



Carnegie Shul Chatter

May 11, 2023

Shabbat
Shalom



Light candles 8:08pm — Shabbat Services 9:30am

Shabbat Services

Join us in the sanctuary, providing you have been vaccinated for Covid 19, or attend virtually. Watch your email for a Zoom link or contact Rosalyn Hoffman at rjlynman@yahoo.com. The complete Torah reading, in Hebrew and English, can be found at https://www.chabad.org/parshah/torahreading_cdo/aid/2495886/jewish/Behar-Bechukotai-Torah-Reading.htm

Healing

Healing. There are times that we all need it. We need it for our loved ones when they are sick. We need it for ourselves when we are sick. And sometimes we need it for society when society is sick. We have a prayer for healing that is part of the daily Amidah. We say mi shebarchus to heal the sick at our Sabbath services. The Haftorah this week ends with, "Heal me, O G d, then shall I be healed; help me, then I shall be helped, for You are my praise!"

Every day I read the newspaper and think to myself, "What a sick society we live in." Between the war in Ukraine with missile attacks on innocent people, or terrorist attacks anywhere in the world, and all of the mass shootings in our very own United States, I am appalled by how sick our society has become. But "has become" is probably the wrong choice of words. Society has been sick almost forever.

We ask God to heal us, and we are sad when he does not. But the Torah tells us how to be healed. It gives us a path for redemption. But far too often we fail to take that path.

What is the path? It is to obey God's commandments. It is to do His mitzvot. And sadly, we refuse to follow that path.

And so we profit not. And a failure to profit will usually result in a loss. Just ask the prophets.

Behar-Bechukotai in a Nutshell

Leviticus 25:1–27:34

From Chabad.org

The name of the Parshah, “Behar,” means “on Mount [Sinai]” and it is found in Leviticus 25:1. The name of the Parshah, “Bechukotai,” means “in My statutes” and it is found in Leviticus 26:3.

On the mountain of Sinai, G-d communicates to Moses the laws of the Sabbatical year: every seventh year, all work on the land should cease, and its produce becomes free for the taking for all, man and beast.

Seven Sabbatical cycles are followed by a fiftieth year—the Jubilee year, on which work on the land ceases, all indentured servants are set free, and all ancestral estates in the Holy Land that have been sold revert to their original owners. Additional laws governing the sale of lands, and the prohibitions against fraud and usury, are also given.

G-d promises that if the people of Israel will keep His commandments, they will enjoy material prosperity and dwell securely in their homeland. But He also delivers a harsh “rebuke,” warning of the exile, persecution and other evils that will befall them if they abandon their covenant with Him. Nevertheless, “Even when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away; nor will I ever abhor them, to destroy them and to break My covenant with them; for I am the L-rd their G-d.”

The Parshah concludes with the rules on how to calculate the values of different types of pledges made to G-d, and the mitzvah of tithing produce and livestock.



Haftorah in a Nutshell

Jeremiah 16:19-17:14

The haftorah discusses the punishments that await those who disregard G-d’s law, and the blessings that are the lot of those who follow the Creator’s wishes. This follows the theme of this week’s Torah reading which details at length the blessings and curses.

The prophet Jeremiah rebukes the people of Israel for their idolatrous ways and for not having faith in G-d. He conveys G-d’s words of wrath towards those who do not put their trust in Him — foretelling exile as their punishment — and of blessings for those who do.

“Cursed is the man who trusts in man and relies on mortal flesh for his strength, and whose

heart turns away from the G-d. He shall be like a lone tree in the desert, and will not see when good comes, and will dwell on parched land in the desert, on salt-sodden soil that is not habitable. Blessed is the man who trusts in the G-d, to whom G-d will be his trust. For he shall be like a tree planted by the water, and which spreads its roots out into a stream, so it will not be affected when heat comes, and its leaves shall be green, and in the year of drought will not be anxious, neither shall it cease from bearing fruit.”

The haftorah ends with the following poignant verses: “G-d who is the source of the hopes of Israel, all that forsake You shall be shamed, and they who turn away from me shall be marked out on the earth that they have forsaken G-d, the source of living waters. Heal me, O G-d, then shall I be healed; help me, then I shall be helped, for You are my praise!”

Behar Commentary

By Rabbi Reuben Ebrahimoff

The Haftorah is read from the book of Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah), 32:6-27

The connection of the Haftorah to the Parsha: There are 3 connections between the Parasha and the Haftorah: #1) The Parasha of Behar deals with the laws of “Geula”, redemption of property (land).

Similarly, the Haftorah gives an account of Yirmiyahu purchasing a field. #2) At the beginning of the Parsha of Behar, it informs us of the laws of Shmitta, the commandment

that one must let his fields rest for 1 year, once every seven years. The sages teach us that because B’nai Yisrael failed to observe seventy Shmitta years ($7 \times 70 = 490$ years) Hashem exiled the Jews to Bavel for seventy years. The Haftorah tells us of this punishment by mentioning the Babylonian army’s impending conquest of Jerusalem. #3) Both the Torah and the Haftorah contain similar hints to the final redemption.

Introduction

Jeremiah is in prison in Jerusalem. King Zedekiah put him there for suggesting the Judeans should surrender to Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon. The city is besieged by the Babylonians. According to Jeremiah’s own prophecy, Jerusalem will soon be destroyed and the people of Israel will be taken into captivity. In the midst of this turmoil, Hashem (G-d) commands Jeremiah to buy a field from his uncle in his hometown of Anatot. Jeremiah is unlikely to get any benefit from the field, but he is to buy it anyway. Hashem uses this event to promise future restoration of Israel. Fields will again be bought and sold in the land. This is a message of hope and promise in a time of destruction



The storyline of this week's Haftorah

Jeremiah, the “weeping prophet,” has been jailed by Zedkiyahu, the (last) King of Judah, because of his prophecies that recommended that the Jews surrender to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Bavel, instead of fighting against them. Obviously, King Zedkiyahu had a different opinion. The Haftorah begins here: a divine word instructs Jeremiah to purchase ancestral land from his cousin Hanamel that he does according to the legal practice. Jeremiah then instructs his scribe Baruch to preserve the documents in a Clay Jar as lasting proof. It was in the Levitical city of Anatot which was located 2 miles north of Jerusalem and was Jeremiah's home town!

Jeremiah 32:14 Thus says Hashem, “Take these deeds, this sealed deed of purchase and this open deed, and put them in an earthenware jar that they may last a long time. Real estate deeds had two copies — a sealed one and an open one. To preserve them they were usually put in earthenware, similarly to what they did with the Dead Sea Scrolls.

His father, Chilkiyahu, a Kohen (who may have been the same Chilkiyahu that found the Torah Scroll Moses wrote while cleaning out the Bait Hamikdash for King Josiah) lived there with other very pious people. Jeremiah seeks to understand the symbolic meaning of the purchase. Yirmiyahu first praises Hashem with prayer, and then requests an explanation of Hashem's command. Hashem replies that due to Israel's and Judah's straying after Idolatry and turning their backs on Hashem, the Babylonians will conquer Jerusalem. (Not to worry, Hashem will return B'nai Yisrael to their fields and cities).

The appointment of Zedekiah as king over Judah has been found in records from Babylon known as the Babylonian Chronicles. The tablet records that after Jerusalem was captured by Nebuchadnezzar in 597 BC, “He installed a king of his own choosing.” (Zedekiah).

Yirmiyahu's Biography:

- ◆ The definition of his name is “Hashem will elevate”.
- ◆ Born circumcised, to Chilkiya, also a prophet, in 640 B.C.E. about 2650 years ago, on Tishah Be'av in Anatot, 2 miles north of Jerusalem, in the land of Binyamin.
- ◆ Was a Kohen and a descendant of Rachav, the Yericho (Jericho) innkeeper that Yehoshua saved.
- ◆ Spoke at childhood, cursing the day he was born. Began prophesying at age 18, continuing for 40 years.
- ◆ Lived in Jerusalem. He never married, and had no children.
- ◆ Was the head of the Mishmeret Hakohanim (The Guard by the Priests doing work in the Holy Temple). They were the custodians of the Ark of the Lord.
- ◆ Known as the Weeping Prophet, for he endured the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash. Symbolically, he wore a wooden yolk around his neck.
- ◆ His prophecies took place before, during, and after the destruction of the Bait Hamikdash (Holy Temple). Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon destroyed the Temple. He remained in Jerusalem after its destruction with Gedalyah ben Achikam, the man whom the fast of Gedalyah is named after. Shafan was his scribe. Shafan brought the scroll he found in the Bait Hamikdash to Jeremiah, which was originally written by Moses. It was open to the verse “Hashem will bring you and your elected King to a nation unknown to

your fathers.” That scared people into changing their ways.

- ♦ Wrote 3 Books: His own, Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah); Eicha (Lamentations), read on Tishah Be'av; and Melachim (The Book of Kings). . The time span of the book Jeremiah was 66 years.

Famous Phrase:

Jeremiah 17:7, “Baruch hagever asher yivtach ba’Hashem” “Blessed is the man who trusts in Hashem and Hashem will be his helper.” Recited in the Birchat Hamazon, Grace after Meals.

Haftorahman’s Lesson of the week:

Hashem made Yirmiyahu buy a field, so that he would have the deed to the land in his hand. That way Jeremiah would know that one-day his property in Israel would be reclaimed. We too have a great deal to look forward to.

Yahrtzeits

This week the Carnegie Shul acknowledges the yahrtzeits of:

May their memories be for a blessing.

Rabbi Josef Berglas

Louis Cohn

Sylvia Zemon Weiss

Dina Cooper Block

Max Cohen

Yetta Gussin

Harry Burnkrant

Ethel Golanty

