



Hope in A Time of Darkness

SOURCE SHEET BY MOLLIE ANDRON & ZACH TRUBOFF

1 Ezekiel's vision of the Valley of Dry Bones is one of the most famous in the entire Bible. It seeks to offer hope to the Jewish people by promising them that even though the destruction of the Temple and their subsequent exile may feel like a death, God will ultimately redeem them and breathe life into the Jewish people once more.

Ezekiel 37:11-14

יחזקאל פרק לז:יא-יד

And He said to me, "O mortal, these bones are the whole House of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, our hope is gone; we are doomed.'

Prophecy, therefore, and say to them: Thus said the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves and lift you out of the graves, O My people, and bring you to the land of Israel.

You shall know, O My people, that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves and lifted you out of your graves.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּנ־אָדָם הָעֶצְמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה כָּל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
הֲמָה הֵנָּה אֲמֹרִים יָבֹשׁוּ עֶצְמוֹתַיִנו וְאָבְדָה תְּקוּמָנוּ
נִגְזְרָנוּ לָנוּ:

לְכֹן הִנְבֵּא וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה הִנֵּה
אֲנִי פֹתֵחַ אֶת־קְבֻרֹתֵיכֶם וְהֵעֲלִיתִי אֶתְכֶם
מִקְבֻרֹתֵיכֶם עִמִּי וְהִבֵּאתִי אֶתְכֶם אֶל־אֲדָמַת יִשְׂרָאֵל:

וַיִּדְעַתֶּם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה בְּפִתְחִי אֶת־קְבֻרֹתֵיכֶם
וּבְהֵעֲלוֹתִי אֶתְכֶם מִקְבֻרֹתֵיכֶם עִמִּי:

וְנָתַתִּי רוּחִי בְּכֶם וְחִיִּיתֶם וְהִנַּחְתִּי אֶתְכֶם
עַל־אֲדָמַתְכֶם וַיִּדְעֻתֶם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה דִּבְרֹתִי וְעָשִׂיתִי
נְאֻם־יְהוָה:

- ? In what ways have the Jewish people experienced this prophecy over the last century?
- ? Have you ever had an experience like this in your own life, a time when you lost hope only to find yourself eventually redeemed?

2 *Rebecca Solnit, Hope in the Dark, p. xiv*

Hope locates itself in the premises that we don't know what will happen and that in the spaciousness of uncertainty is room to act... Hope is an embrace of the unknown and the unknowable, an alternative to the certainty of both optimists and pessimists. Optimists think it will all be fine without our involvement; pessimists take the opposite position; both excuse themselves from acting. It's the belief that what we do matters even though how and when it may matter, who and what it may impact, are not things we can know beforehand. We may not, in fact, know them afterward either, but they matter all the same.

- ? In what ways is hope different from optimism?
- ? What kind of faith does hope require according to Rebecca Solnit?

Rebecca Solnit is a contemporary writer and activist whose works touch upon a variety of themes such as feminism, environmentalism, and human rights. This quote is taken from a collection of essays dedicated to the challenge of maintaining hope even in times when one's efforts to better the world remain thwarted.

3 Yehudah Amichai, Ein Yahav

יהודה עמיחי, עין יהב

A night drive to Ein Yahav in the Arava Desert,
a drive in the rain. Yes, in the rain.
There I met people who grow date palms,
there I saw tamarisk trees and risk trees,
there I saw hope barbed as barbed wire.
And I said to myself: That's true, hope needs to be
like barbed wire to keep out despair,
hope must be a mine field.

נסיעה לילית לעין יהב בערבה
נסיעה בגשם. כן בגשם.
שם פגשתי אנשים שמגדלים תמרים.
שם ראיתי עצי אשל ועצי אשליה.
שם ראיתי תקוה דוכרנית כמו תיל דוקרני
ואמרתי בלבי: אמת, התקוה צריכה להיות
כמו תיל כדי להגן עלינו מן היאוש.
התקוה צריכה להיות שדה מוקשים

- ? Why do you think hope needs to be vigorously protected?
- ? Can you think of a time that you had to defend a hope against attacks from others?

Return to this source sheet after you have listened to the Israel Story Podcast.

HaTikvah, Naftali Herz Imber

התקווה, נפתלי הרץ אימבר

As long as in the heart, within,
The soul of a Jew still yearns,
And onward, towards the ends of the east,
an eye still gazes toward Zion;

Our hope is not yet lost,
The two-thousand-year-old hope,
To be a free nation in our land,
The land of Zion and Jerusalem.

כל עוד בלבב פְּנִימָה
נֶפֶשׁ יְהוּדֵי הוֹמְיָה,
וּלְפָאֲתֵי מִזְרָח, קְדִימָה,
עֵין לְצִיּוֹן צוֹפִיָה,

עוד לא אָבְדָה תְּקוּוֹתֵנוּ,
הַתְּקוּוֹה בֵּת שְׁנוֹת אֲלָפִים,
לְהִיּוֹת עַם חֲפָשִׁי בְּאַרְצֵנוּ,
אֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם.

- ? Do you think that this hope is finite?
- ? Why do you think that we still yearn for Zion if the Jews have already returned to Zion?
- ? If you were to write an anthem for the Jewish people, what would be the central theme of it?