few minutes, the prophecy in chapter 13 is unique as it consists of two sections: one universal, as can be seen for example by verse 11:

“I will punish the **world** for its evil, the **wicked** for their sins. I will put an end to the **arrogance** of the **haughty** and will humble the pride of the **ruthless**.”

and one particular, as can be seen by verse 19:

“**Babylon**, the jewel of kingdoms, the pride and glory of the **Babylonians**, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah.”

Why is the prophet prophesying doom to Babylon? What incurred the wrath of the prophet to say such things to Babylon? In the year 586 BCE the Babylonian empire destroyed the temple and exiled the Jewish people, as we will also begin to commemorate tomorrow. Since then, Babylon has attracted many prophecies awaiting its demise. Not only was it to be punished, but it was hoped that it would get what it deserved – at least what it had done to the Jewish people – מידה כנגד מידה, or an eye for an eye.

These sentiments are portrayed by the following two verses (amongst other examples):

Jeremiah 51: 24

“But I will requite Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea For all the wicked things they did to Zion before your eyes – declares the Lord.”

Psalms 137: 8

8 “Daughter Babylon, doomed to destruction, happy is the one who repays you according to what you have done to us.”

The verse from Psalms is particularly instructive as the beginning of this psalm is far more well known: על נהרות בבל שם ישבנו גם בכינו בזכרנו את ציון

“By the rivers of Babylon, we sat and wept when we remembered Zion.” When we picture the exiles we picture a people weeping by a river awaiting a return, but there is another sentiment in the same chapter: Anger, and a desperate desire to witness the fall and punishment of Babylon.

These sentiments were also depicted in a painting by John Martin, an English painter in 1831. The painting depicts the destruction of Babylon based on prophecies such as Isaiah 13 and Jeremiah 50–51. As can be seen in the painting, both heaven and earth come together in order to destroy Babylon.

But as we say in Hebrew: גודל האכזבה – כגודל הציפיה meaning the greater the expectation, the greater the disappointment.

While the prophecies hope for such a destruction, the contemporary historical records tell a very different story. What is important about these sources is not only that they are contemporary but also complimentary. The two sources are from two different perspectives: One, the Cyrus Cylinder is from the Persian (conquerors) perspective, whereas the other the Nabonidus Chronicle is from the Babylonian (conquered) perspective. According to the sources available, it seems quite clear that Babylon was not destroyed, plundered or exiled. Rather, Babylon simply capitulated and surrendered.

This can be seen clearest by the following two Akkadian sources:

The Cyrus Cylinder reads:

“He (Marduk) made him (Cyrus) enter his city Babylon without fighting or battle.”

“When I entered Babylon in peaceful manner, I took up my lordly abode in the royal palace amidst rejoicing and happiness ... My vast army moved about Babylon in peace.

The Nabonidus Chronicle reads:

“On the sixteenth day ... the army of Cyrus entered Babylon without a battle.”

“Cyrus entered Babylon. The wine containers were filled before him. There was peace in the city, Cyrus proclaimed peace.”

If we put ourselves in the exile’s shoes for a moment, it could very well be that witnessing the fall of Babylon, without any semblance of destruction or what had happened to their temple, sealed the deal in a sense – the destruction of the temple and the exile were meant to be. In a way it was a re-destruction of the temple and a re-exile of the Jewish people, an affirmation that it was meant to be.

How could it be that the prophecies failed to come to fruition? How could it be that those who destroyed the temple and exiled the people were ‘let off easy’? How could it be that God did not inflict upon them ‘an eye for an eye’ as he had said he would?

It is precisely in these moments of crisis where the prophet must step in and not just predict history, but rather attempt to shape history and use this moment as a birthing stool.

After understanding what the crisis is, we have to explore the question: **how** does Isaiah chapter 13 grapple with this crisis?

We now return to the prophecy, and as stated before – there are two parts to this prophecy – one section which deals with a universal destruction, that has nothing to do with Babylon, and the other section is particular and very specific about Babylon’s destruction.

Throughout the Bible there is a very small but significant scribal practice which designates a literary unit. This practice is simply leaving a small or large indentation between verses. Simply put, what comes before the indentation (פרשה/פרשייה) is one literary unit, whereas what comes after the indentation/break is another literary unit and one can argue what the relationship is between the two units.

It is interesting to see that in all modern printed versions of the book of Isaiah both sections of the prophecy appear as **one single** unit in the text. Thus for example we can say in a modern printing of the Koren publication, and in this picture of the Aleppo Codex. As opposed to this, if we turn to the oldest extant copy of the book of Isaiah – The Great Isaiah Scroll from Qumran, one of the most well preserved Dead Sea Scroll, dated to the first century BCE, we see that the scribe had a tradition of splitting the prophecy into two sections, precisely where the universal prophecy transitions into the particular prophecy.

But if we take a closer look at these two sections of the prophecy, we can see that there is a very subtle dialogue that is happening between them. There are many examples, but here I will suffice with three. The subtle dialogue is expressed by using the same term in both sections, but in a different way.

- 1) The Hebrew word גאון, pride, appears in both sections. In the universal section though it refers to the pride of the arrogant, whereas in the particular section, it refers to the Babylonians (who are also known as Chaldeans).
- 2) The word קרוב, near, also appears twice, once in each section. Whereas in the universal section, what is near is the day of the Lord. A day that is meant to bring an end to all the wicked. In the particular section, the word near refers to the end of Babylon.
- 3) Lastly, the word צבי in Hebrew has two meanings: one being beauty, the other being gazelle. In the universal section, the word is used in the latter sense, whereas in the particular section it is used in the former.

Now that we have seen the subtle dialogue between the two sections of the prophecy, the question arises – what is the nature of this dialogue? Do we see a process of specification? Meaning, is the particular section responding and interpreting the universal section on Babylon? Or do we see here a process of generalization? Meaning is the universal section responding and reinterpreting the particular section?


Logically, both options exist and both options have been put forth. That being the case, I would like to opt for the second option, seeing here a process of generalization of a specific prophecy. I believe that the dialogue between these texts take on an entirely new meaning in light of the crisis brought about by the fact that Babylon was not destroyed as promised.

This crisis brought with it both opportunity and birth pangs as Rabbi Sacks wrote:

The opportunity was to transfer the prophecy from referring to a specific enemy to the very concept or entity of evil and wickedness. The prophecy is now not limited to one Babylonian enemy, but rather comes to tell the people that one day evil itself will be eradicated and good will prevail. This may also explain this prophecies placement at the beginning of the unit to the foreign nations. Isaiah is saying: even if the nations will not fall as promised they are but manifestations of evil.

The opportunity though, brings with it birth pangs. What are the birth pangs here? Underlying this interpretation is a difficult and complex lesson to stomach, and that is: Divine crime and punishment does not always follow human expectation. Although we may yearn for a proper ‘eye for an eye’, that does not mean that God’s will will bend to human desire. This lesson is a painful one, because as humans it is far more simple for us to look at others and ask – why did **they** not get punished, what about **their** punishment? It is far more difficult to shift the focus on us and ask – how will **we** respond? How will **we** deal with things that we don’t understand?

The time since Rabbi Sacks passing has been a turbulent one, filled with all too many crises. Although he is no longer with us, I hope that we can all cling to his outlook on crisis and find the way to transform them into opportunities. Thank you very much.

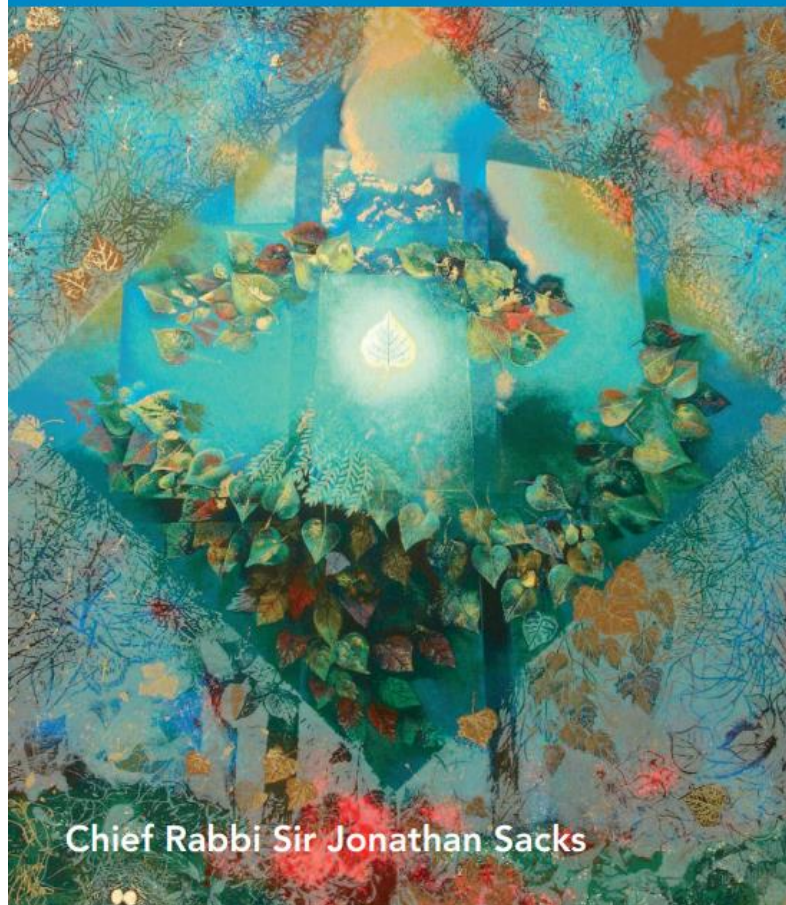


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LETTERS TO THE NEXT GENERATION

REFLECTIONS FOR YOM KIPPUR



Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks

Letter 2: The price of things and the value of things

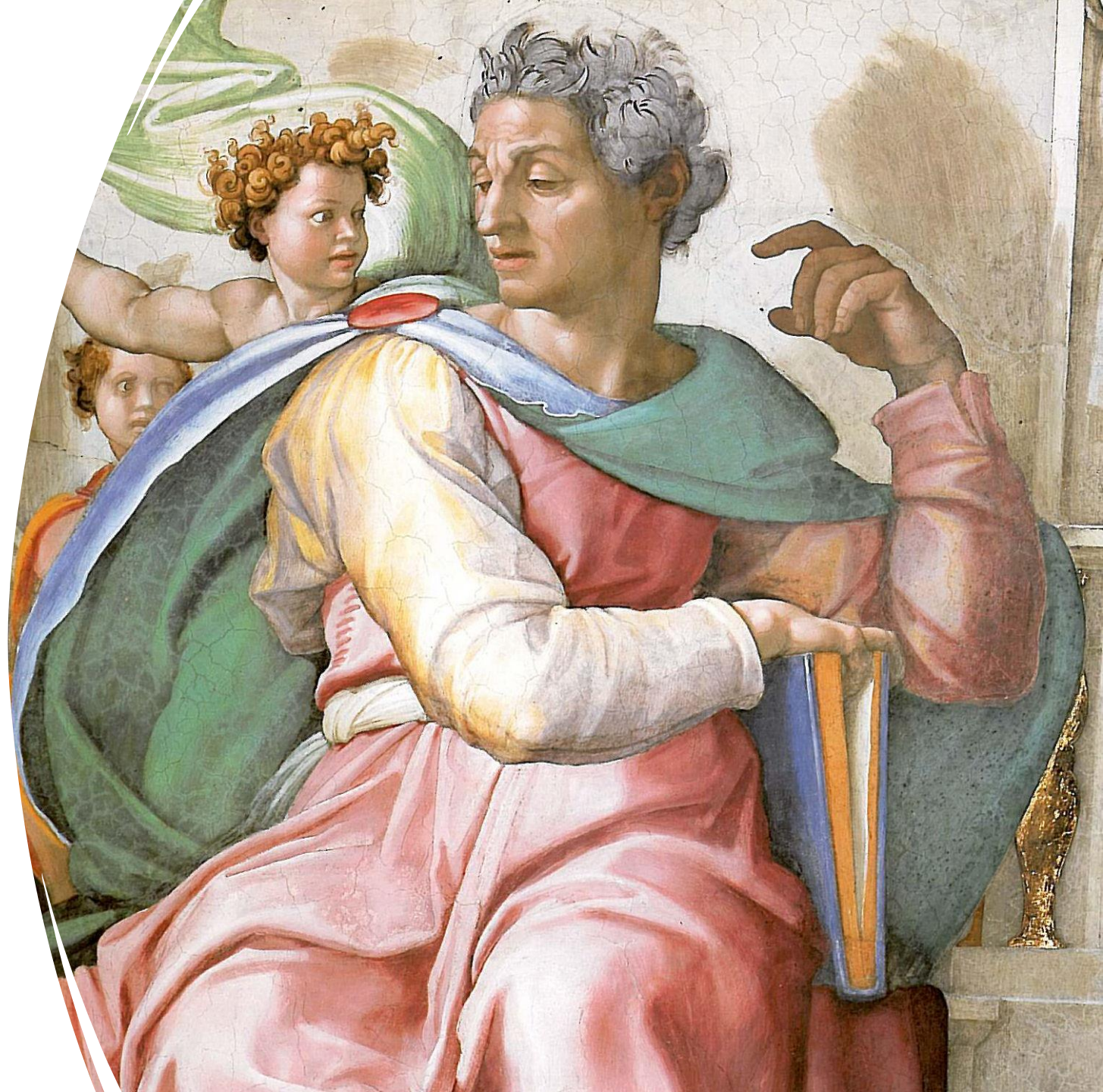
SARA, DAVID, these have been tough times. Financial collapse, economic recession, and uncertainty ahead. People have lost their savings, their jobs, even their homes. What do you do in times like these? The best answer was given by an American politician: *Never waste a crisis*. You learn more in bad times than in good.

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What the financial collapse should teach us is that we were becoming obsessed with money: salaries, bonuses, the cost of houses, and expensive luxuries we could live without. *When money rules, we remember the price of things and forget the value of things*. That is a bad mistake. The financial collapse happened because people borrowed money they didn't have, to buy things they didn't need, to achieve a happiness that wouldn't last.

The prophet Isaiah - ישעיהו

- Lives in Jerusalem
- His prophecies cover over 200 years of history – before and after the destruction of the **first** temple.



The two major questions:

What

is the crisis that
Isaiah 13 is
grappling with?

How

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grapple with it?

Prophecies to foreign nations

Isaiah 13 – 23	Jeremiah 46 – 51	Ezekiel 25 – 29
Babylon	Egypt	Amon
Philistia	Philistines	Moab and Seir
Moab	Moab	Edom
Damascus	Ammonites	Philistia
Egypt	Edom	Tyre
Desert of the Sea	Damascus	Sidon
Dumah	Kedar	Egypt
Bearav (In the Steppe)	Elam	
Valley of Vision	Babylon	
Tyre		

What is in Isaiah 13?

13 ¹A prophecy against **Babylon** that Isaiah son of Amoz saw:

Universal

² Raise a banner on a bare hilltop, shout to them; beckon to them to enter the gates of the nobles. ³ I have commanded those I prepared for battle; I have summoned my warriors to carry out my wrath—those who rejoice in my triumph. ⁴ Listen, a noise on the mountains, like that of a great multitude! Listen, an uproar among the kingdoms, like nations massing together! The LORD Almighty is mustering an army for war. ⁵ They come from faraway lands, from the ends of the heavens—the LORD and the weapons of his wrath—to destroy the whole country. ⁶ Wail, for the day of the LORD is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty. ⁷ Because of this, all hands will go limp, every heart will melt with fear. ⁸ Terror will seize them, pain and anguish will grip them; they will writhe like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at each other, their faces aflame. ⁹ See, the day of the LORD is coming—a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger—to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it. ¹⁰ The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. ¹¹ I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless. ¹² I will make people scarcer than pure gold, more rare than the gold of Ophir. ¹³ Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the LORD Almighty, in the day of his burning anger. ¹⁴ Like a hunted gazelle, like sheep without a shepherd, they will all return to their own people, they will flee to their native land. ¹⁵ Whoever is captured will be thrust through; all who are caught will fall by the sword. ¹⁶ Their infants will be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses will be looted and their wives violated.

Particular

¹⁷ See, I will stir up against them the Medes, who do not care for silver and have no delight in gold. ¹⁸ Their bows will strike down the young men; they will have no mercy on infants, nor will they look with compassion on children. ¹⁹ Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the pride and glory of the Babylonians, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. ²⁰ She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations; there no nomads will pitch their tents, there no shepherds will rest their flocks. ²¹ But desert creatures will lie there, jackals will fill her houses; there the owls will dwell, and there the wild goats will leap about. ²² Hyenas will inhabit her strongholds, jackals her luxurious palaces. Her time is at hand, and her days will not be prolonged.

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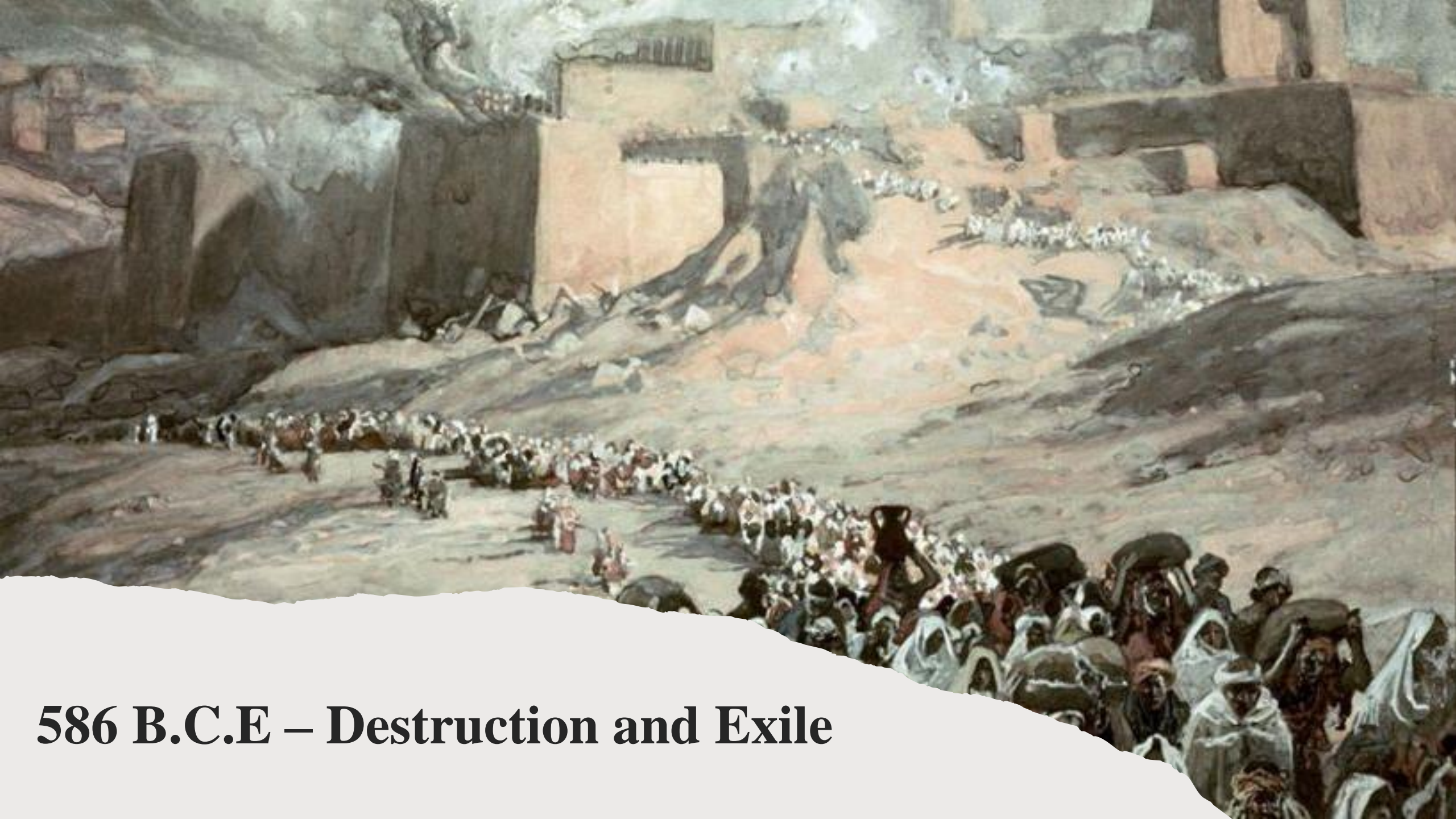
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Why a prophecy of doom to Babylon?

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586 B.C.E – Destruction and Exile

The hope for Babylon's demise

ירמיה נא 24 :

וְשִׁלַּמְתִּי לְבַבְּךָ וּלְכָל | יוֹשְׁבֵי כְשָׁדִים אֶת כָּל־רַעְתֶּם אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ בְצִיּוֹן לְעֵינֵיכֶם נְאֻם יְהוָה :

Jeremiah 51:24

But I will requite Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea For all the wicked things they did to Zion before your eyes – declares the Lord.

תהלים קלז:

8 בַּת־בָּבֶל הַשְׂדֻדָּה אֲשֶׁר־י שִׁשְׁלָם־לָךְ אֶת־גְּמוּלָךְ שְׂגַמְלָהּ לָנוּ:

Psalms 137:8

8 Daughter Babylon, doomed to destruction, happy is the one who repays you according to what you have done to us.

תהילים קלז - The hope for Babylon's demise

1 By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion.

2 There on the poplars we hung our harps,
3 for there our captors asked us for songs, our tormentors demanded songs of joy; they said, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

4 How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?

5 If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill.

6 May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not consider Jerusalem my highest joy.

7 Remember, Lord, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell. "Tear it down," they cried, "tear it down to its foundations!"

8 Daughter Babylon, doomed to destruction, happy is the one who repays you according to what you have done to us.

9 Happy is the one who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rocks.

א על נהרות, בבל--שם ישבנו, גם-בכינו: בנכרנו, את-ציון.

ב על-ערבים בתוכה-- תלינו, כנרותינו.

ג כי שם שאלונו שובינו, דברי-שיר-- ותוללינו שמחה:
שירו לנו, משיר ציון.

ד איך--נשיר את-שיר-יהוה: על, אדמת נכר.

ה אם-אשכחך ירושלם-- תשכח ימיני.

ו תדבק-לשוני, לחכי-- אם-לא אזכרכי:

ז אם-לא אעלה, את-ירושלם-- על, ראש שמחתי.

ח זכר יהוה, לבני אדם-- את, יום ירושלם:

האמרים, ערו ערו-- עד, היסוד בָּהּ.

ח בת-בבל, השדודה:

אשרי שישלם-לך-- את-גמולך, שגמלת לנו.

ט אשרי, שיאחז ונפץ את-עלליך-- אל-הסלע.

The hope for Babylon's demise

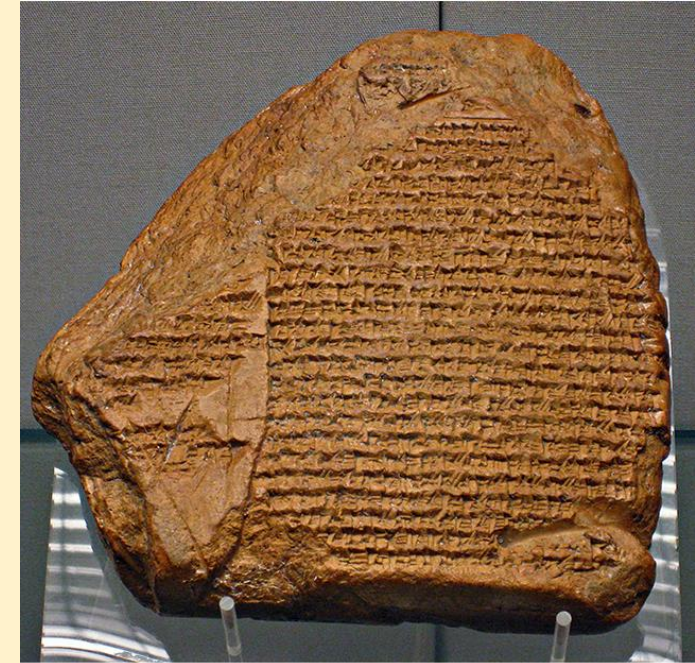
John Martin



Contemporary historical sources



The Cyrus Cylinder
(6th Century B.C.E.)
Persian



The Nabonidus Chronicle
(6th Century B.C.E.)
Babylonian

Babylon was not destroyed

Contemporary historical sources

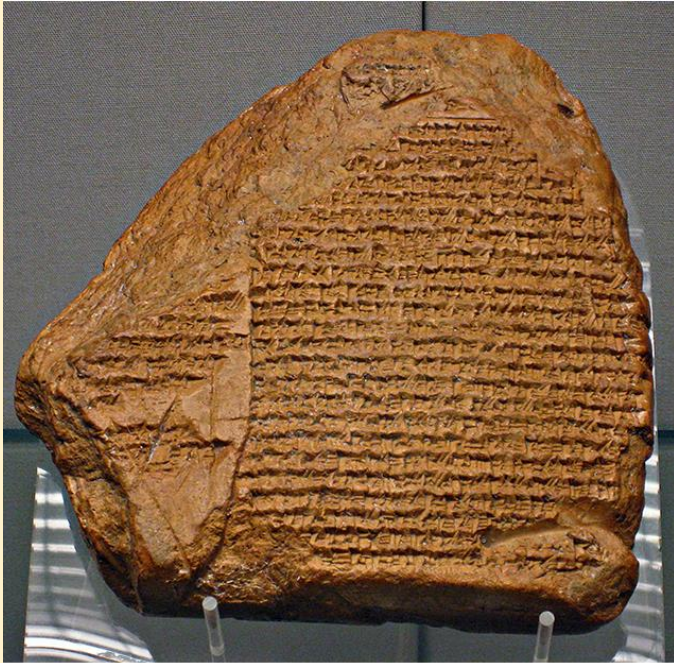


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Universal

Particular

² Raise a banner on a bare hilltop, shout to them; beckon to them to enter the gates of the nobles. ³ I have commanded those I prepared for battle; I have summoned my warriors to carry out my wrath—those who rejoice in my triumph. ⁴ Listen, a noise on the mountains, like that of a great multitude! Listen, an uproar among the kingdoms, like nations massing together! The LORD Almighty is mustering an army for war. ⁵ They come from faraway lands, from the ends of the heavens—the LORD and the weapons of his wrath—to destroy the whole country. ⁶ Wail, for the day of the LORD is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty. ⁷ Because of this, all hands will go limp, every heart will melt with fear. ⁸ Terror will seize them, pain and anguish will grip them; they will writhe like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at each other, their faces aflame. ⁹ See, the day of the LORD is coming—a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger—to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it. ¹⁰ The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. ¹¹ I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless. ¹² I will make people scarcer than pure gold, more rare than the gold of Ophir. ¹³ Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the LORD Almighty, in the day of his burning anger. ¹⁴ Like a hunted gazelle, like sheep without a shepherd, they will all return to their own people, they will flee to their native land. ¹⁵ Whoever is captured will be thrust through; all who are caught will fall by the sword. ¹⁶ Their infants will be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses will be looted and their wives violated.

¹⁷ See, I will stir up against them the Medes, who do not care for silver and have no delight in gold. ¹⁸ Their bows will strike down the young men; they will have no mercy on infants, nor will they look with compassion on children. ¹⁹ Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the pride and glory of the Babylonians, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. ²⁰ She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations; there no nomads will pitch their tents, there no shepherds will rest their flocks. ²¹ But desert creatures will lie there, jackals will fill her houses; there the owls will dwell, and there the wild goats will leap about. ²² Hyenas will inhabit her strongholds, jackals her luxurious palaces. Her time is at hand, and her days will not be prolonged.

Two
prophecies –
one unit

[illegible]

יחילק איש אלהיהו יתמהו פני להבים פניהם: הנה יוס
יהוה בא אכזרי ועברה וחרון אף לשום הארץ לשמה
וחטאיה ישמיד ממנה: כי כוכבי השמים וכסיליהם לא יהיו
אדם חשך השמש בצאתו וירח לא יגיה אורו: ופקדתי על
תבל רעה ועל־רשעים עונם והשבתו גאון זדים וגאות
עריצים אשפיל: אוקיר אנוש מפו ואדם מכתם אופיר: על־
פן שמים ארגיו ותרעש הארץ ממקומה בעברת יהוה
צבאות וביום חרון אפו: והיה כצבי מרח וכצאן ואין מקבץ
איש אל־עמו יפנו ואיש אל־ארצו ינוסו: כל־הנמצא ידקר
וכל־הנספה יפול בחרב: ועל־ליהם ירששו לעיניהם ישפו
בתיהם ונשיהם תשגלנה: הנני מעיר עליהם את־מדי אשר
כסף לא יחשבו וזהב לא יחפצו־בו: וקשתות נערים תרשנה
ופרי־בטן לא ירחמו על־בנים לא־תחוס עינם: והיתה בבל
צבי ממלכות תפארת גאון כשדים כמהפכת אלהים את־
סדם ואת־עמרה: לא־תשב לנצח ולא תשכן עדר־הור ודור
ולא־יהל שם ערבי ורעים לא־ירבצו שם: ורבעו־שם ציזים
ומלאו בתיהם אחים ושכנו שם בנות יענה ושעירים ירקדו
שם: וענה איים באלמונתיו ותנים בהיכלי ענן וקרוב לבוא
עתה וימיה לא ימשכו: כי ירחם יהוה את־יעקב ובחר עוד
בישראל והנחם על־אדמתם ונלוה הגר עליהם ונספחו על־
בית יעקב: ולקחום עמים והביאום אל־מקומם והתנחלום
בית־ישראל על אדמת יהוה לעבדים ולשפחות והיו שבים
לשביהם ורדו בגושיהם: והיה ביום הנח יהוה
לך מעצבך ומרגוד ומן־העברה הקשה אשר עבר־ך:
ונשאת המשל הזה על־מלך בבל ואמרת איך שבת גוש
שבתה מדהבה: שבר יהוה מטה רשעים שבט משלים: מכה
עמים בעברה מפת בלתי סרה ודה באן גוים מרדף בלי

Two prophecies – one unit

עליונים ימות אשר עשוי ושאבקים
קדש לחיה

ממ עני השועה
זכרון חיה

רעה ותמחה פני להבים
פניהם חיה יס יהוד בא

אבריו עברה וחרון אף
לשון הארץ שפה חטא

וחטאיה ושמיר ממנה
כוכביו שמים וסלחהם

לא יחלו ארס חשך
חשך שבעתו וחרחא

וגה אורו ופקדתי על
תכליהו ערשעים

ענש וחספתו גאון ורס
וגאית ערשעים אשפיל

אוקיר אנוש מפו וארס מכתם אופיר
על שמים ארגיו ותרגש הארץ ממקומה בעברת יהוה

צבאות ובוים חרון אפו והיה כצבי מרח ובצאן ואין מקפץ
איש אל עמו יפנו ואיש אל ארצו ינוסו כל הנמצא ידקר

וכל הנספה יפול בחרב ועלליהם ירששו לעניהם יסשו
בתייהם וגשייהם תשגלנה הנני מעיר עליהם את מדי אשר

תשכנה

והיה כצבי מרח ובצאן ואין מקפץ
איש אל עמו יפנו ואיש אל ארצו ינוסו כל הנמצא ידקר

וכל הנספה יפול בחרב ועלליהם ירששו לעניהם יסשו
בתייהם וגשייהם תשגלנה הנני מעיר עליהם את מדי אשר

תשכנה

יחילון איש אל דעהו ותמחה פני להבים פניהם חיה יס יהוד בא אכורי ועברה וחרון אף לשון הארץ שפה חטא וחסאיה ושמיר ממנה כוכביו שמים וסלחהם לא יחלו ארס חשך שבעתו וחרחא וגה אורו ופקדתי על תכליהו ערשעים אשפיל אוקיר אנוש מפו וארס מכתם אופיר על שמים ארגיו ותרגש הארץ ממקומה בעברת יהוה צבאות ובוים חרון אפו והיה כצבי מרח ובצאן ואין מקפץ איש אל עמו יפנו ואיש אל ארצו ינוסו כל הנמצא ידקר וכל הנספה יפול בחרב ועלליהם ירששו לעניהם יסשו בתייהם וגשייהם תשגלנה הנני מעיר עליהם את מדי אשר תשכנה

והיה כצבי מרח ובצאן ואין מקפץ
איש אל עמו יפנו ואיש אל ארצו ינוסו כל הנמצא ידקר

וכל הנספה יפול בחרב ועלליהם ירששו לעניהם יסשו
בתייהם וגשייהם תשגלנה הנני מעיר עליהם את מדי אשר

תשכנה

והיה כצבי מרח ובצאן ואין מקפץ
איש אל עמו יפנו ואיש אל ארצו ינוסו כל הנמצא ידקר

וכל הנספה יפול בחרב ועלליהם ירששו לעניהם יסשו
בתייהם וגשייהם תשגלנה הנני מעיר עליהם את מדי אשר

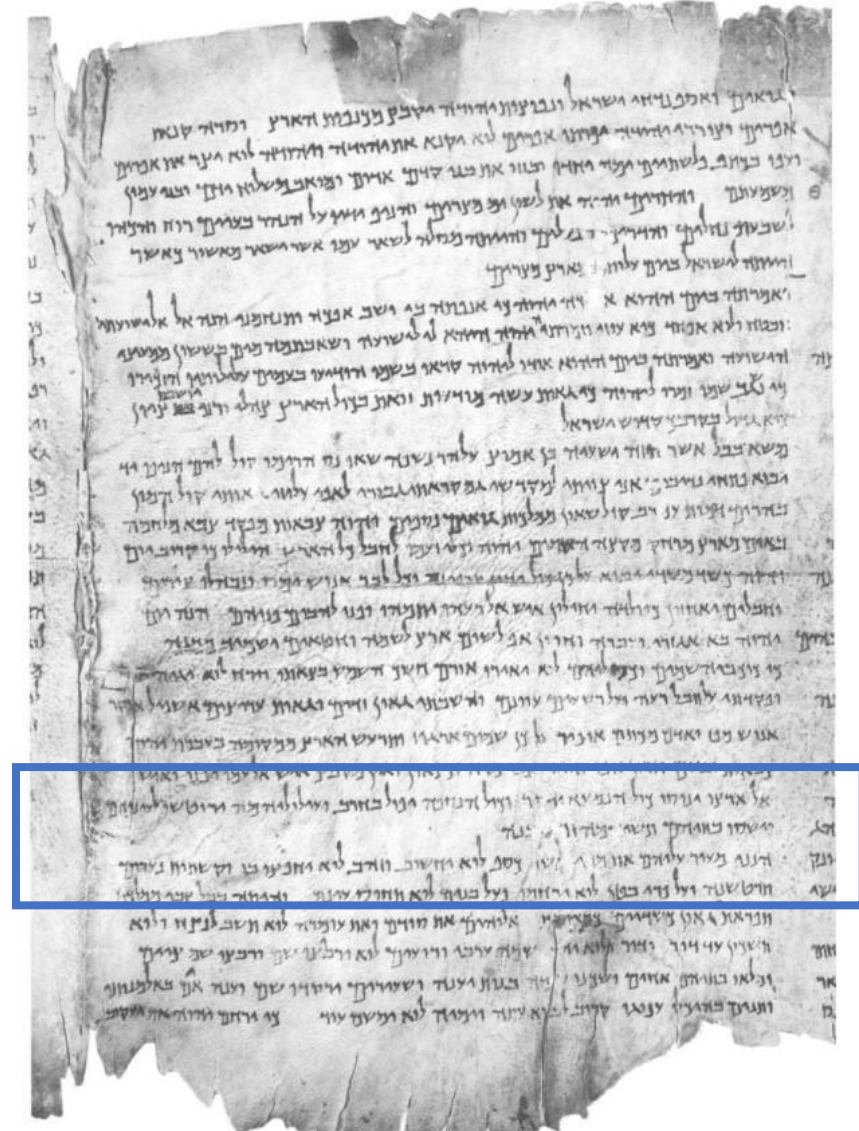
תשכנה

יחילון איש אל דעהו יתמהו פני להבים פניהם: הנה יום
יהיה בא אכזרי ועברה וחרון אף לשום הארץ לשמה
וחטאיה ישמיד ממנה: כי כוכבי השמים וכסיליהם לא יהלו
אדם חשך השמש בצאתו וירח לא יגיה אורו: ופקדתי על-
תבל רעה ועל דשעים עונם והשפתי גאון זדים וגאות
עריצים אשפיל: אוקיר אנוש מפז ואדם מכתם אופיר: על-
פן שמים ארגזו ותרעש הארץ ממקומה בעברת יהוה
צבאות וביום חרון אפו: והיה כצבי מדה וכצאן ואין מקבץ
אנוש אל עמו ותזנ ואנוש אל ארצו ונוסו: כל הנמצא וידקר
וכל הנספה יפול בחרב: ועלליהם ירטשו לעיניהם ישפו
בתייהם ונשיהם תשגלנה: הנני מעיר עליהם את מדי אשר-
בסף לא יחשבו וזהב לא יחפצו: וקשתות נערים תרטשנה
ופרי בטן לא ירחמו על בנים לא תחוס עינם: והיתה בבל
צבי ממלכות תפארת גאון פשדים כמהפכת אלהים את-
סדם ואת עמורה: לא תשב לנצח ולא תשכן עהדה ודוד
ולא יהל שם ערבי ודעים לא ירבעו שם: ורבעו שם צינים
ומלאו בתייהם אחים ושכנו שם בנות יענה ושעירים ירקדו

מכתם אופיר על כן שמים
ארגזו ותרעש הארץ
ממקומה בעברת יהוה
צבאות וביום חרון אפו
והיה כצבי מדה וכצאן
ואין מקבץ אנוש אל עמו
ותזנ ואנוש אל ארצו ונוסו
כל הנמצא וידקר
וכל הנספה יפול בחרב
ועלליהם ירטשו לעיניהם
ישפו בתייהם ונשיהם
תשגלנה: הנני מעיר עליהם
את מדי אשר-בסף לא יחשבו
וזהב לא יחפצו: וקשתות נערים
תרטשנה ופרי בטן לא ירחמו
על בנים לא תחוס עינם:
והיתה בבל צבי ממלכות
תפארת גאון פשדים כמהפכת
אלהים את סדם ואת עמורה:
לא תשב לנצח ולא תשכן
עהדה ודוד ולא יהל שם
ערבי ודעים לא ירבעו שם:
ורבעו שם צינים ומלאו
בתייהם אחים ושכנו שם
בנות יענה ושעירים ירקדו



The Great Isaiah Scroll



לגואים ואספ נדחי ישראל ונפוצות יהודה יקבצ מכנפות הארצ 13 וסרה קנאת
אפרים וצוררי יהודה יכרתו אפרים לוא יקנא את יהודה ויהודה לוא יצר את אפרים
14 ועפ^א בכתפ^ב פלשתיים ימה יחדו ובזוז את בני קדם אדום ומואב משלוח ידם ובני עמון
משמעם P(?) 15 והחרים יהוה את לשון ים מצרים והניף ידיו על הגור בעיים רוח והכרז
5 לשבעת^א נחלים והדריכו בנעלים 16 והייתה מסלה לשאר עמו אשר ישאר מאשור כאשר
הייתה לישראל ביום עלותו מארצ מצרים V and P
1 ואמרת ביום ההוא א[נ]ה יהוה כי אנפתה בי ושב אפכה ותנחמני 2 הנה אל אל ישועתי
Ch. 12 אבטח ולוא אפחד כיא עזי וזמרת^י יהוה היהא לי לישועה 3 ושאתמה מים בששון ממעיני
הישועה 4 ואמרתה ביום ההוא אודו ליהוה קרא בשמו הדיע בעמים עלילותי הזכירו
10 כי נגב שמו 5 וזמר ליהוה כי גאות עשה מודעות וזאת בכול הארצ 6 צהלי ורני (בת) יס^י ציון
כיא גדול בקרבך קדוש ישראל V
1 משא בבל אשר חזה^א ישעיה בן אמוצ 2 על דר נשפה שאו נס דרימו קול להם הניפו יד
Ch. 13 יבוא פתחי נדיבים 3 אני צויתי למקדשי גמ קראתי גברי לאפי עליי גאותי 4 קול המון
בדרים דמות עם רב קול שאון ממלכות גוים נספים יהוה צבאות מפקד צבא מלחמה
15 5 באים מארצ מרחק מקצה השמים^א יהוה וכלי ועמו לחבל כל הארצ 6 הילילו כי קרוב יום
יהוה כשד משדי יבוא 7 על כן כול ידון תרפינה וכל לבב אנוש ינס 8 ונבהלו צירים
ותבלים יאחזון כזלדה יחילון איש אל רעהו יתמדו ופני להבים פניהם 9 הנה יום
יהוה בא אגורי ועברה וחרון אפ לשום ארצ לשמה וחסאים ישמיד ממנה V(?)
10 כי כוכבי השמים וכסליהם^א לוא יאירו אורם חשך השמש בצאתו וידח לוא יגיה אורו
20 11 ופקדתי על תבל רעה ועל רשעים עוונם והשבתי^א גאון זדים וגאות עריצים אשפיל 12 אקך
אנוש מפו ואדם מכתם אפיר 13 על כן שמים ארגיו ותרעש הארצ ממקומה בעברת יהוה
עבנות וזבים יתקו ופני יהוה פניו יתה ופניו יתה ופניו יתה ופניו יתה
אל ארצ ינוסו 15 כל הנמצא ילקך וכול הנספה יפול בחרב 16 ועלוליהמה ירוטשו לעניהם
וישסו בתיהם ונשיהמה ת[שכ]נה V
25 17 הגני מעיר עליהם את מדי אשר כספ לוא יחשוב וזהב לוא יחפצו בו 18 וקשתות נעדים
ותשנה ועל פי בן לוא יחמו ועל בנים לוא תחוס עינם 19 והיתה בבל צני ממלכת
תפראת גאון כשדיים כמאפכת אלוהים את סודם ואת עומרה 20 לוא תשב לבצח ולוא
תשכון עד דוד דודר ולוא יה[] שמה ערבי ורועים לוא ירבצו שם 21 ורבעו שם ציים
ומלאו בתיהם אחים ושכנו שמה בנות ישעיה ושעירים יקדו שם 22 וענה אים באלמונות
30 ותנים בהכלו ענגו קרוב לבוא עתה וימיה לוא ימשכו עוד 1 כי ירחם יהוה את יעקב

יהוה כשד משדי יבוא 7 על כן כול ידן תרפינה וכל לבב אנש ימס 8 ונבהלו צירים
 וחבלים יאחוזון כזלדה יחילון איש אל רעהו יתמהו לפני להבים פניהם 9 הנה יום
 יהוה בא אגורי ועברה וחרון אפ לשום ארצ לשמה וחטאים ישמיד ממנה V(?)
 10 כי סוכבי השמים וכסליהם^a לוא יאירו אורם חשך השמש בצאתו וידח לוא יגיה אורו
 11 ופקדתי על תבל רעה ועל רשעים עונם והשבת^a גאון זדים וגאות עריצים אשפיל 12 אקר
 אנש מפו ואדם מכתם אפיר 13 על כן שמים ארגזו ותרעש הארצ ממקומה בעברת יהוה
 צבאות ובים דרון אפי 14 והיו צבי מדה וכצאון ואין מקבצ איש אל עמו יפנו ואיש
 אל ארצו ינוסו 15 כל הנמצא ידלך וכול הנספה יפול בחרב 16 ועילוליהמה ירוטשו לעיניהם
 וישכו בתייהם ונשיהמה ת[שכ]בנה V
 17 הנני מעיר עליהם את מדי אשר כספ לוא יחשוב וזהב לוא יחפצו בו 18 וקשתות נערים
 תרטשנה ועל פרי בטן לוא ירחמו ועל בנים לוא תחוס עינם 19 והיתה בבל צבי ממלכת
 תפראת גאון כשדיים כמאפכת אלוהים את סודם ואת עומרה 20 לוא תשב לנצח ולוא
 תשכון עד דור ודור ולוא יה[] שמה ערבי ורועים לוא ירבצו שם 21 ורבצו שמ ציים
 ומלאו בתייהם אחים ושכנו שמה בנות יענה ושעירים ירקדו שם 22 וענה א'ם באלמנותו



Universal (vss. 2–16)	Particular (vss. 17–22)
<p>11 וְהִשְׁבַּתִּי גֵאוֹן זָדִים וְגָאוֹת עָרִיצִים אֶשְׁפִּיל</p> <p>I will put an end to the pride of the arrogant</p>	<p>19 וְהִיְתָה בָּבֶל צְבִי מִמְּלָכוֹת תִּפְאָרֶת גֵּאוֹן כְּשָׂדִים</p> <p>And Babylon, glory of kingdoms, proud splendor of the Chaldeans</p>
<p>6 הִילֵּילוּ כִּי קָרוֹב יוֹם יְהוָה כְּשֶׁד מִשְׁדֵּי יָבוֹא</p> <p>Howl! For the day of the Lord is near</p>	<p>22 וְקָרוֹב לָבוֹא עֲתָה וַיָּמֶיהָ לֹא יִמָּשְׁכוּ</p> <p>Her [Babylon] hour is close at hand; Her days will no be long</p>
<p>14 וְהָיָה כַּצִּבִּי מְדָח</p> <p>Then like gazelles that are chased ... Each man shall turn back to his people</p>	<p>19 וְהִיְתָה בָּבֶל צְבִי מִמְּלָכוֹת</p> <p>And Babylon, glory of kingdoms</p>



Universal (vss. 2–16)	Particular (vss. 17–22)
<p>11 וְהִשְׁבַּתִּי גִּאּוֹן זְדִים וְגִאּוֹת עָרִיצִים אֲשָׁפִיל</p> <p>I will put an end to the pride of the arrogant</p>	<p>19 וְהִיְתָה בָּבֶל צְבִי מִמְּלָכוֹת תִּפְאָרֶת גִּאּוֹן כְּשָׂדִים</p> <p>And Babylon, glory of kingdoms, proud splendor of the Chaldeans</p>
<p>6 הִילֵּילוּ כִּי קָרוֹב יוֹם יְהוָה כְּשֹׁד מִשְׁדֵּי יָבוֹא Howl! For the day of the Lord is near</p>	<p>22 וְקָרוֹב לָבוֹא עֲתָה וַיָּמֶיהָ לֹא יִמָּשְׁכוּ</p> <p>Her [Babylon's] hour is close at hand; Her days will not be long</p>
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What is the nature of this dialogue?

Generalization or Specification

² Raise a banner on a bare hilltop, shout to them; beckon to them to enter the gates of the nobles. ³ I have commanded those I prepared for battle; I have summoned my warriors to carry out my wrath—those who rejoice in my triumph. ⁴ Listen, a noise on the mountains, like that of a great multitude! Listen, an uproar among the kingdoms, like nations massing together! The LORD Almighty is mustering an army for war. ⁵ They come from faraway lands, from the ends of the heavens—the LORD and the weapons of his wrath—to destroy the whole country. ⁶ Wail, for the day of the LORD is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty. ⁷ Because of this, all hands will go limp, every heart will melt with fear. ⁸ Terror will seize them, pain and anguish will grip them; they will writhe like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at each other, their faces aflame. ⁹ See, the day of the LORD is coming—a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger—to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it. ¹⁰ The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. ¹¹ I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless. ¹² I will make people scarcer than pure gold, more rare than the gold of Ophir. ¹³ Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the LORD Almighty, in the day of his burning anger. ¹⁴ Like a hunted gazelle, like sheep without a shepherd, they will all return to their own people, they will flee to their native land. ¹⁵ Whoever is captured will be thrust through; all who are caught will fall by the sword. ¹⁶ Their infants will be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses will be looted and their wives violated.

¹⁷ See, I will stir up against them the Medes, who do not care for silver and have no delight in gold. ¹⁸ Their bows will strike down the young men; they will have no mercy on infants, nor will they look with compassion on children. ¹⁹ Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the pride and glory of the Babylonians, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. ²⁰ She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations; there no nomads will pitch their tents, there no shepherds will rest their flocks. ²¹ But desert creatures will lie there, jackals will fill her houses; there the owls will dwell, and there the wild goats will leap about. ²² Hyenas will inhabit her strongholds, jackals her luxurious palaces. Her time is at hand, and her days will not be prolonged.

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² Raise a banner on a bare hilltop, shout to them; beckon to them to enter the gates of the nobles. ³ I have commanded those I prepared for battle; I have summoned my warriors to carry out my plan. ⁴ Listen, a noise on the mountain. Listen, an uproar among the kingdoms.

The LORD Almighty is mustering an army. ⁵ They will come from distant lands, from the ends of the heavens—the LORD and the weapons of his wrath—to destroy the whole country. ⁶ Wail, for the day of the LORD is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty. ⁷ Because of this, all hands will go limp, every heart will melt with fear. ⁸ Terror will seize them, pain and anguish will grip them; they will writhe like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at each other, their faces aflame. ⁹ See, the day of the LORD is coming—

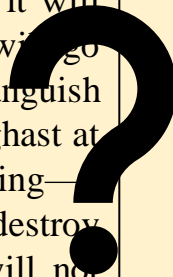
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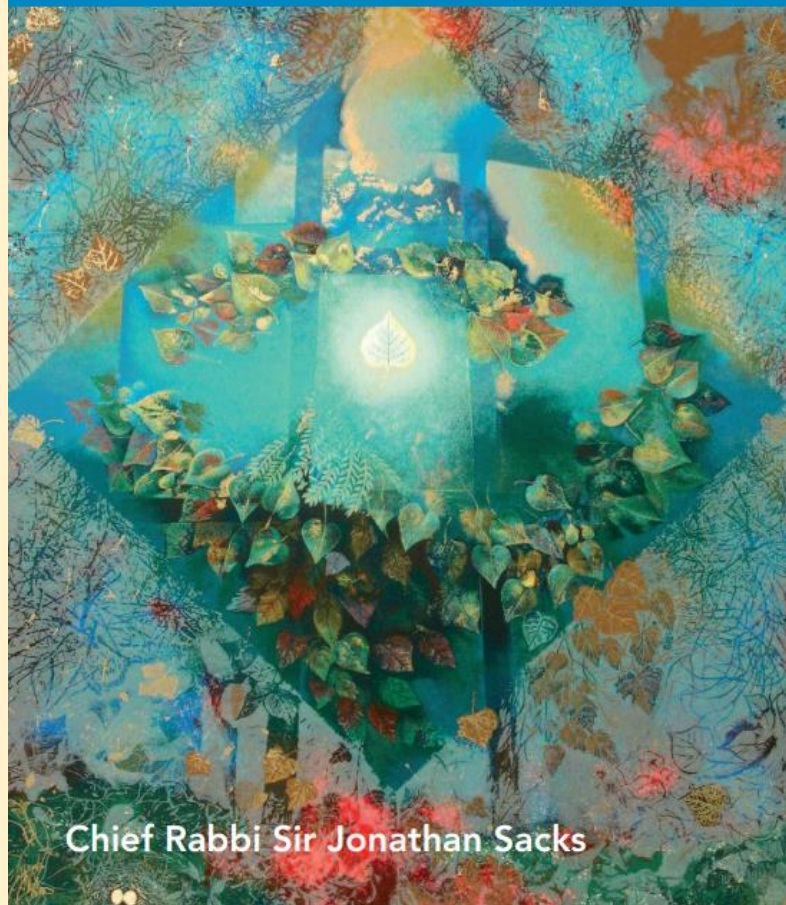
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Generalization

LETTERS TO THE NEXT GENERATION

REFLECTIONS FOR YOM KIPPUR



Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks

Letter 2: The price of things and the value of things

SARA, DAVID, these have been tough times. Financial collapse, economic recession, and uncertainty ahead. People have lost their savings, their jobs, even their homes. What do you do in times like these? The best answer was given by an American politician: *Never waste a crisis*. You learn more in bad times than in good.

The Chinese ideogram for 'crisis' also means 'opportunity'. Perhaps that's why the Chinese have been around so long. Only one language I know goes one further, and that is Hebrew. The Hebrew word for 'crisis' is *mashber*, which also means a birthing-stool. In Hebrew, crises are not just opportunities; they are birthpangs. Something new is being born. That's why Jews have survived every crisis in 4,000 years and emerged even stronger than they were before.

What the financial collapse should teach us is that we were becoming obsessed with money: salaries, bonuses, the cost of houses, and expensive luxuries we could live without. *When money rules, we remember the price of things and forget the value of things*. That is a bad mistake. The financial collapse happened because people borrowed money they didn't have, to buy things they didn't need, to achieve a happiness that wouldn't last.

LETTERS TO THE M

Opportunity – God was not referring to a particular nation, but rather the very entity of evil and wickedness.



Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks

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Prophecies to foreign nations

Isaiah 13–23	Jeremiah 46–51	Ezekiel 25–29
Babylon	Egypt	Amon
Philistia	Philistines	Moab and Seir
Moab	Moab	Edom
Damascus	Ammonites	Philistia
Egypt	Edom	Tyre
Desert of the Sea	Damascus	Sidon
Dumah	Kedar	Egypt
Bearav (In the Steppe)	Elam	
Valley of Vision	Babylon	
Tyre		

LETTERS TO THE

Opportunity – God was not referring to a particular nation, but rather the very entity of evil and wickedness.


Birthpangs – Divine crime and punishment does not always follow human expectation.

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Textual Innovation
in Times of Crisis:
Understanding
Isaiah 13

Thank
you!