

# OR HAMIDBAR

SPIRITUAL JUDAISM IN THE DESERT

## The Grand Finale – Daniel 10-12

10:1-3 In the third year of King Cyrus of Persia, an oracle was revealed to Daniel, who was called Belteshazzar. That oracle was true, but it was a great task to understand the prophecy; understanding came to him through the vision.

At that time, I, Daniel, kept three full weeks of mourning. I ate no **tasty food/lehem hamudot**, nor did any meat or wine enter my mouth. I did not anoint myself until the three weeks were over.

4-7 It was on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, when I was on the bank of the great river—the Tigris—that I looked and saw a man dressed in linen, his loins girt in fine gold. His body was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and legs had the color of burnished bronze, and the sound of his speech was like the noise of a multitude. I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; the men who were with me did not see the vision, yet they were seized with a great terror and fled into hiding.

8-10 So I was left alone to see this great vision. I was drained of strength, my vigor was destroyed, and I could not summon up strength. I heard him speaking; and when I heard him speaking, overcome by a deep sleep, I lay prostrate on the ground. Then a hand touched me and shook me onto my hands and knees.

11-14 He said to me, “O Daniel, **precious man/ish hamudot**, mark what I say to you and stand up, for I have been sent to you.” After he said this to me, I stood up, trembling. He then said to me, “Have no fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind to get understanding, practicing abstinence before your God, your prayer was heard, and I have come because of your prayer. However, the prince of the Persian kingdom opposed me for twenty-one days; now Michael, a prince of the first rank, has come to my aid, after I was detained there with the kings of Persia. So I have come to make you understand what is to befall your people in the days to come, for there is yet a vision for those days.”

15-17 While he was saying these things to me, I looked down and kept silent. Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, “My lord, because of the vision, I have been seized with pangs and cannot summon strength. How can this servant of my lord speak with my lord, seeing that my strength has failed and no spirit is left in me?”

18-21 He who looked like a man touched me again and strengthened me. He said, “Have no fear, **precious man/ish hamudot**, all will be well with you; be strong, be strong!” As he spoke with me, I was strengthened, and said, “Speak on, my lord, for you have strengthened me!” Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? Now I must go back to fight the prince of Persia. When I go off, the prince of Greece will come in. No one is helping me against them except your prince, Michael. However, I will tell you what is recorded in the book of truth.

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11:1-4 In the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to strengthen and fortify him. And now I will tell you the truth: Persia will have three more kings, and the fourth will be wealthier than them all; by the power he obtains through his wealth, he will stir everyone up against the kingdom of Greece. Then a warrior king will appear who will have an extensive dominion and do as he pleases. But after his appearance, his kingdom will be broken up and scattered to the four winds of heaven, but not for any of his posterity, nor with dominion like that which he had; for his kingdom will be uprooted and belong to others beside these.

5-10 “The king of the south will grow powerful; however, one of his officers will overpower him and rule, having an extensive dominion. After some years, an alliance will be made, and the daughter of the king of the south will come to the king of the north to effect the agreement, but she will not maintain her strength, nor will his strength endure. She will be surrendered together with those who escorted her and the one who begot her and helped her during those times.

A shoot from her stock will appear in his place, will come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north; he will fight and overpower them. He will also take their gods with their molten images and **their precious vessels/k’lei hemdatam** of silver and gold back to Egypt as booty. For some years he will leave the king of the north alone, who will [later] invade the realm of the king of the south, but will go back to his land. His sons will wage war, collecting a multitude of great armies; he will advance and sweep through as a flood, and will again wage war as far as his stronghold.

11-13 Then the king of the south, in a rage, will go out to do battle with him, with the king of the north. He will muster a great multitude, but the multitude will be delivered into his [foe’s] power. But when the multitude is carried off, he will grow arrogant; he will cause myriads to perish, but will not prevail. Then the king of the north will again muster a multitude even greater than the first. After a time, a matter of years, he will advance with a great army and much baggage.

14-16 In those times, many will resist the king of the south, and the lawless sons of your people will assert themselves to confirm the vision, but they will fail. The king of the north will advance and throw up siege ramps and capture a fortress city, and the forces of the south will not hold out; even the elite of his army will be powerless to resist. His opponent will do as he pleases, for none will hold out against him; he will install himself in the beautiful land with destruction within his reach.

17-20 He will set his mind upon invading the strongholds throughout his [foe’s] kingdom, but in order to destroy it he will effect an agreement with him and give him a daughter in marriage; he will not succeed at it and it will not come about. He will turn to the coastlands and capture many; but a consul will put an end to his insults, nay pay him back for his insults. He will head back to the strongholds of his own land, but will stumble, and fall, and vanish. His place will be taken by one who will dispatch an officer to exact tribute for royal glory, but he will be broken in a few days, not by wrath or by war.

21-23 His place will be taken by a contemptible man, on whom royal majesty was not conferred; he will come in unawares and seize the kingdom through trickery. The forces of the flood will be overwhelmed by him and will be broken, and so too the covenant leader.

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And, from the time an alliance is made with him, he will practice deceit; and he will rise to power with a small band.

24-26 He will invade the richest of provinces unawares, and will do what his father and forefathers never did, lavishing on his allies spoil, booty, and wealth; he will have designs upon strongholds, but only for a time. He will muster his strength and courage against the king of the south with a great army. The king of the south will wage war with a very great and powerful army but will not stand fast, for they will devise plans against him.

Those who eat of his food will ruin him. His army will be overwhelmed, and many will fall slain.

27-28 The minds of both kings will be bent on evil; while sitting at the table together, they will lie to each other, but to no avail, for there is yet an appointed term. He will return to his land with great wealth, his mind set against the holy covenant. Having done his pleasure, he will return to his land.

29-30 At the appointed time, he will again invade the south, but the second time will not be like the first. Ships from Kittim will come against him. He will be checked, and will turn back, raging against the holy covenant. Having done his pleasure, he will then attend to those who forsake the holy covenant.

31-32 Forces will be levied by him; they will desecrate the temple, the fortress; they will abolish the regular offering and set up the appalling abomination. He will flatter with smooth words those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people devoted to their God will stand firm.

33-35 The knowledgeable among the people will make the many understand; and for a while they shall fall by sword and flame, suffer captivity and spoliation. In defeat, they will receive a little help, and many will join them insincerely.

Some of the knowledgeable will fall, that they may be refined and purged and whitened until the time of the end, for an interval still remains until the appointed time.

36-39 The king will do as he pleases; he will exalt and magnify himself above every god, and he will speak awful things against the God of gods. He will prosper until wrath is spent, and what has been decreed is accomplished.

He will not have regard for the god of his ancestors or for the **one dear to women/hemdat nashim**; he will not have regard for any god, but will magnify himself above all.

He will honor the god of fortresses on his stand; he will honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and **costly things/u'b'hamudot**, a god that his ancestors never knew.

He will deal with fortified strongholds with the help of an alien god. He will heap honor on those who acknowledge him, and will make them master over many; he will distribute land for a price.

40 -42 At the time of the end, the king of the south will lock horns with him, but the king of the north will attack him with chariots and riders and many ships. He will invade lands, sweeping through them like a flood; he will invade the beautiful land, too, and many will fall, but these will escape his clutches: Edom, Moab, and the chief part of the Ammonites.

He will lay his hands on lands; not even the land of Egypt will escape.

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43-45 He will gain control over treasures of gold and silver and over all **the precious things/hamudot** of Egypt, and the Libyans and Cushites will follow at his heel. But reports from east and north will alarm him, and he will march forth in a great fury to destroy and annihilate many. He will pitch his royal pavilion between the sea and the beautiful holy mountain, and he will meet his doom with no one to help him.

12:1-4 At that time, the great prince, Michael, who stands beside the sons of your people, will appear. It will be a time of trouble, the like of which has never been since the nation came into being. At that time, your people will be rescued, all who are found inscribed in the book. Many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to eternal life, others to reproaches, to everlasting abhorrence.

And the knowledgeable will be radiant like the bright expanse of sky, and those who lead the many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever.

But you, Daniel, keep the words secret, and seal the book until the time of the end. Many will range far and wide and knowledge will increase.”

5-6 Then I, Daniel, looked and saw two others standing, one on one bank of the river, the other on the other bank of the river. One said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the water of the river, “How long until the end of these awful things?”

7 Then I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the water of the river, swear by the Ever-Living One as he lifted his right hand and his left hand to heaven: “For a atime, times, and half a time;-a and when the breaking of the power of the holy people comes to an end, then shall all these things be fulfilled.”

8-13 I heard and did not understand, so I said, “My lord, what will be the outcome of these things?”

He said, “Go, Daniel, for these words are secret and sealed to the time of the end.

Many will be purified and purged and refined; the wicked will act wickedly and none of the wicked will understand; but the knowledgeable will understand. From the time the regular offering is abolished, and an appalling abomination is set up—it will be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

Happy the one who waits and reaches one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.)

But you, go on to the end; you shall rest, and arise to your destiny at the end of the days.”

## **Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 92a**

Rava says: From where is resurrection of the dead derived from the Torah?

It is derived from a verse, as it is stated: “Let Reuben live and not die, in that his men become few”

(Deuteronomy 33:6). This is interpreted: “Let Reuben live” in this world “and not die” in the World-to-Come.

Ravina says that resurrection is derived from here: “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awaken, some to everlasting life, and some to reproaches and everlasting disgrace” (Daniel 12:2).

Rav Ashi says proof is derived from here: “But go you your way until the end be; and you shall rest, and arise to your lot at the end of days” (Daniel 12:13).