

Redemption and/as Tragedy **Playful (Im)Piety #1**

What is this “book”? <https://photos.app.goo.gl/SxDkriyCVSvZYBUj8>

1. Two Background Verses

Jeremiah 30:1-7

“For days are coming”—declares the Lord—“when I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel and Judah, said the Lord; and I will bring them back to the land that I gave their fathers, and they shall possess it.”

And these are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and Judah. Thus said the Lord: “We have heard cries of panic, terror without relief. Ask and see: Surely men do not give birth! Why then do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor? Why is every face turned green?

Ah, that day is awesome; there is none like it! It is a time of trouble for Jacob, but he shall be delivered from it.”

Amos 5:18-20

Ah, you who wish for the day of the Lord! Why should you want the day of the Lord? It will be darkness, not light! Like a man who runs from a lion, only to be attacked by a bear; if he comes indoors, and leans his hand on the wall, he is bitten by a snake. Surely the day of the Lord will be not light, but darkness, blackest night without a glimmer.

2. Redemption and/as Tragedy in 149 Words

Bavli Sanhedrin 98b

Rabbi Yoḥanan said, “The Messiah should come, but I don’t want to see him.”

Reish Lakish said,

“Why did Rabbi Yoḥanan say this?

You might say that it is because of the verse (Amos 5:19)—but you can find that occurring in our times:

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When a man goes out to the field and is stopped by a Centurion—it is like a lion.

He comes into the city, and is stopped by a tax-collector—it is like a bear.

And then he comes into his own home, and finds his sons and daughters faint with hunger—it is as if a snake bit him.”

Rather, it is because it is written (Jeremiah 30:6), “Ask and see: Do men give birth? Then why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor? Why is every face turned green?”

What is the meaning of “every man” (*kol gever*)?

Rava bar Yitzhak said in the name of Rav, “The Almighty (*kol gevurah*).”

And what is the meaning of “every face turned green?”

Rabbi Yoḥanan said, “The residents of the upper realms and the residents of the lower realms. When God will say, ‘These people are the works of my hands, and those other people are also the works of my hands. How could I displace these for the sake of those?’”

Rav Pappa said, “This is like the folk saying, ‘When the ox falls while running, the horse replaces it in the pen.’”

Rashi (11th Century, France & Germany) to Sanhedrin 98b

[seeing this in context: hebrewbooks.org/shas.aspx?mesechta=24&daf=98b&format=pdf]

When an ox is hurt, its owner must move a horse into its pen. The owner is very fond of the ox, and would never have wanted to do this had the ox not fallen. And when the ox is healed from its fall, which could be today or tomorrow, it is painful for the owner to remove the horse and replace it with the ox, for he himself had placed the horse there.

So too God, after Israel’s fall, transferred their sovereignty to Gentiles. But when Israel repents and is redeemed, it will be painful for God to displace the nations from before Israel.

Kaddish de-Rabbanan

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