

The Gemara⁹ deduces the laws of protesting ownership within three years from the chapter in Yirmiyahu¹⁰ which is the Haftorah of Parshas Behar. The contents of this chapter are as follows:

King Tzidkiyahu imprisoned Yirmiyahu in the 'Chatzar HaMatara,' which Rashi explains, is a prison. However, throughout Tanach a prison is referred to as בית הסוהר, משמר or בית כלא, but never as a חצר המטרה.

King Tzidkiyahu justified imprisoning Yirmiyahu by saying, "Why are you prophesying saying, 'Hashem said I will give the city into the hands of the king of Babylon...'"

King Tzidkiyahu was a tzaddik. What was his complaint against Yirmiyahu? It is forbidden for a prophet to refrain from relating his prophecy¹¹. Did he expect Yirmiyahu to withhold his prophecy?

Some commentators explain that King Tzidkiyahu imprisoned Yirmiyahu in order to protect him from enemies who wanted to harm him for predicting the doom that would befall them were they not to correct their ways.

Yirmiyahu further relates that Hashem appeared to him saying that Chanamel his cousin will come to him to sell his field. Yirmiyahu was to buy this field as a symbolic act for the future - that there will yet be a return to Eretz Yisrael, and people will once again buy houses and fields. This will serve as a protest of the gentile takeover and will affirm the Jewish ownership of the land.

Rashi¹² notes that this prophecy came to Yirmiyahu in the Chatzar HaMatara. Why is it necessary for Rashi to inform us of the location where Yirmiyahu received the prophecy; of what meaning is it to us?

The Arizal revealed to his students the location of the Chatzar HaMatara among other holy sites auspicious for prayer. It is near the Shaar Shechem.

This seems unnecessary and out of place. The location of the Chatzar HaMatara should be of interest to archeologists and historians, but not to a man of G-d.

The Prophecies of the Chatzar HaMatara

Yirmiyahu was the prophet of doom; he predicted the destruction of the Bais HaMikdash and the ensuing exile. This is hinted to in his name, ירמי is similar to הרמה, removal. He had the tragic task of foretelling the removal of the Divine Presence from Yerushalayim and the Jewish people from their land. ירמי is also similar to מרירות, bitterness. His task was bitter indeed.

This is in contrast to Prophet ישעי, whose name is similar to ישועה, redemption. He had the fortunate task of predicting the delightful era of redemption.¹³

However, while he was incarcerated in the Chatzar HaMatara, a strange thing happened. Yirmiyahu - the prophet of exile - received prophecies containing delightful consolations and utopian vistas of future harmony that even Prophet Yeshaya did not merit!

"[The Jewish people] will be for me a nation and I will be for them a G-d. I will give them one heart and one path to fear Me all the days so that it should be good for them and for their children after them... and I will be happy to do good for them and I will plant them in this land with truth, with My whole heart and with My whole soul... once again it will be heard...in the cities of Yehuda and in the courtyards of Yerushalayim...a voice of joy, a voice of gladness, the voice of a groom, the voice of a bride, a voice proclaiming, 'give thanks to Hashem, the Master of legions, for Hashem is good, for His kindness is forever'..."¹⁴

What happened? How was Yirmiyahu's role altered?

More Questions

Reading further into the Haftorah, we face more difficulties. Yirmiyahu prays to Hashem asking, "Why are you requesting of me to buy the land from Chanamel as a symbolic act of the return of exiles? The land is being handed over to the (invading armies of the) Kasdim anyhow?"

Hashem answered, "True, but they will eventually return."

Yirmiyahu's question is very difficult to understand. Did he doubt that the Jewish people would ever return to Eretz Yisrael? The Torah is full of promises that the exile will only be temporary.

This also leads us to question the necessity of the entire symbolic purchase of Yirmiyahu. The Torah itself states that:

"וּשָׁב ה' אֱלֹקֵיךָ אֶת שְׁבוּיֹתֶיךָ וְרָחֲמֶךָ וְשָׁב וּקְבָצֶךָ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר הִפְיָצֶךָ ה' אֱלֹקֵיךָ שָׁמָּה. אִם יְהִי נִדְחָךְ בְּקֶצֶה הַשָּׁמַיִם מִשָּׁם יִקְבָּצֶךָ ה' אֱלֹקֵיךָ וּמִשָּׁם יִקְחֶךָ: וְהִבִּיאֶךָ ה' אֱלֹקֵיךָ אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יָרְשׁוּ אֲבוֹתֶיךָ וִירְשָׁתָהּ וְהִיטִבְךָ וְהִרְבֶּךָ מֵאֲבוֹתֶיךָ."¹⁵

'And Hashem, your G-d, will return your captives and He will have compassion for you, and He will return and gather you from all the nations that He had scattered you there. If you will be banished to the end of Heaven, from there Hashem, your G-d, will gather you and from there He will take you. And Hashem, your G-d, will bring you to the land which your ancestors inherited, and He will do good for you, and He will increase you [more than] your ancestors.'

Yirmiyahu is a Reincarnation of King Shlomo

In the verses of this chapter we find Hashem saying to Yirmiyahu, *על אפי ועל חמתי היתה לי העיר*, "My wrath and anger was upon this city from the day it was built."

This refers to King Shlomo's act of marrying the daughter of Pharaoh the night before the inauguration of the Bais HaMikdash, which caused him to wake up late - thereby delaying the offering of the daily morning sacrifice¹⁶.

How is the sin of Shlomo relevant over here, at the end of the book of Yirmiyahu?

There are two men who had opposite fortunes in life. Shlomo led the building of the Bais HaMikdash versus Yirmiyahu who had the unlucky task of forewarning and witnessing its destruction.

Mystical teachings reveal that Yirmiyahu is a reincarnation of King Shlomo. In an earlier lifetime he had planted the seeds for the destruction of the Temple by marrying the daughter of Pharaoh and delaying the offering of the first morning sacrifice. He now had to prophesize about and live through its destruction.

The Chasam Sofer explains that Chanamel sold his field to Yirmiyahu because he knew that Yirmiyahu was a tzaddik. His merit would ensure that the field would be safe from the invading armies.

However, Yirmiyahu suspected that his merit would not protect Chanamel's field. To the contrary, he was at fault for the destruction and exile of Judea.

Yirmiyahu countered to Hashem, upon being commanded to buy the field, saying, *ומשלם עון אבות*, "and repay the sins of the fathers to the laps of the children." 'Children' can also refer to a later reincarnation of a person. The sin of his father – his previous incarnation as Shlomo – is carried over to him as Yirmiyahu. It is unfair for him to buy Chanamel's field, as it will definitely be destroyed due to his past sins.

Hashem responded by saying, *"אני ה' אלקי כל בשר"*, 'I am the Hashem, the G-d of all flesh.' The body you currently inhabit did not sin. The rule that sins are transferred from previous lifetimes only holds true if in the next lifetime one continues to sin. Since Yirmiyahu was completely righteous in this lifetime, his merit *will* protect the field of Chanamel.

The Greatness of the Chatzar HaMatara

The verse mentions that the Chatzar HaMatara was located in the king's palace. This is peculiar, because the royal palace does not normally house a prison.

King David lived in Yerushalayim for thirty-three years. His palace was a modest one – practical, but not opulent. The Zohar teaches that King David considered himself a pauper. Similarly, he described himself in Tehillim¹⁷ saying “I did not seek matters too great and wondrous for me.” He did not recline in honor as other kings, and it was not beneath his dignity to dirty his hands when engaged in determining practical application of Torah law¹⁸. Conversely, King Shlomo conducted himself in a lavish royal fashion. He therefore built himself a magnificent palace that took thirteen years to build. He was praised for building the Bais HaMikdash before his own palace and for hastening its completion¹⁹.

(Tzaddikim can have different manners of conducting themselves. Some lived extremely simply; and others, like R' Yisrael of Rizhin, conducted themselves in a royal manner, as a reflection of the grandeur of the Kingdom of Hashem.)

When the royal household moved to the new palace, the old palace was abandoned and later used for incarcerating criminal dignitaries (just as Pharaoh had a separate prison for dignitaries, as mentioned in Breishis 39:20). This is the prison in which Yirmiyahu was imprisoned; the old royal palace.

This prison, being the former home of King David, had an extraordinary holiness to it. While living there, King David composed chapters of Tehillim and engaged in singing and praising Hashem. There he taught Shlomo, his son, the laws of building the Bais HaMikdash. From this palace, King David directed the erection of the foundations of the Bais HaMikdash.

It was because of this holiness that the prison was named Chatzar - courtyard of - HaMatara. The Zohar teaches that the Divine Presence is called Matara, which means protection, because the Divine Presence protects the Jewish nation.

The foundations of the Bais HaMikdash were never destroyed. They will be part of the Third Bais HaMikdash from the era of Mashiach, when the supernatural will reign. Yovel's power of returning everything to its source is due to its being of the realms of the supernatural. (This was explained last week.)

The Chatzar HaMatara – from where the building of the foundations of the Third Bais HaMikdash was directed - has the holiness of Yovel. מטרָה when the letters are completely spelled out, מִמֵּ טִית רִישׁ הִי, is gematria²⁰ לווֹ תהיה לוֹ, 'אחרי נמכר גאלה תהיה לוֹ', 'After [a Jewish man] is sold [to a gentile], he should be redeemed' (they both equal 1024).

King Tzidkiyahu's Intent in Imprisoning Yirmiyahu in the Chatzar HaMatarah

Many years earlier, King Yoshiyahu had sent for Chuldah the Prophetess to relay the word of Hashem, and did not summon Yirmiyahu. He did this because women are compassionate, and he hoped that - as a woman - she would relate a more positive prophecy than Yirmiyahu²¹. From here we deduce that the nature of the prophet affects his prophecies.

So, too, the place where the prophet receives his prophecy affects it.

King Tzidkiyahu locked Yirmiyahu in the Chatzar HaMatara because he thought, “Why does Yirmiyahu prophesize doom? It is because he is a soul of exile!” He hoped to mitigate the effect of his personality by at least placing him in the Chatzar HaMatara, a place of Yovel.

His goal was that the atmosphere of redemption that reigned in the Chatzar HaMatara should influence the prophecy that Yirmiyahu would receive, and the edict of the destruction would be rescinded.

The plan of King Tzidkiyahu worked to some degree. In the Chatzar HaMatara, Yirmiyahu received prophecies of consolation far surpassing the greatest ones of Yeshaya, who was the prophet of redemption.

Among the prophecies received by Yirmiyahu in the Chatzar HaMatara are the famous words עוֹד "עוֹד יִשְׁמַע בְּעִיר יְהוּדָה וּבְחֻצוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם קוֹל שֹׁשׁוֹן וְקוֹל שִׂמְחָה קוֹל חֲתָן וְקוֹל כְּלָה" 'Once again it will be heard in the cities

of Yehuda and the courtyards of Yerushalayim a voice of joy, a voice of gladness, a voice of a groom and a voice of a bride.'

A husband and wife were originally one in Adam. When Chavah was separated from Adam, all couples were separated from each other. With marriage, they are returned to their original state of being; they are again united as one. Marriage is a form of Yovel.

Therefore, "יובל הוא שנת" is gematria (numerically equal to) "קול ששון וקול שמחה קול חתן וקול כלה" ²²"החמשים שנה תהיה לכם" (they both equal 2078).

A Tzaddik Leaves an Impression of Holiness

The Chatzar HaMatara was the place that King David, the soul of prayer, lived for thirty-three years. Over there he poured out his heart in prayer and authored many chapters of Tehillim. בחצר המטרה is gematria לדוד תפילה, a prayer for David (they both equal 559).

The Imrei Emes once traveled to the city of Sanz. He pointed to a certain house and proclaimed, "The Sanzer Rav must have resided there." Later it was verified that indeed the Sanzer Rav had lived there. A holiness was etched into the place where he had once served Hashem and was discernible to those with untainted vision.

R' Yisrael of Syatin passed by a house in Tel Aviv and asked, "Who lived there?" After inquiring, it was revealed that the Belzer Rebbe had lived there for a few months upon his arrival in Eretz Yisrael.

The place where a tzaddik served Hashem is laden with holiness. This is why the Arizal revealed the location of the Chatzar HaMatara. It is the place where King David prayed and is among the places auspicious for prayer. ואני תפילה, and I [King David] am prayer, is gematria מטרה, in the form of gematria called מט + מטר + מטר + מ (they both equal 592).

Yirmiyahu's Past Precluded a Complete Redemption

Yirmiyahu realized that he was in a place auspicious for effecting redemption and prayed for a salvation. This is why he prayed, saying, "Why are you requesting of me to buy the land from Chanamel as a symbolic act of the return of exiles? The land is being handed over to the (invading armies of the) Kasdim?"

Yirmiyahu's cry was not one of confusion, but one of beseeching and prayer. His intent was - if I am in a place of Yovel, let me beg for a complete nullification of the decree to uproot the Jewish people.

However, although the holiness of Yovel is eternal, it can be temporarily suspended. From the verse "ואם יהי' היובל לבני ישראל" ²³, 'If the Yovel will be for the Jewish people', Rashi infers that the Yovel will be temporarily suspended due to sin and exile.

The suspension of Yovel due to the destruction of the Bais HaMikdash is due to the sin of King Shlomo marrying the daughter of Pharaoh. Therefore, בת פרעה, the daughter of Pharaoh, is gematria "ואם" יהיה היבל לבני ישראל (they both equal 757).

(The intent of King Shlomo in marrying the daughter of Pharaoh was, of course, for the sake of Heaven. He intended to subdue the evil forces of Egypt by marrying their princess. His mistake was that through this the daily morning sacrifice was delayed. However, this was orchestrated by Hashem, Who sometimes causes righteous people to make mistakes for the good of the Jewish people. This concept is explained at length by the Ohr HaChaim, beginning Parshas Acharei.)

Protesting for the Soul of Yirmiyahu

Yirmiyahu was first King Shlomo. But he had been in this world before that, as Betzalel. The one who built the Mishkan also built the Bais HaMikdash. He will once again appear as Mashiach and build the third and final Bais HaMikdash²⁴. We are taught that the Mishkan - the work of Betzalel - and the Bais HaMikdash - the work of King Shlomo - will both be included in the building of the Third Bais HaMikdash.

From the narrative of Yirmiyahu buying Chanamel's field we deduce the law that one must protest ownership of property within three years.

Yirmiyahu was the third incarnation of this great and holy soul. With the purchase of the field of Chanamel to protest the gentile conquest of Eretz Yisrael, he was symbolizing a protest for his own soul. He symbolized that he himself will return and rebuild the Bais HaMikdash. The essence of all three incarnations will unite to build the Third Bais HaMikdash. Therefore, בצלאל שלמה ירמיהו is gematria נכון "יהי' הר בית ה' 25" 'The [Third] Bais Hamikdash will be ready' (they both equal 799).

The Haftorah of the parsha of Yovel protests: The soul that was once great will be restored to its former glory.

After Lag B'Omer, we read the parshios of Behar and Bechukosai, the parshios of Yovel. In Parshas Behar we read of the laws of Yovel, and in Parshas Bechukosai, after concluding the forewarning of exile and its perils - Hashem promises that we will return, in the spirit of Yovel.

We read these parshios in preparation for Shavuot, which is the fiftieth day of Sefirah and shines with the light of Yovel.

ויקום והי' באחרית הימים נכון יהי' הר בית השם בראש ההרים ונשא מגבעות ונהרו אליו כל הגוים והלכו עמים רבים ואמרו לנו ונעלה אל הר ה' בית אלקי יעקב ויורנו מדרכיו ונלכה באורחותיו כי מציון תצא תורה ודבר ה' מירושלים אמן

May [the promise be] fulfilled: "And it will be in the end of days, the mountain of Hashem's house will be ready on the summit of the hills, higher than the mountains, and all the nations will flock to Him and many nations will come and they will say, 'Come let us ascend the mountain of Hashem, to the house of the G-d of Yaakov, and He will teach us of his ways and we will go in His paths, because from Tzion comes Torah and the word of Hashem comes from Yerushalayim.'"

¹ ויקרא כה:כג

² מלאכי ג:יא

³ מלכים א' ח:לב

⁴ ברכות דף ה ע"ב רש"י שם

⁵ איוב יח:ד

⁶ ויקרא כו:מב

⁷ שמות ח"ב דף נ"ג ע"א

⁸ בבא בתרא פרק חזקת הבתים

⁹ ב"ב דף כח ע"ב

¹⁰ ירמיהו פרק ל"ב

¹¹ רש"י דברים יח:כ

¹² ב"ב שם

¹³ זוהר

¹⁴ ירמיהו פרק סוף פרק ל"ב ול"ג

¹⁵ דברים ל:ג-ה

¹⁶ פ' ל"ב ורש"י שם ממדרש

¹⁷ פרק קל"ו

¹⁸ ברכות דף ד' ע"א

¹⁹ סנהדרין דף ק"ד ע"ב

²⁰ ויקרא כה:מח

²¹ מגילה דף יד ע"ב

²² ויקרא כה:יא

²³ במדבר לו:ד

²⁴ ספר גלגלי נשמות לרמ"ע מפאנו

²⁵ ישע"י ב:ב