

Narratives of Healing: National Loss and Rebuilding
Based on shiur by Rivka Kahan, Nishmat July 2020

SOURCES

I. Bnei Yisrae'l's Relationship with Hashem before the Sin of the Spies

1. **Bamidbar 9:15-23**

On the day that the Tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the Tabernacle, the Tent of the Pact; and in the evening it rested over the Tabernacle in the likeness of fire until morning. It was always so: the cloud covered it, appearing as fire by night. And whenever the cloud lifted from the Tent, the Israelites would set out accordingly; and at the spot where the cloud settled, there the Israelites would make camp. At a command of the LORD the Israelites broke camp, and at a command of the LORD they made camp: they remained encamped as long as the cloud stayed over the Tabernacle. When the cloud lingered over the Tabernacle many days, the Israelites observed the LORD's mandate and did not journey on. At such times as the cloud rested over the Tabernacle for but a few days, they remained encamped at a command of the LORD, and broke camp at a command of the LORD. And at such times as the cloud stayed from evening until morning, they broke camp as soon as the cloud lifted in the morning. Day or night, whenever the cloud lifted, they would break camp. Whether it was two days or a month or a year—however long the cloud lingered over the Tabernacle—the Israelites remained encamped and did not set out; only when it lifted did they break camp. On a sign from the LORD they made camp and on a sign from the LORD they broke camp; they observed the LORD's mandate at the LORD's bidding through Moses.

2. **Bamidbar 10:29-11:3**

10:29-36

Moses said to Hobab son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place of which the LORD has said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us and we will be generous with you; for the LORD has promised to be generous (*debayr tov*) to Israel."

(כִּי יִי דָבָר טוֹב עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל). "I will not go," he replied to him, "but will return to my native land." He said, "Please do not leave us, inasmuch as you know where we should camp in the wilderness and can be our guide. So if you come with us, we will extend to you the same bounty (*tov*) that the LORD grants us."

(וְהָיָה כִּי תֵלֵךְ עִמָּנוּ וְהָיָה הַטוֹב הַהוּא אֲשֶׁר יִיטִיב יָי עִמָּנוּ וְהַטְבָּנוּ לָךְ). They marched from the mountain of the LORD a distance of three days. The Ark of the Covenant of the LORD traveled in front of them on that three days' journey to seek out a resting place for them; and the LORD's cloud kept above them by day, as they moved on from camp. (35) *When the Ark was to set out, Moses would say: Advance, O LORD! May Your enemies be scattered, And may Your foes flee before You!* (36) *And when it halted, he would say: Return, O LORD, You who are Israel's myriads of thousands!*

11:1-3

The people took to complaining bitterly before the LORD. (וַיְהִי הָעָם כְּמִתְאַנְנִים רַע בְּאָזְנֵי י"י) The LORD heard and was incensed: a fire of the LORD broke out against them, ravaging the outskirts of the camp. The people cried out to Moses. Moses prayed to the LORD, and the fire died down. That place was named Taberah, because a fire of the LORD had broken out against them.

3. Bamidbar 1:1-2

(1) Hashem spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the Tent of Meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying, (2) "Take a census (lit, "count the heads") of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of the names, every male, one by one (Numbers 1:1-2)

Chezkuni (Rabbi Chizkiyahu ben Manoach, 13th cent. France) on Bamidbar 1:2

Count the heads: Because within twenty days they will travel to Eretz Yisrael, as its says in Parshat Beha'alotcha, "And it was in the second year in the second month on the twentieth of the month" and there it is written, "We are traveling to the place"

II. Understanding the Rift between Bamidbar Chapters 10 and 11

4. Bamidbar 11:1

The people were complaining in the ears of Hashem (*rah b'oznai Hashem*). When Hashem heard it, his anger was kindled; and Hashem's fire burnt among them, and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp.

Rashi, Bamidbar 11:1

The term **דִּבְרֵי תִּפְתָּח** denotes **[people who seek] "a pretext"** -- they seek a pretext how to separate themselves from following the Omnipresent. Similarly is stated in the narrative of Samson (Judges 14:4) "for he sought a pretext (to'anah)[against the Phillistines]."

5. Bamidbar 11:10

Moses heard the people weeping, every clan apart (*l'mishp'chotav*), each person at the entrance of his tent. The LORD was very angry, and Moses was distressed (וּבְרַעְיוֹנֵי מִזְעָה רַע).

Rashi, Bamidbar 11:10

THEN MOSES HEARD THE PEOPLE WEEP THROUGHOUT THEIR FAMILIES -- *i.e.*, the members of each family gathered together and wept in order to display their discontent in public. Our Rabbis, however, said that *l'mishp'chotav* means "the people wept because of

family affairs" -- because of the intermarriage of blood-relatives that had been forbidden to them.

6. Table of times/complaints of Bnei Yisroel in the desert, and responses of Hashem. Note how both the complaints and responses evolve/change over time, to consider and help us to understand the sin of the spies.

Source/Reference	Complaint	Response
Shemot 15:23-25	They came to Marah, but they <u>could not drink the water</u> of Marah because it was bitter; that is why it was named Marah. And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"	... and the LORD showed him a piece of wood; he threw it into the water and <u>the water became sweet</u> . There He made for them a fixed rule, and there He put them to the test.
Shemot 16:2-4	In the wilderness, the whole Israelite community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots, <u>when we ate our fill of bread!</u> For you have brought us out into this wilderness to starve this whole congregation to death."	And the LORD said to Moses, " <u>I will rain down bread for you from the sky</u> , and the people shall go out and gather each day that day's portion—that I may thus test them, to see whether they will follow My instructions or not.
Shemot 17:1-8	From the wilderness of Sin the whole Israelite community continued by stages as the LORD would command. They encamped at Rephidim, and there was <u>no water for the people to drink</u> . The people quarreled with Moses. "Give us water to drink," they said; ... But the people thirsted there for water; and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?"	and Moses replied to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you try the LORD?" ... Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do with this people? Before long they will be stoning me!" Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pass before the people; take with you some of the elders of Israel, and take along the rod with which you struck the Nile, and set out. I will be standing there before you on the rock at Horeb. <u>Strike the rock and water will issue from it, and the people will drink.</u> " And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. The place was named Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and because they tried the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD present among us or not?" <u>Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim.</u>

Source/Reference	Complaint	Response
Bamidbar 11:1-3	The people took to <u>complaining bitterly</u> before the LORD (<i>v'yehi ha'am k'mit'o'n'nim rah b'oznai Hashem</i>),	The LORD heard and was incensed: <u>a fire of the LORD broke out against them, ravaging the outskirts of the camp</u> . The people cried out to Moses. Moses prayed to the LORD, and the fire died down. That place was named Taberah, because a fire of the LORD had broken out against them.
Bamidbar 11:4-20	The riffraff in their midst felt a gluttonous craving; and then the Israelites wept and said, "If only we had meat to eat! We remember the <u>fish that we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic</u> . Now our gullets are shriveled. <u>There is nothing at all! Nothing but this manna to look to!</u> " Now the manna was like coriander seed, and in color it was like bdellium. The people would go about and gather it, grind it between millstones or pound it in a mortar, boil it in a pot, and make it into cakes. It tasted like rich cream. When the dew fell on the camp at night, the manna would fall upon it.	The LORD was very angry, and Moses was distressed (<i>u'v'anai Moshe rah</i>). And Moses said to the LORD, "Why have You dealt ill with Your servant (<i>lamoh ha'ray'oh'to l'avdecha</i>), and why have I not enjoyed Your favor, that You have laid the burden of all this people upon me? ... Then the LORD said to Moses, "Gather for Me seventy of Israel's elders of whom you have experience as elders and officers of the people, and bring them to the Tent of Meeting and let them take their place there with you. I will come down and speak with you there, and I will draw upon the spirit that is on you and put it upon them; they shall share the burden of the people with you, and you shall not bear it alone. And say to the people: Purify yourselves for tomorrow and <i>you shall eat meat, for you have kept whining before the LORD and saying, 'If only we had meat to eat! Indeed, we were better off in Egypt!'</i> <u>The LORD will give you meat and you shall eat. You shall eat not one day, not two, not even five days or ten or twenty, but a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you. For you have rejected the LORD who is among you, by whining before Him and saying, 'Oh, why did we ever leave Egypt!'</u> "
Reference	Complaint	Response

<p>Bamidbar 14:1-11 (after spies return and report)</p>	<p>The whole community broke into loud cries, and the people wept that night. All the Israelites railed against Moses and Aaron. "If only we had died in the land of Egypt," the whole community shouted at them, "or if only we might die in this wilderness! Why is the LORD taking us to that land to fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be carried off! <u>It would be better for us to go back to Egypt!</u>" And <u>they said to one another, "Let us head back for Egypt."</u></p>	<p>Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembled congregation of the Israelites. And Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, of those who had scouted the land, rent their clothes and exhorted the whole Israelite community: "The land that we traversed and scouted is an exceedingly good land. If the LORD is pleased with us, He will bring us into that land, a land that flows with milk and honey, and give it to us; only you must not rebel against the LORD. Have no fear then of the people of the country, for they are our prey: their protection has departed from them, but the LORD is with us. Have no fear of them!" As the whole community threatened to pelt them with stones, the Presence of the LORD appeared in the Tent of Meeting to all the Israelites. And the LORD said to Moses, "How long will this people spurn Me, and how long will they have no faith in Me despite all the signs that I have performed in their midst?"</p>
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7. ***"The Lord is Righteous in All His Ways," R. Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, at 160-63***

The *hurban* was unexpected . . . But this is very strange and requires an explanation. Why, indeed, did they not believe it? After all, the Babylonian Empire was the most powerful empire in antiquity! It certainly had the ability to do whatever it wanted. The answer is that no one believed there was anything in the world strong enough to defeat Jerusalem and the Beit haMikdash. People assumed that the Jewish people, and especially the warriors for Zion and Jerusalem, were somehow invincible. They were convinced that *Knesset Yisrael* had a certain quality, that the defenders of Jerusalem had a certain strength and heroism that would protect them and it from any attack. The faith of the Jews that *HaKadosh Baruckh Hu* would accept their prayers led them to conclude that Jerusalem could never and would never be conquered. Yes, the Babylonians might be successful for a while, and perhaps might even come very near to the gates of Jerusalem. Yes, the Jews might have some temporary reversals, but when the final battle took place, Jerusalem would be spared and the Jewish people would emerge victorious.

But then they got up in the morning and lo, contrary to their and everyone's expectations, they found the *Beit haMikdash* gone, Jerusalem in ruins, and the people sent into captivity.

This was the major tragedy of *hurban Yerushalayim*, not just that it happened, but that it happened *shavat*, suddenly, instantly.

In the *haftarah* of *Parshat Be-har* (Jer. 32:6-27), *HaKadosh Baruckh Hu* told Jeremiah to leave Jerusalem and go to Anatot and buy a field from his uncle. When he left, the *Beit HaMikdash* was still in its place, on its foundations. The priests had not moved from their place; they were performing the service as if nothing threatened their routine, as if Jerusalem still had the same full protection of "Each man under his grapevine and under his fig tree" (I Kings 5:5) as in the time of David and Solomon. But when Jeremiah returned from consummating the real estate transaction, he found the *Beit HaMikdash* gone. *Hazal* tell us that people coming to Jerusalem were able to see from afar the smoke rising high from the Temple Mount. One of the miracles that occurred in the *Beit HaMikdash* was that the wind did not disperse the pillar of smoke rising from the altar (*Avot 5:5*). After concluding the business transaction with his uncle, Jeremiah returned to Jerusalem, and as he drew near to the city, he lifted his eyes to see the pillar of smoke. But this time he did not see it, and it was then he understood what had happened.

Jeremiah was the prophet of the *hurban*. *HaKadosh Baruckh Hu* had told him many times that the *hurban* would strike, that Jerusalem would be wiped out, and the *Beit HaMikdash* set afire and consumed by flames. Yes, he often beheld a vision of the *hurban*. Yes, he was the messenger of G-d sent to speak to the people about the *hurban*. Yes, he tried to prevent the *hurban*. But even he did not realize that it would happen so soon. When he left the *Beit HaMikdash*, he had every intention of returning to it. But when he drew close to Jerusalem, it struck him, suddenly... This is *shavat*, suddenly, unexpectedly. *Hazal* also tell us (*Gittin 57a*) that half the inhabitants of Tur Malka were celebrating while the other half had already begun to be destroyed. Those who were celebrating simply did not know and could not imagine what was happening. On the contrary, they thought that the *hurban* could never happen.

III. What Comes After the Sin and Punishment?

8. **Bamidbar 15:1-2**

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to the Israelite people and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you to settle in ...

9. **Ramban, Bamidbar 15:2- Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman, a/k/a Nachmanides,**
b. 1194, Spain, d. 1270, Acre, Israel

When you arrive into the land in which you will dwell. After Hashem promised the sons that they would come into the Land, He added to the laws of the offerings -- that they would bring wine-offerings once they entered the Land. Perhaps this was said now to comfort them and to assure them, for they were in despair. They thought: Who knows what will be at the end of forty years? Maybe the sons will sin as well? Therefore Hashem saw fit to comfort them. The commandments that depend on the Land of Israel implied a promise that they would enter the Land and inherit it.

IV. Communal Loss and Healing

10. **Hoshea 2 (Haftarah for Parshat Bamidbar)**

[The number of the people of Israel shall be like that of the sands of the sea], which cannot be measured or counted; and instead of being told, ["You are Not-My-People,"] they shall be called Children-of-the-Living-God. The people of Judah and the people of Israel shall assemble together and appoint one head over them; and they shall rise from the ground—for marvelous shall be the day of Jezreel! Oh, call your brothers "My People," And your sisters "Lovingly Accepted!"

Rebuke your mother, rebuke her— For she is not My wife And I am not her husband—
And let her put away her harlotry from her face And her adultery from between her breasts. Else will I **strip her naked** And leave her as on the day she was born: And I will make her **like a wilderness, Render her like desert land**, And let her **die of thirst**. I will also **disown her children**; For they are now a **harlot's brood**, In that their mother has played the harlot, She that conceived them has **acted shamelessly**— Because she thought, **"I will go after my lovers**, Who supply my bread and my water, My wool and my linen, My oil and my drink." Assuredly, I will **hedge up her roads with thorns And raise walls against her**, And she shall not find her paths. **Pursue her lovers as she will, She shall not overtake them; And seek them as she may, She shall never find them.** Then she will say, "I will go and return To my first husband, For then I fared better than now." And she did not consider this: It was I who bestowed on her The new grain and wine and oil; I who lavished silver on her And gold—which they used for Baal. Assuredly, I will **take back My new grain in its time And My new wine in its season, And I will snatch away My wool and My linen That serve to cover her nakedness.** Now **will I uncover her shame In the very sight of her lovers, And none shall save her from Me.** And I will **end all her rejoicing: Her festivals, new moons, and sabbaths— All her festive seasons.** I will **lay waste her vines and her fig trees**, Which she thinks are a fee She received from her lovers; **I will turn them into brushwood, And beasts of the field shall devour them.** Thus **will I punish her** For the days of the Baalim, On which she brought them

offerings; When, decked with earrings and jewels, She would go after her lovers, Forgetting Me —declares the LORD.

Assuredly, I will speaK coaxingly to her And lead her through the wilderness And speaK to her tenderly. I will give her her vineyards from there, And the Valley of Achor as a plowland of hope. There she shall respond as in the days of her youth, When she came up from the land of Egypt. And in that day —declares the LORD— You will call [Me] Ishi, And no more will you call Me Baali. For I will remove the names of the Baalim from her mouth, And they shall nevermore be mentioned by name. In that day, I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the ground; I will also banish bow, sword, and war from the land. Thus I will let them lie down in safety. And I will espouse you forever: I will espouse you with righteousness and justice, And with goodness and mercy, And I will espouse you with faithfulness; Then you shall be devoted to the LORD. In that day, I will respond —declares the LORD— I will respond to the sky, And it shall respond to the earth; And the earth shall respond With new grain and wine and oil, And they shall respond to Jezreel. I will sow her in the land as My own; And take Lo-ruhamah back in favor; And I will say to Lo-ammi, “You are My people,” And he will respond, “[You are] my God.”

11. Rashi, Hoshea 2:1

What is the connection between the punishment and the consolation that are adjacent to each other in one divine speech? Our Rabbis explained in *Pesachim*: Hoshea sensed about himself that he sinned in saying "Exchange them" so he stood up and requested mercy for them. And in the *Sifrei Devei Rav Parshat Vayeshev* it says: Yisrael dwelled in Shittim. We have learned that Rebbe said: There are parshiot that are joined to each other but are as far from each other as east from west. "For you are not my nation" "And the number of Bnei Yisrael will be like the sand of the sea." What is the connection of this to that? It is a parable to a king who became angry at his wife. He sent for a scribe to come and write her a *get*. By the time the scribe arrived, the king was appeased to his wife. The king said: Is it possible that the scribe should leave here in opposition - that is to say, that his heart would be divided and astonished, saying "Why did he send for me?" So he said to him, "Come and write that I am doubling her ketubah." And according to this *pshat*, this is the reason for this juxtaposition of "For you are not My people and I am not your G-d." I will make it seem as if I am not yours, and you will be exiled among the nations, and even there you will multiply and flourish, and you will repent to return to Me with your hearts as it says through Moshe "You will return to your heart among the all of the nations where Hashem exiled you," "And Hashem will return your captivity," so too, here, "Bnei Yehuda and Bnei Yisrael gathered together."

V. The Nature of Individual vs. Communal Avelut (Mourning)

12. *Out of the Whirlwind*, Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, pp. 11-12, 29-30

The precept of *avelut*, as I indicated above, rests completely upon this Jewish doctrine of human freedom from emotional coercion. . . Judaism says with admirable realism: Of course every event, good or bad, is planned by the Almighty. So too is death. Man can do little to change the course of events; rather, he must surrender to G-d's inscrutable will. Yet submission to a higher will must not prevent man from experiencing these emotions which are precipitated by a confrontation with existential absurdity, with the total disregard for and complete indifference to human interests manifested, *prima facie*, by natural law.

Judaism does not want man to rationalize evil or to theologize it away. It challenges him to defy evil and, in the case of death, to give vent to his distress. Both rationalizing and theologizing harden the human heart and make it insensitive to disaster. Man, Judaism says, must act like a human being. He must cry, weep, despair, grieve and mourn as if he could change the cosmic laws by exhibiting those emotions. In times of distress and sorrow, these emotions are noble even though they express the human protest against iniquity in nature and also pose an unanswerable question concerning justice in the world. The Book of Job was not written in vain. Judaism does not tolerate hypocrisy and unnatural behavior which is contrary to human sensitivity . . . I want the sufferer to act as a human being, G-d says. Let him not suppress his humanity in order to please Me.

....

In individual mourning, betrothal is forbidden. Man, vanquished by death, suffers self-degradation. There is no use continuing the struggle, and he submits himself to his cruel fate. But it is permissible to betrothe on Tish'ah be'Av. The whole dimension of despair and resignation, the notion of the mourner being unworthy of his own existential experience, sitting like a leper on a heap of ashes, bankrupt and forlorn, is contrary to the very gist of *avelut de'rabbim*. There, the mourner is not the individual but the nation, the covenantal community, which must never lose hope or faith. No matter how difficult times are, no matter how great the loss is, however dreary and bleak the present seems, the future shines with a brilliant glow full of promise. The messianic hope has never vanished; the people have never been enveloped by the dark night of despair.

While the Temple was being consumed by the purple flames of destruction, R. Yohanan ben Zakkai was already planning the future redemption. He introduced *takkanot zekher la'mikdash*, ritual reminders that although we have lost a Temple built by human hands, we will instead find a sanctuary constructed by the Divine hand, " ... the sanctuary, O L-rd, which Thy hands have established" (Ex. 15:17). The more intense the callousness, the drearier the boredom, the more cruel and ruthless were the Roman edicts of religious persecution -- the louder Rabbi Akiva used to laugh at the dismal, detestable present and the stronger was his faith in the future (*Makkot 24b*).

Nehamah, consolation, is intertwined in the texture of *avelut de-rabbim*. There the whole method of manifesting despair is out of context and contradicts the very essence of *avelut de-rabbim*, which is a dialectical moving between grief and hope, darkness and a dazzling light, spiritual emptiness and a transcendent vision, bleak autumn and a glowing summer.

13. ***The L-rd is Righteous in All His Ways*, Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, at 29-30**

The *Gemara* (*Taanit 29a*) says that according to Rabbi Yohanan, the *yom ha'avelut* or the *yom ha-ta'anit* on *Tish'ah be'Av* should have been established not on the ninth of Av but on the tenth, because most of the *Beit haMikdash* was actually burned and destroyed on the tenth and not on the ninth. And the *Yerushalmi* (*Taanit 4:6*) says that some *Amora'im*, Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi and Rabbi Abun, observed both fast days, the ninth and the tenth (see Tur, *Orah Hayyim 558*). But how could they do this? The enactment was for only one day of mourning! After all, one is not permitted to sleep in the *sukkah* on *Shemini Atzeret* because it is a violation of *bal tosif*, adding to the *mitzvot* (*Eiruvim 96a*, *Rosh haShanah 28b*). How could they observe two days of *Tish'ah be'Av*?

...

The Rambam explains that there is no *bal tosif* as far as *Tish'ah be'Av* is concerned because there is no such thing as *Kol ha'mit'abel al Yerushalayim yhoter mi-dai*." He writes that it is considered meritorious (*zechut hi lo*) to elaborate one's mourning for Jerusalem (*Torat ha-Adam*, Chavel ed., p.242). One cannot "over-mourn" for the destruction of Jerusalem. If one feels that one has not mourned enough for Jerusalem, one may go ahead and establish an additional day for oneself. There would be *bal tosif* on *Sukkot* but there is no *bal tosif* for the mourning over Jerusalem. There is no maximum to the *avelut* for Jerusalem . . . *Avelut Yerushalayim* is an endless gesture.

14. **Isaiah 1:1-27**

The prophecies of Isaiah son of Amoz, who prophesied concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, For the LORD has spoken: "I reared children and brought them up— And they have rebelled against Me! An ox knows its owner, An ass its master's crib: Israel does not know, My people takes no thought." Ah, sinful nation! People laden with iniquity! Brood of evildoers! Depraved children! They have forsaken the LORD, Spurned the Holy One of Israel, Turned their backs [on Him]. Why do you seek further beatings, That you continue to offend? Every head is ailing, And every heart is sick. *From head to foot No spot is sound: All bruises, and welts, And festering sores— Not pressed out, not bound up, Not softened with oil. Your land is a waste, Your cities burnt down; Before your eyes, the yield of your soil Is consumed by strangers— A wasteland as overthrown by strangers! Fair Zion is left Like a booth in a vineyard, Like a hut in a cucumber field, Like a city beleaguered. Had not the LORD of Hosts Left us some survivors, We should be like Sodom, Another Gomorrah.*

Hear the word of the LORD, You chieftains of Sodom; Give ear to our God’s instruction, You folk of Gomorrah! “What need have I of all your sacrifices?” Says the LORD. “I am sated with burnt offerings of rams, And suet of fatlings, And blood of bulls; And I have no delight In lambs and he-goats. That you come to appear before Me— Who asked that of you? Trample My courts no more; Bringing oblations is futile, Incense is offensive to Me. New moon and Sabbath, Proclaiming of solemnities, Assemblies with iniquity, I cannot abide. Your new moons and fixed seasons Fill Me with loathing; They are become a burden to Me, I cannot endure them. And when you lift up your hands, I will turn My eyes away from you; Though you pray at length, I will not listen. Your hands are stained with crime—

Wash yourselves clean; Put your evil doings Away from My sight. Cease to do evil; Learn to do good. Devote yourselves to justice; Aid the wronged. Uphold the rights of the orphan; Defend the cause of the widow. “Come, let us reach an understanding, —says the LORD. *Be your sins like crimson, They can turn snow-white; Be they red as dyed wool, They can become like fleece.*” If, then, you agree and give heed, You will eat the good things of the earth;

But if you refuse and disobey, You will be devoured [by] the sword.— For it was the LORD who spoke. *Alas, she has become a harlot,* The faithful city That was filled with justice, Where righteousness dwelt— But now murderers. Your silver has turned to dross; Your wine is cut with water. Your rulers are rogues And cronies of thieves, Every one avid for presents And greedy for gifts; They do not judge the case of the orphan, And the widow’s cause never reaches them.

Assuredly, this is the declaration Of the Sovereign, the LORD of Hosts, The Mighty One of Israel: “Ah, I will get satisfaction from My foes; I will wreak vengeance on My enemies! I will turn My hand against you, And smelt out your dross as with lye, And remove all your slag: *I will restore your magistrates as of old, And your counselors as of yore. After that you shall be called City of Righteousness, Faithful City.*” Zion shall be saved in the judgment; Her repentant ones, in the retribution.

15. Table comparing Isaiah and Torah (Parshat Breishit)

Isaiah Chapter 1	Breishit Chapters 2-3
If, then, you agree and give heed, You will <i>eat the good things of the earth</i> (1:19)	And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “ <i>Of every tree of the garden you are free to eat</i> ” (Gen. 2:16)
But if you refuse and disobey, You will be devoured [by] <i>the sword</i> .— For it was the LORD who spoke. (1:20)	He drove the man out, and stationed east of the garden of Eden the cherubim and the <i>fiery ever-turning sword</i> , to guard the way to the tree of life. (Gen. 2:24)
<i>Alas (aichah)</i> , she has become a harlot (1:21)	The LORD God called out to the man and said to him, “ <i>Where are you?</i> ” (<i>Va'yomer lo ayekah</i>)(Gen. 3:9)

16. **Ramban, introduction to Sefer Bamidbar**

And this book is all about *mitzvot* relevant to that particular time, which Bnei Yisrael were commanded when they stood in the *midbar*, and the miracles that were done for them, to tell all of the acts of Hashem that He did for them to act wondrously. And it tells that He began to give their enemies over to them by the sword, and commanded how to divide the land for them. And this book has no *mitzvot* which are binding upon the generations except for a few *mitzvot* related to sacrifices, which He began in *Sefer Hakohanim (Vayikra)* and their explanations were not completed there so they were completed in this book.