

MATAN AL HAPEREK

The Six-Year Online Weekly Tanach Learning Program

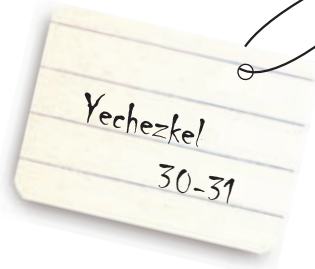


Perek 30

This perek includes two prophecies about the destruction of Egypt. The first prophecy (1-19) is of a general nature and deals with the "day of the Lord" in which God will destroy all of Egypt and its allies. The second prophecy (20-26) is more focused and speaks of the destruction of Egypt by the Babylonians. The main imagery in this prophecy is the image of the "arm" – the breaking of Pharaoh's arm as contrasted with the strengthening of the arm of the king of Babylonia.

- 1 "For the day is near; even the day that is near is the Lord's." (3) The description of the day of the Lord in the first prophecy can be divided into four sections. What is the main topic of each section? Follow the development through the sections: on whom do the first and second sections focus (1-5, 6-9)? What is added to the description of the destruction in the third section (10-12)? Who is affected in the fourth section (13-19) See especially pasuk 13.
- 2 Compare the first and fourth sections. In both of them we find the names of many places – which are mentioned in the first section and which are found in the fourth section? (See also Bereshit 10:6,13 in connection with the first section and the appendix in connection with the fourth)



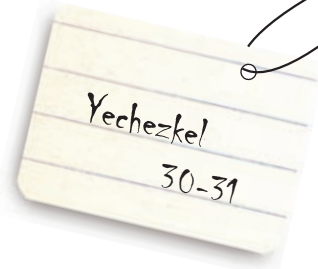


- 3 The background to the second prophecy which deals with the broken arm of Egypt is an historical event – see Melachim II 24:7. See also **Rashi**:

I have broken the arm of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt: already another time, for I placed his army in the hands of Nevuchadnezzar in the fourth year of Yehoyakim, as it is said in the Book of Yirmiyahu (46:2): “Concerning Egypt, concerning the army of Pharaoh-necho, the king of Egypt, which was on the Euphrates in Carcemish, whom Nevuchadnezzar king smote, etc.”

and behold, it was not bound: from that day on... and with this expression Yirmiyahu, too, prophesied concerning that blow, using the language “it has no cure,” as it is said (Yirmiyahu 46:11): “Go up to Gilad and take balm, O virgin daughter of Egypt; in vain you have increased medicines, you have no cure.” **הַבָּשָׂה** is an expression of binding, for they bind the broken bone.

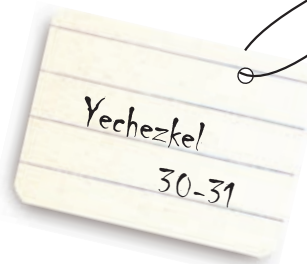
- 4 The language of arm/hand repeats itself several times in the prophecy:
- What do the arms in the prophecy symbolize and what is the meaning of the contrast between the arms? Pay attention to the phrase which repeats in pesukim 25-26.
 - The image of the arm/hand in the prophecy and the phrase "strong arm" imply a connection to the story of the Exodus from Egypt – "*With a strong hand and an outstretched arm*" What is the meaning of this in terms of the role of the king of Babylonia?



Perek 31

The prophet compares the fate of the Assyrian superpower, which had disintegrated about 100 years earlier, to the expected fate of the Egyptian superpower. The prophecy consists of a frame narrative (2,18) which speaks about Egypt and an enclosed narrative which describes the fate of Assyria as a precedent to the fate of Egypt, using an allegory based on the description of the Garden of Eden in Bereshit 2.

- 5 The description begins with a growing cedar, and the topic of water repeats three times in this description (4, 5, 7).
- a) What is the role of the water in the description and why is it so emphasized? How does it explain the advantage of the cedar? Use the commentary of the **Radak** to understand:
- It says that the deep waters sent their rivers around the plantings, this is referring to the cedar which is planted there and is fed by a plethora of water, and the canals which are small streams...were sent out to water all the trees of the field.
- b) Compare this to the mention of water in the second section. What is the meaning of the terms "*trees of water*" / "*all that drink water*" (14,16) in their context, and how will the sin of the tree be corrected in the future (15)?
- 6 The word "all" (*kol*) repeats seven times in the section. Compare its role in pesukim 4-5, 8-9 to its role in pasuk 6. What is the purpose of the tree's unique growth and height?



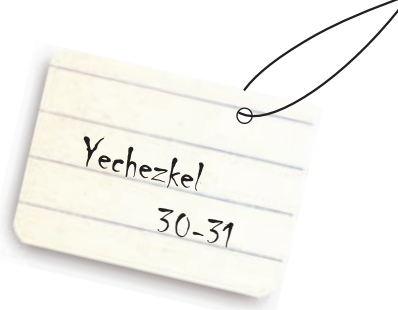
- 7 Examine pesukim 12-13 and compare them to pasuk 6. How do we see the reversal in the condition of the tree and its relationship to its environs? Pay attention to the reversal in the relationship of the animals and birds to the tree, and the connection of the nations to it.
- 8 A similar description of the role of the tree appears in the prophecy of the redemption of Israel in perek 17:22-24. Compare the prophecies – what is the role of the tree in the two prophecies? See the explanation of **Rav Yaakov Ariel**:

The allegory of the cedar is different from the allegories of the crocodile and the ship, and it is contradictory to them. In the Assyrian Garden of Eden there stands a central tree, but the garden is not meant exclusively for it, rather for all the trees and animals, and its role is to bring life to the creatures. Proper monarchy brings repair to the world. Yechezkel designated this role for Israel and compared it to a wonderful cedar... However, the Assyrian tree was arrogant, with its height stretching to the heavens and to the birds in the sky and the animals in the field, and therefore it was cut and felled. (Lev Chadash – Iyunim beSefer Yechezkel)

Appendix

In his prophecies about Egypt, Yechezkel speaks about both the cities in the Nile Delta and the cities in the land of Patros, which is in the south of Egypt. These cities were the central cities of Egypt – some of them capital cities and some of them military and religious centers.

Sin was a city on the northeastern border of Egypt, on the eastern side of the Suez Canal. According to the description in our perek it must have been a fortified city. The fact that the Persians twice fought decisive battles for the area, and their victory caused the downfall of all of Egypt



shows the importance of the area. "Aven" (Iunu) was a city in Lower Egypt which was the center of worship of the sun god Ra. The Greeks called the city Heliopolis – the city of the sun. "Beset" was the name of a place in the eastern delta near a tributary of the Nile called the Bubastis tributary. The meaning of the name in Egyptian is the house of the goddess Bastet. This goddess appears as a lioness or cat. Pi-Beset was the capital of Egypt during the 22nd and 23rd dynasties. "Mof/Nof" was the capital of Egypt in the 3rd through 6th dynasties, and is called Memphis in Greek sources. It was one of the main religious centers of Egypt, competing with Aven. "Zoan" (Tanis) was the capital of Hyksos. "No Amun" was in Upper Egypt and was named for the head goddess of Upper Egypt. Its Greek name was Thebes. The city is known for the magnificent archeological finds in its suburbs – the temples in Karnak and Luxor.

(Free Translation of Y.T. Moskowitz, Daat Mikra Le'Yechezkel, Olam Hatanach Le'Yechezkel)



(Wikipedia / NordNordWest)

Map of Egypt

For expanded content and answers to questions:  מתן על הפרק • perek.matan@gmail.com

Tali ilan Studio 052-5513437

The Six-Year Online Weekly Tanach Learning Program

© כל הזכויות שמורות. מתן על הפרק. מתן ירושלים • טל': 02-5944555



מכון תורני לנשים ע"ש שרה בת יצחק יעקב רינגרט
The Sodie Rennett Women's Institute for Torah Studies

המרכז ללימודי תנ"ך