

## Daniel & Chanukah!

### 1. I Maccabees 1

60 And in keeping with the king's order, the women who had had their children circumcised were put to death, 61 with the babies hung from their necks; and they also killed their families and plundered those who had circumcised them. 62 And many in Israel gained might and resolved in their hearts not to eat anything common; 63 and they preferred to die rather than to be defiled by the food or to profane the holy covenant; and they did die.

### 2. I Maccabees 1

33 And they said to them, "Enough of this! Now come out and obey the king's account, and you will live!" 34 And they said, "We will not come out, nor will we obey the king's account to profane the day of the sabbaths." 35 Then the enemy hastened to war against them, 36 but they did not retaliate; nor did they throw stones at them, nor block up their own hiding places. 37 They said, "Let us all die in innocence; the heaven and the earth testify on our behalf that you destroy us unjustly." 38 So the officers and soldiers raised-up a war against them on the sabbaths, and they died, along with their women, and their children, and their livestock, to the number of 1,000 souls of humans. 39 And when Mattithijah and his friends learned about this, they mourned deeply for them. 40 And one man said to another, "If we all do as our brothers have done, and do not war against the nations for our souls and our traditions, they will soon destroy us from the earth." 41 And on that day, they took counsel, saying, "Let us make a war against every human who wars against us on the day of the sabbaths, so that we may not all die as our brothers died in the hiding places."

### 3. II Maccabees 7

Now it also happened, that seven brothers with their mother were arrested and tormented with whips and scourges by the king, to force them to eat illegal swine meat. 2 But one of them, acting as their spokesman, said, "What do you expect to ask and learn from us? For we are ready to die rather than transgress the laws of God received from our fathers."

### 4. IV Maccabees 16

For him also our father Abraham was zealous to sacrifice Isaac our progenitor, and didn't shudder at the sight of his own paternal hand descending down with the sword upon him. The righteous Daniel was cast to the lions; and Ananias, Azarias, and Misael were hurled into a fiery furnace, yet they endured through God. You, then, having the same faith toward God, don't be troubled.

### 5. III Maccabees 6

Now a certain Eleazar, a man famous among the priests of the country, who, on account of his age, had been allotted *the* right of being the eldest, and for all of his lifetime had been ornamented with excellence, restrained the elders around him from calling on the holy God, *and* prayed as follows: 2 "King of great-might, Almighty God Most-High, piloting the whole creation with pity, 3 look upon *the* seed of Abraham, O Father, upon children of *the* made holy Jacob, a people of your made-holy portion who are unrighteously perishing as strangers in a strange land. 4 Pharaoh with his multiplication of chariots, the former ruler of this Egypt, elevated with lawless audacity and a boasting tongue, you caused to perish together with his arrogant army by drowning them in the sea, manifesting *the* light of your mercy on *the* race of Israel. 5 "Sennacherib exulting in his innumerable forces, oppressive king of the Assyrians, who had taken the entire land under his hand by *the* spear and was soaring against your holy city, uttering burdensome *words* with boasting and audacity, you, O Master, shattered, clearly showing your might to many nations. 6 "The three comrades in Babelia who had voluntarily given their souls into a fire so as not to venerate the vain-things, you rescued unharmed, even to a hair, bedewing *the* extremely-fiery furnace *and* turning a flame against all their opponents. 7 "Daniel, who through the slanders of envy was hurled down into *the* earth to lions as food for beasts, you led up to *the* light unharmed. 8 "Also Jonah, wasting away in a belly of a sea-monster, you, Father, watched over *and* restored<sup>33</sup> unharmed to his entire house.

#### Sanhedrin 74a-74b

Rabbi Yoḥanan says in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yehotzadak: The Sages who discussed this issue counted the votes of those assembled and concluded in the upper story of the house of Nitza in the city of Lod: With regard to all other transgressions in the Torah, if a person is told: Transgress this prohibition and you will not be killed, he may transgress that prohibition and not be killed, except for those of idol worship, forbidden sexual relations, and bloodshed... When Rav Dimi came from Eretz Yisrael to Babylonia, he said that Rabbi Yoḥanan said: This was taught only when it is not a time of religious persecution. But in a time of religious persecution, even if they issued a decree about a minor mitzva, one must be killed and not transgress.

#### Gittin 57b

There was an incident involving four hundred boys and girls who were taken as captives for the purpose of prostitution. These children sensed on their own what they were expected to do, and they said: If we commit suicide and drown in the sea, will we come to eternal life in the World-to-Come? The oldest child among them expounded the verse: "The Lord said, I will bring back from Bashan, I will bring them back from the depths of the sea" (Psalms 68:23). "I will bring back from Bashan," i.e.,

#### 6. גמ' סנהדרין עד.-עד:

אמר רבי יוחנן משום רבי שמעון בן יהוודק: נימנו וגמרו בעלית בית נתזה בלוד: כל עבירות שבתורה אם אומרין לאדם עבור ואל תהרג - יעבור ואל יהרג, חוץ מעבודה זרה וגילוי עריות ושפיכות דמים... כי אתא רב דימי אמר רבי יוחנן: לא שנו אלא שלא בשעת השמד, אבל בשעת השמד - אפילו מצוה קלה יהרג ואל יעבור.

#### 7. גמ' גיטין נז:

מעשה בארבע מאות ילדים וילדות שנשבו לקלון הרגישו בעצמן למה הו מתבקשים אמרו אם אנו טובעין בים אנו באין לחיי העולם הבא דרש להו הגדול שבהו אמר ה' מבשן אשיב אשיב ממצולות ים מבשן אשיב מבין שיני אריה אשיב ממצולות ים אלו שטובעין בים פיון ששמעו ילדות כד קפצו

from between the teeth [bein shen] of the lion, and “I will bring them back from the depths of the sea” is referring to those who drown in the sea for the sake of Heaven. When the girls heard this, they all leapt and fell into the sea... Concerning them and others like them the verse states: “As For Your sake we are killed all the day long; we are reckoned as sheep for the slaughter” (Psalms 44:23).

### Shir Hashirim Rabbah 7

They immediately went to Ezekiel. They said to him as they said to Daniel: ‘Shall we prostrate ourselves to it or not?’ He said to them: ‘I have already received a tradition from my teacher Isaiah: “Hide for a brief moment until the fury has passed” (Isaiah 26:20). They said to him: ‘Do you want them to say that all the nations prostrate themselves to this idol?’ He said to them: ‘What do you say?’ They said to him: ‘We want to diminish it, in that we will be there and will not prostrate ourselves to it, so that they will say: All the nations prostrate themselves to this idol other than Israel.’ He said to them: ‘If that is your wish, wait for me until I consult the Omnipotent.’ That is what is written: “Men of the elders of Israel came to seek the Lord and they sat before me” (Ezekiel 20:1). Who were they? They were Hananya, Mishael, and Azarya. He said before the Holy One blessed be He: ‘Master of the universe, Hananya, Mishael, and Azarya request to give their lives for the sanctity of Your name. Will You stand by them or not?’ He said: ‘I will not stand by them.’ That is what is written: “Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel, and say to them...Do you come to seek Me? (Ezekiel 20:3). After you caused Me to destroy My house, to burn My Sanctuary, and to exile My children among the nations; after that you come to seek Me? “As I live, I will not acquiesce to you” (Ezekiel 20:3).

At that moment, Ezekiel wept, lamented, and wailed to himself: ‘Woe to the enemies of Israel, the remnant of Judah is lost. Only these remain from Judah, as it is stated: “Among them from the children of Judah were Daniel, Hananya, Mishael, and Azarya” (Daniel 1:6), and this is the answer that they receive?’ He was weeping and walking. When he arrived, they said to him: ‘What did the Holy One blessed be He say to you?’ He said to them: ‘I will not stand by you.’ They said to him: ‘Whether He stands or whether He does not stand, we are giving our lives to sanctify His name.’

כוֹלֵן וְנִפְלוּ לְתוֹךְ הַיָּם ... וַעֲלִיָּהֶם הַכְּתוּב אוֹמֵר כִּי עֲלִיָּד הַרְגֵנוּ  
כָּל הַיּוֹם נִחְשְׁבֵנו כְּצֹאן טִבְחָה

### 8. תוס' גמ' ע"ז יח. ד"ה ואל יחבל

ואל יחבל עצמו - אור"ת דהיכא שיראים פן יעבירו עובדי כוכבים לעבירה כגון ע"י יסורין שלא יוכל לעמוד בהם אז הוא מצוה לחבל בעצמו כי ההיא דגיטין (דף נו : ) גבי ילדים שנשבו לקלון שהטילו עצמם לים.

### 9. שיר השירים רבה (וילנא) פרשה ז

הִלְכוּ לָהֶם מִיַּד אֶצֶל יְחֻזְקָאֵל, אָמְרוּ לוֹ כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרוּ לְדַנְיָאֵל נִסְגֹּד לֵיהּ אוֹ לֹא, אָמַר לָהֶם כְּבָר מְקַבֵּל אֲנִי מִיִּשְׁעֵיהּ רַבִּי (ישעיה כו, כ) : חֲבִי כְּמַעַט רָגַע עַד יַעֲבֹר זַעַם. אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ מָה אַתָּה בְּעֵי דִיהוֹן אָמְרוּ הֲדִין צִלְמָא סְגִדִין לֵיהּ כָּל אַמְיָא, אָמַר לוֹן וּמָה אַתוֹן אָמְרוּ, אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ אֲנִי בְּעֵינֵי נִתְּוּ בֵּיהּ פִּגְסֵי דְנִיְהוּי תַּמְּוּ וְלֹא נִסְגֹּד לֵיהּ, בְּגִין דִּיהוֹן אָמְרוּ הֲדִין צִלְמָא כָּל אַמְיָא סְגִדִי לֵיהּ לְבַר מִיִּשְׁרָאֵל. אָמַר לָהֶם אִם כְּדַעְתְּכֶם הַמְתִּינוּ לִי עַד שֶׁאֶמְלֹךְ בְּגִבְרָה, הֲדָא הוּא דְכְּתִיב (יחזקאל כ, א) : בָּאוּ אֲנָשִׁים מִזְּקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְדַרְשׁ אֶת ה' וַיִּשְׁבוּ לִפְנֵי, וּמִי הָיוּ, אֵלוֹ חֲנַנְיָה מִיִּשְׁרָאֵל וְעֲזַרְיָה, אָמַר לְפָנֵי הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם חֲנַנְיָה מִיִּשְׁרָאֵל וְעֲזַרְיָה מִבְּקָשִׁים לְתוֹן נַפְשָׁם עַל קְדֻשַׁת שְׁמֵךְ, מִתְּקִים אֶת עֲלִיָּהֶן אוֹ לֹא, אָמַר לוֹ אֲנִי מִתְּקִים עֲלֵיָּהֶם, הֲדָא הוּא דְכְּתִיב (יחזקאל כ, ג) : בֶּן אֲדָם דְּבָר אֶת זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם וְגו' הַלְדַרְשׁ אֶתִּי אַתֶּם בָּאִים, מֵאַחַר שֶׁגִּרְמַתְּם לִי לְהַחְרִיב בֵּיתִי וְלִשְׂרֹף הֵיכָלִי וְלְהַגְלוֹת בְּנֵי לְבָיִן הָאֲמוֹת וְאַחַר כֵּן אַתֶּם בָּאִים לְדַרְשְׁנִי, (יחזקאל כ, ג) : חִי אֲנִי אִם אֲדַרְשׁ לָכֶם. בְּאוֹתָהּ שְׁעָה בָּכָה יְחֻזְקָאֵל וְקוֹנֵן וְהִלְלִיל בְּעַצְמוֹ וְאָמַר וַיִּלְשׁוּנָאֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבָדָה שְׁאֲרִית יְהוּדָה, שְׁלֹא נִשְׁתַּיֵּר מִיְהוּדָה אֶלָּא אֵלוֹ בְּלָבָד, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (דניאל א, ו) : וַיְהִי בָהֶם מִבְּנֵי יְהוּדָה דְּנִיָּאֵל חֲנַנְיָה מִיִּשְׁרָאֵל וְעֲזַרְיָה, וְזוֹ תְּשׁוּבָה בָּאָה לָהֶם, וְהָנָה בְּכִי וְאַזְזִיל, בִּין דְּאֲתָא אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ מָה אָמַר לָךְ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, אָמַר לָהֶם אֵינִי מִתְּקִים עֲלֵיכֶם, אָמְרוּ לוֹ בִּין מִתְּקִים בִּין שְׂאִין מִתְּקִים אֲנִי נוֹתְנִין נַפְשׁוֹתֵינוּ עַל קְדֻשַׁת שְׁמוֹ...