

The Weekly Haftorah

By: Reuben Ebrahimoff - The Haftorahman

The Haftorah for Parshat Va'aira

The Haftorah's Topic: Egypt's punishment for betraying Israel
in the time of the destruction of the 1st Temple

The Haftorah is read from the book of Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 28:25-29:21



The prophet Ezekiel by: Michelangelo

The connection of the Haftorah to the Parsha: The Parsha and the Haftorah speak about the punishment of Egypt. The Parsha speaks about the plagues that befell the Egyptians in Moses' time and the Haftorah predicts that Babylon will conquer Egypt in Pharaoh Chofra's time. The difference in time of when the Parsha took place and the Haftorah is about a thousand years.



Ezekiel refers to the **Egyptians** as Crocodiles.
Crocodiles were the rulers of the land & the sea.
The Pharaohs thought of themselves that way as well.

The storyline of this week's Haftorah: Yechezkel begins by telling Bnei Yisroel that Hashem will punish the Jewish Nation's enemies. Then Hashem will permit the

Jewish people to return to their homeland in the future. Yechezkel then has a prophecy that Bavel (Babylon) will conquer Pharaoh and Egypt. At the time of this prophecy, Jerusalem was surrounded by the Babylonians for approximately a year. The Jews were hoping to receive help from the Egyptians and Yechezkel's prophecy shattered that dream. Hashem was trying to convey to the Nation of Bnei Yisroel that they should rely on Him, and not other nations. The Haftorah then explains that Egypt would be desolate for 40 years, and that the people will be scattered among the nations. Egypt deserves this punishment because the people of Egypt promised to defend Israel against their enemies, but when it came time to help, they did not keep their word. The Haftorah concludes with the idea that that Nebuchadnezzar, King of Bavel, was allowed to conquer Egypt because of their betrayal against Bnei Yisroel.



The Statue of King Nebuchadnezzar, King of **Babylon**.
Ezekiel predicts that Nebuchadnezzar will destroy the Egyptians.

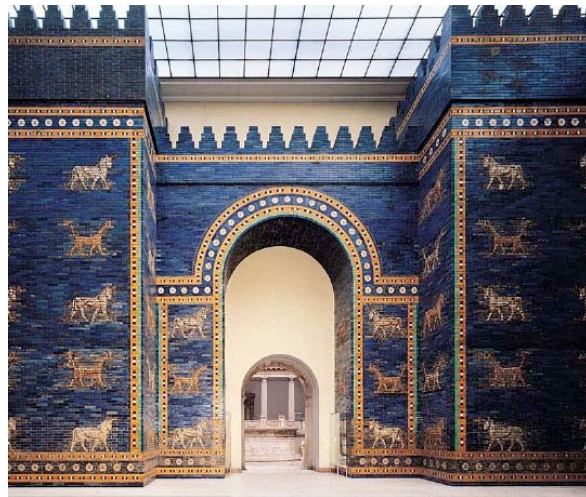
Yechezkel ben Buzi's Biography:

- The meaning of his name is "Hashem will strengthen."
- He was a Kohen.
- He prophesied just before the destruction of Jerusalem on Tishah Be'av (The 9th of Av). He was exiled in 597 B.C.E. Some of his visions were while he was in exile. He was a major prophet that recorded the warnings to the Jewish captives of Babylon. He was among 8000 exiles taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon soldiers. He died in Bavel.
- He saw the divine vision of the Ma'aseh Hamerkavah (Hashem's Throne).
- Yechezkel wrote his own book; his prophetic ministry lasted 20 years.



Ezekiel's the prophets Tomb is in Iraq

Famous Phrases: Yechezkel 36:26, "*v'hasirosi et lev ha'even m'bsarchem v'natati lachem laiv basar*" "And I shall remove the heart of stone from you and give you a heart of flesh".



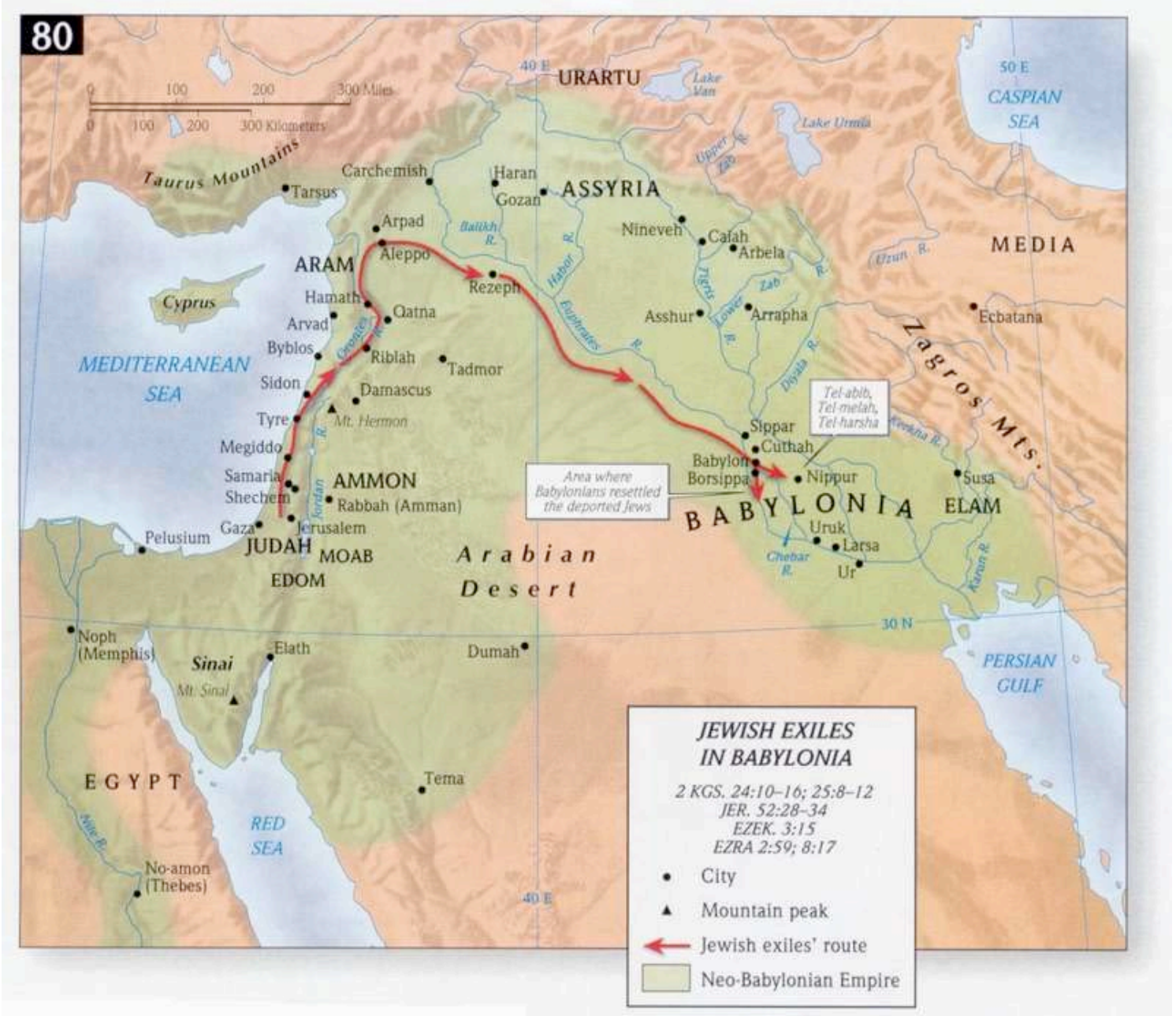
The Gates to Nebuchadnezzar's Palace

Haftorahman's lesson of the week: We see a direct connection between Hashem and man with regard to "midah kineged midah," measure for measure. Because Egypt did not keep Bnei Yisroel from being scattered and conquered, Hashem would not protect the Egyptians from becoming desolate. We need to remember that whatever we do, there are consequences to our actions. The punishment will be the flipside of the sin. There is a story of a father who found his son smoking in the backyard and promptly made his son smoke all the cigarettes in the pack. The son then proceeded to throw up many times and felt very ill. Suffice it to say, he never smoked again. This demonstrates the positive effect of "midah kineged midah." However, Hashem's retribution is more severe. Be very careful in life, for you never know the exact punishment you will receive for a sin.



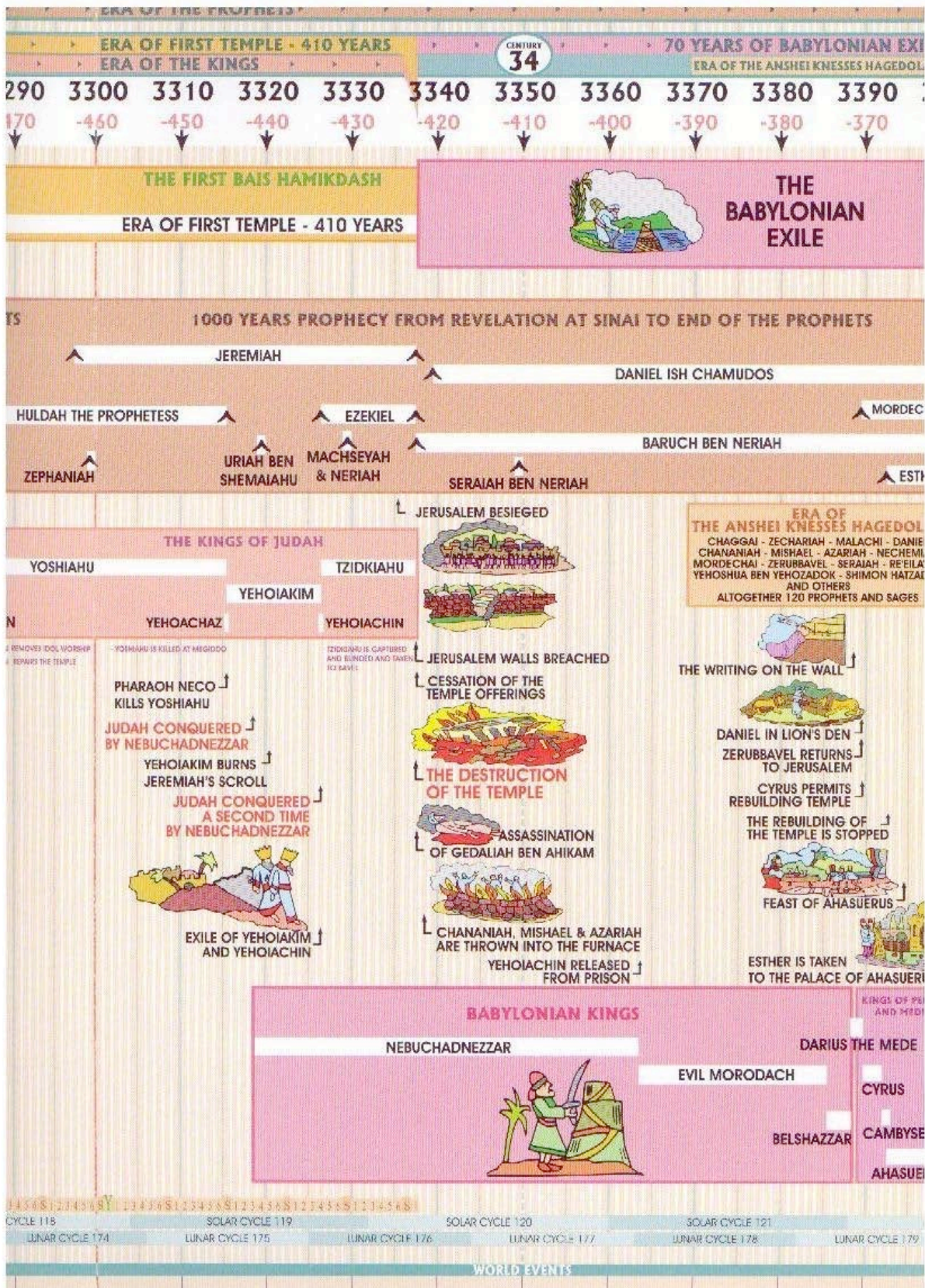
A statue of an Egyptian Pharaoh

Map: The Haftorah takes place in Bavel.



Map: Holman Bible Atlas

Timeline: These events took place about 2400 years ago.



Timeline: Ephraim Waxman Dor L'Dor Feldheim Publishing

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