

## Tanach in a Day, 2:00 PM: Yonah, Nachum, Ovadia, Tzefaniah, Chavakuk Nasty Neighbours: Edom, Assyria, Babylon

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY TORAH MITZION BEIT MIDRASH

R' Mordechai Torczyner – torczyner@torontotorah.com Parenthesized page numbers refer to the Artscroll Stone Tanach

Yonah: Midway through the first Beit haMikdash (8th century or 6th century BCE), in Yisrael

1. An unusual out-of-book reference Melachim II 14:25 (947)

2. Rabbi Don Isaac Abarbanel (15th century Spain, Portugal, Italy) to Yonah 1:1

גמר בלבו שלא ללכת בנינוה כדי שלא ינצלו אנשי אשור מהכלייה על ידו כי איך תהיה הליכתו סבה להציל את בני אשור ולהכרית את בני ישראל... ואם ד' יתברך ירצה להצילם בעצמו יעשה כרצונו אבל לא באמצעות יונה ועל ידו.

He decided not to go to Nineveh, so that the people of Assyria would not be saved from destruction by his hand. How could his going cause the Assyrians to be saved, and to destroy the children of Israel?!... If Gd wishes to save them Himself, let Him do as He wishes – but not via Yonah and by his hand.

Nachum: Latter part of the first Beit haMikdash (7th century or 5th century BCE), in Yehudah

3. The Chronicle of the Fall of Nineveh http://www.livius.org/ne-nn/nineveh/nineveh02.html

4. Outline

Chapters 1-2 Assyria is doomed

Chapter 3 Rebuke of the Assyrians for their sins: Theft, immorality, alliances and arrogance

5. A reversal Yonah 4:2 (1375) vs. Nachum 1:3 (1387)

Ovadia: A disputed time and location

6. Identity Divrei haYamim II 17:7 (1973) or Melachim I 18:3 (857)?

#### 7. Talmud, Sanhedrin 39b

'And Achav called Ovadia, who was in charge of the house; and Ovadia was very Gd-fearing.' What is this text saying? Rabbi Yitzchak explained: Achav said to Ovadia: Regarding Yaakov it says, 'I have been fortunate, and Gd has blessed me because of you.' Regarding Yosef it says, 'And Gd blessed the house of the Egyptian because of Yosef.' My household has not been blessed; perhaps you are not Gd-fearing! At which point a voice emerged and said, 'Ovadia was very Gd-fearing, but Achav's household is not deserving of blessing.'

Rabbi Abba said: What is said regarding Ovadia is greater than what is said regarding Avraham, for regarding Avraham it did not say 'very' and regarding Ovadia it said 'very'.

Rabbi Yitzchak said: Why did Ovadia merit prophecy? For he hid 100 prophets in a cave...

Why was Ovadia the one to prophesy for Edom? R' Yitzchak said: Gd said, 'Let Ovadia, who lived between two wicked ones and did not learn from their deeds, come prophesy against wicked Esav who lived between two righteous people and did not learn from their deeds. Ephraim Makshaah, student of R' Meir, cited R' Meir as saying that Ovadia was an Edomite convert. As people say, 'From it itself, the hatchet enters the tree.'

8. Outline

1:1-9 Prediction of punishment for Edom 1:10-14 Rebuke for harming the Jews

1:14-21 Redemption of Israel

## 9. Esav and Edom Bereishit 36 (89), Divrei haYamim I 4:42-43 (1883), Devarim 23:8 (483)

#### 10. Ibn Ezra to Bereishit 27:40

The sleeping who have not wakened think that we are in the Edomite exile. It is not so. Edom was under Yehudah's hand... Yoav killed every male Edomite. Because they were under Yehudah's hand, they rejoiced upon our day, telling the Babylonians, 'Dig, dig until the foundation!' This shame was more harsh for Israel, having Edom mock them in their evil. And so we have, 'Rejoice, daughter of Edom'... Also during the time of Hyrcanus he made them guards of Jerusalem and he had them circumcised. In the day of Agrippas, when Jerusalem was conquered, Edomite legions came to help Yehudah, and the nation that exiled us was from the seed of the Kitim... Few believed the new religion, and when they believed in the time of Constantine he created the whole religion anew, no one would observe this new Torah, aside from the Edomites.

## 11. Talmud, Megilah 6a

קסרי וירושלים אם יאמר לך אדם חרבה ירושלים וישבה קסרי שתיהן אל תאמן ישבו שתיהן אל תאמן ישבה ירושלים חרבה ירושלים וישבה קסרי וירושלים אם יאמץ אמר אמלאה החרבה אם מליאה זו חרבה זו אם מליאה זו חרבה אם מליאה מליאה

## Tzefaniah: End of the first Beit haMikdash (6<sup>th</sup> century BCE or 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE), Yehudah

12. Rabbi David Kimchi, Radak to Tzefaniah 1:1

ונבואתו היתה קודם ששבו יאשיהו ויהודה מרעתם

His prophecy was presented before Yoshiyahu and Judea repented of their evil.

13. Midrash, Pesikta Rabti 26

ירמיהו היה מתנבא בשווקים, צפניה בתוך בתי כנסיות, וחולדה אצל הנשים

Yirmiyahu prophesied in the markets, Tzefaniah in the synagogues, and Chuldah with the women.

14. Outline

Chapter 1 The Day of Gd is coming: Yehudah will fall to Bavel

Chapter 2 The arrogant nations will fall

Chapter 3 Jerusalem has sinned, but a day of enlightenment is coming

# Chavakuk: Toward the end of the first Beit haMikdash (6th century BCE or 4th century BCE), Yehudah

### 15. Targum Yonatan to 1:2

עד אימתי ד' אנא מצלי? הלא גלי קדמך, קבילנא קדמך על חטופין, הלא יוכלא קדמך למיפרק

Until when, Gd, will I pray? It is revealed before You! I have cried before You regarding theft; you have the ability to save!

16. Outline

Chapter 1 Challenging Gd: Where is Divine Justice?
Chapter 2 Gd responds: Bavel will fall for their sins
Chapter 3 A prayer to Gd to save us from harm

### 17. Project Habakkuk http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project\_Habakkuk