

The Depth of the Jewish Bond to Eretz Yisroel

Introduction

"וילכו בני מכיר בן מנשה גלעדה וילכדה ויורש את האמרי אשר בה"¹ And the children of Machir the son of Menashe went to Gilead and conquered it and drove out the Emoriim that inhabited it. Why did the children of Machir conquer Gilead rather than Moshe Rabbeinu during the conquest of Sichon and Og?

The verse continues, "ויתן משה את הגלעד למכיר בן מנשה," and Moshe gave Gilead to [the family of] Machir the son of Menashe. We must understand this since Moshe Rabbeinu generally designated land only for Shevatim (tribes) Reuven, Gad and half the tribe of Menashe, not for individuals. Why was Machir an exception, that Moshe assigned land to his individual family?

At the end of Parshas Masei, the leaders of the Family of Machir requested that the daughters of Tzelafchad shouldn't marry out of the tribe, because if they do the land they inherited from their father would go to their husbands [which would be from a different tribe], and the portion of Shevat Menashe would be diminished. This must also be understood. What were they so concerned about, since likewise, the men of Menashe could marry from other tribes and enlarge the land of their Shevet?

"ותהיינה מחלה תרצה וחגלה ומלכה ונעה בנות צלפחד לבני דדיהן לנשים"² The verse says that the daughters of Tzelafchad married their cousins to show their greatness that they waited forty years until they found appropriate spouses, and did not compromise their spiritual stature. We know however, that Nadav and Avihu who did not marry because they couldn't find anyone appropriate for themselves were criticized. Why are the daughters of Tzelafchad praised for the same thing Nadav and Avihu are censured for?

We can also ask, in the desert, the Jewish People camped according to their families, so the daughters of Tzelafchad were neighbors with their future spouses all along! Didn't they know of them all these forty years?

We will now explain some concepts upon which the answers to the above questions will be based.

The Origin of Adam and Chavah

The Hebrew word for 'woman' is אשה, because the verse tells us, "כי מאיש לקחה,"³ she was taken from the "איש" - man. Hashem took a rib from Adam and formed it into Chavah. All the Jewish men are rooted in Adam and all the Jewish women are rooted in Chavah. Just like Chavah was originally a part of Adam, so too each woman was a part of her husband and through marriage they reunite back to their original status.

The Hebrew word for man is אדם because he was taken from the אדמה, earth. Adam [the first man] was created from the dust of the place of the Mizbe'ach (altar.) Actually, all of Eretz Yisroel is called Mizbe'ach, as the Gemarah says, "Everyone who is buried in Eretz Yisroel is as if they are buried under the Mizbe'ach." A similar opinion is found in the Medrash which states⁶, that the head of Adam [where his body started developing from] came from the place of the Mizbe'ach [where Eretz Yisroel started

developing from], and the rest of his body came from different parts of Eretz Yisroel. Either way we look at it, Man was created from the earth of the Mizbe'ach and Eretz Yisroel.

This leads us to conclude that the place of the Mizbe'ach is the root of all Jewish couples. Because Adam [who incorporated all Jewish men] was taken from the Mizbe'ach and Chavah [who incorporated all Jewish women] was taken from him. That is why the Gemarah tells us that when a couple divorces even the Mizbe'ach sheds tears upon them. The Mizbe'ach, being their source of origin, feels the pain of them separating most acutely.

Yovel - Everything is Drawn to its Roots

There is a law in nature: Everything must return to its original roots. This is a theme oft repeated in Koheles, like the verse says, "אל מקום שהנחלים הולכים שם הם שבים ללכת", To the place where the streams go, there they return. We find this in all of nature; an apple falls to the ground because that's where it came from, fire strives upward because its source is the moon⁵. This law of return is called Yovel.

A man once came to the Satmar Rav Zt"l and asked the Rav to choose between two equally promising marriage suggestions. The Rav told him, "In today's generation there is no one who can tell you who your destined is. Therefore, I advise you to choose the one that appeals to your heart most." A person is naturally inclined toward his roots.

Since the origin of the Jewish People is Eretz Yisroel, there is a natural feeling of deep longing for her. Why are there some Jews who don't feel this longing? This is because their negative actions built a separation between them and their roots.

The Sefer Chareidim writes:

"צריך כל איש ישראל לחבב את ארץ ישראל, ולבוא אליה מאפסי ארץ בתשווקה גדולה, כבן אל חיק אמו."

"Every Jewish person must love Eretz Yisroel, and come to her from far away lands with a great yearning, like a son to the lap of his mother."

Eretz Yisroel and the Jewish Couple

A Jew upon whom it is G-d forbid decreed that he be cut off from his roots, would be cut off from his wife and from Eretz Yisroel. That is why Meseches Gittin (the tractate that discusses the laws of divorce) begins with a case of someone sending a get (divorce document) from a land outside of Eretz Yisroel to his wife in Eretz Yisroel. He is being separated from his wife and from Eretz Yisroel his original origin.

A Sotah (a woman who commits adultery) desecrates the dust from under the Mizbe'ach from which her exclusive union with her husband originates. Therefore, "מן" From the earth that is in the floor of the Mishkan the Kohen should take and put it into the water [which tests the purity of the Sotah.] Adam and Chavah [the origin of all Jewish couples] were created from the earth under the Mizbe'ach; therefore, the dust of the Mizbe'ach tests the purity of their relationship. "אדם הראשון וחווה" (they both equal 632), because this water has the earth of their origin mixed into it and is capable of testing it.

The Individual Portion of Each Jew in Eretz Yisroel

The Torah is written upon all of Eretz Yisroel. Each piece of land in Eretz Yisroel corresponds to a part in the Torah.⁷ Likewise, every Jew is a letter in the Sefer Torah (this was mentioned last week) and the piece of land to which he is assigned has the part of the Torah which corresponds to him.

The Special Connection between the Daughters of Tzelafchad and Eretz Yisroel

The daughters of Tzelafchad had a deep love for Eretz Yisroel as they requested "תנה לנו אחזה",⁸ Give us (our father's) portion in Eretz Yisroel. They descend from Yosef, who had a deep affinity for Eretz Yisroel. His love of Eretz Yisroel was so strong, that he requested that his remains be transferred there after his death.⁹ But why did the daughters of Tzelafchad love Eretz Yisroel more than the other women of the tribe of Menashe?

The reason for this was because their connection was more direct than other women since they themselves actually had a part in Eretz Yisroel (the part which belonged to their father), and they sensed this.

The Halacha of the Daughters of Tzelafchad Was Hidden From Moshe Rabbeinu

When the question arose if the Daughters of Tzelafchad inherit their father's portion in Eretz Yisroel being that he had no sons; Moshe Rabbeinu did not know the answer and had to ask Hashem. Why?

The daughters of Tzelafchad yearned for their portion in Eretz Yisroel because they originated from it. This yearning to their roots came from the Law of Yovel.

There are 50 levels of understanding. Yovel is derived from the 50th level and therefore arrives in the 50th year.

We know that Moshe Rabbeinu reached until the 49th level of understanding, as our sages derive from the verse "ותחסרו מעט מאלקים"¹⁰, that Moshe Rabbeinu was only missing a little – the 50th level (which he acquired on the last day of his life.) Since this Halacha of inheritance is rooted in the 50th level (Yovel) Moshe Rabbeinu did not know it. Hashem told him, this is what is written before me above; this is a Halacha from the very highest levels. "ויקרב משה את משפטו"¹¹ and Moshe bought their judgment [before Hashem,] משפטו is written with a large ׀, which equals 50, to hint that their judgment was rooted in the 50th level of understanding.

The Daughters of Tzelafchad Married Only After They Got Their Inheritance

Now that we know that a person's spouse is rooted in Eretz Yisroel, we can understand why the daughters of Tzelafchad had to wait for their inheritance in Eretz Yisroel before they found their marriage partners. "ותקרבנה בנות צלפחד בן חפר"¹² and the Daughters of Tzelafchad came forward [to claim their inheritance in the land] is gematria "העפר אשר יהי בקרקע המשכן"⁶ the dust that comes from the ground of the Mishkan [the place of the Mizbe'ach,] they both equal 1773. When the daughters of Tzelafchad acquired their inheritance in Eretz Yisroel, they simultaneously found their husbands with whom their original roots were united with in the land of Eretz Yisroel (which is considered like the Mizbe'ach, as explained.)

Moshe Rabbeinu Couldn't Conquer Gilead

As stated above, all of the Halachos of the Torah are written on Eretz Yisroel.⁷ Which Halachos are engraved upon the land of Gilead?

Eliyahu Hanavi is called 'Eliyahu HaGileadi,' the one that comes from Gilead. The persona of Eliyahu Hanavi (as explained in depth last week), is the one who returns every Jew to his roots; to his land in Eretz Yisroel, to the original state of his Neshama [before sin], as it originated from close to Hashem his heavenly father.

This would suggest that the Halachos of Yovel, the Halachos of the 50th year of the Shemita cycle when all land returns to its previous owner are the halachos engraved on the city of Gilead.

Now we understand why Moshe Rabbeinu couldn't conquer Gilead. Gilead is Yovel, which is the 50th level of understanding which Moshe Rabbeinu only attained on the last day of his life. "ארץ גלעד", the land of Gilead is gematria "חמשים", fifty, they both are equal 398.

(Parenthetically, this is why Lavan caught up with Yaakov in Gilead after Yaakov attempted to run away from him. The Baal Shem Tov explains that Yaakov Avinu emptied Lavan's house of all the sparks of holiness that were in captivity by Lavan who was then the head of all the powers of Tumah. However, there still were some holy sparks left which Yaakov had not yet managed to extract from his evil father-in-law Lavan. Therefore, Hashem caused Lavan to chase after him, and by the [verses in the Torah describing the] exchange of words between them the remaining holy sparks were extracted. Knowing that Gilead is a place of Yovel, return, we understand why it was specifically there that he was able to extract the last and most difficult remaining sparks of holiness and return them to their roots.)

Eight – a Supernatural phenomenon

The Maharal says that the number eight is a very significant number in Judaism. This world is complete with the number seven. There are seven days to a week, seven continents, seven musical notes; everything that connects with the physical world revolves around cycles of the number seven. In Olam Habah (the world in the days of Mashiach) however, we exit the cycle of seven and arrive at a world which revolves around the number eight.

This is the significance of Yovel. We have seven years to a Shemita and then seven Shemitos. When we finish the seven cycles of seven, which equals 49, we arrive at the beginning of the eighth cycle, which is the 50th year, Yovel.

The Connection between the Tribe of Menashe and the City of Gilead

In the travels of the wilderness, the tribe of Menashe was the eighth tribe. They correspond to Cheshvan which is the eighth month when counting from Nissan. Cheshvan is the month in which the 3rd Temple of the era of Mashiach [a supernatural era], will be inaugurated¹⁴. מנשה has the same letters as שמונה, [Hebrew word for] eight.

The tribe of Menashe has a connection to Yovel – the 50th year which starts a cycle of eight after seven cycles of seven, and to Gilead – the land upon which the Halachos of Yovel are written on, and to Eliyahu HaGileadi – the Neshama that returns

everything to its source. "מכיר בן מנשה", Machir the son of Menashe, is gematria "התשב", a reference to Eliyahu Hanavi (as explained last week) they both equal 717.

The Emori Gentiles that lived in Gilead were the klipah (impure forces that block holiness) that covered Gilead, the place where the Torah of Yovel is engraved upon. It was Machir from the tribe of Menashe who was able to conquer that klipah which covered it, because of the special connection that his tribe has to Yovel.

How Did the Daughters Of Tzelafchad Understand Something That Moshe Rabbeinu Didn't?

On Pesach we celebrate our freedom from Egypt, by drinking wine and eating Matzah. We have 3 Matzos corresponding to the 3 Avos (patriarch,) Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov; and 4 cups of wine corresponding to the 4 Imahos (matriarch). The Matzah (grains) feeds and strengthens the intellect. Wine, on the other hand, doesn't enhance the mind; to the contrary, it weakens one's intellectual power. However, it feeds and strengthens one's emotional faculties, one's intuition.

In Hebrew, intuition is called 'Binah.' Women have a stronger Binah than men. "ויבן ה' את הצלע", and Hashem fashioned the rib bone [that he took from Adam into Chavah]. Our sages say ¹⁵ that this refers to the enhanced intuition, (בינה meaning ויבן) that Hashem created in Chavah.

Moshe understood things with pure unbiased intellect. However, intellect is limited when it comes to things that are above the human understanding. The daughters of Tzelafchad understood with Binah that their father's inheritance can't be lost and must be transferred to them.

There are seven Sefiros (spiritual powers which are transformed to The Seven Middos – character traits by which we function) which Hashem used in creating this world. There are an additional three Sefiros which are more heavenly and lofty. Binah, intuition, is the eighth Sefirah (the first of the additional three Sefiros), which as explained above refers to the coming world. ¹⁶"בני בינה ימי שמונה", (after the miracle of Chanukah) the men of Binah enacted eight days (of Chanukah). It also corresponds to Yovel (the eighth cycle). This would bring us to an additional explanation as to why the daughters of Tzelafchad understood what Moshe Rabbeinu didn't, because they had a connection to Yovel whereas Moshe did not.

The Connection of the Tribe of Menashe to Binah - Yovel

The tribe of Menashe, being the eighth tribe, has a very strong power of Binah. "מכיר בן מנשה", Yair the son of Menashe is gematria ¹⁷"יודעי בינה לעתים", the ones who know with Binah how to adjust the calendar (a reference to the sages,) they both equal 717.

They therefore have a strong connection to Yovel. Yovel is that which brings all the Jewish People back to their roots, Eretz Yisroel. Therefore, "ולמכיר נתתי את הגלעד", to Machir [son of Menashe,] I gave Gilead, is gematria "ובאו האובדים בארץ אשור והנדחים", those lost in Assyria, and those cast off in Egypt will come [to Eretz Yisroel,] they both equal 1679. Gilead is the vehicle of returning all Jews to Eretz Yisroel.

Why the Sons of Menashe Insisted That the Daughters of Tzelafchad Don't Intermarry

Now we can understand why the tribe of Menashe wanted their territory to remain theirs. They intuitively sensed that that each tribe belongs in his own piece of land in Eretz Yisroel because each person is rooted in the lot of land to which he was designated. His part in the Torah is also engraved there. Menashe felt this more intensely than the other tribes, because he's rooted in (the Sefirah of Binah) Yovel, the law which ensures that each man owns the property he was designated to in Eretz Yisroel.

The Three Weeks and Yovel

Yovel, the returning of everything to its roots will come to its ultimate expression with the coming of Mashiach.

The three weeks beginning with the 17th of Tamuz and concluding with the 9th of Av, have a connection to the first three Sefiros which are heavenly. These Sefiros are now hidden and will only be revealed with the coming of Mashiach. That is why the Three Weeks are a time of melancholy; their spiritual power is, as of now, hidden.

The Jewish People conquered the Seven Nations of Eretz Yisroel proper. The three nations whose land is across the Jordan were never conquered; Edom, Amon and Moav. The reason why these lands weren't conquered is because they are from the first three Sefiros that are waiting for the days of Mashiach to be revealed, and are presently covered with the klipos of Keini, Knizi and Kadmoni.¹⁸

Part of these three nations was conquered in the days of Moshe, but their holiness is considered inferior to Eretz Yisroel proper as of today. Gilead is part of these lands who's essence is as of yet concealed until the days of Mashiach.

The tribe of Menashe being the eighth tribe, as mentioned above, has a connection to Binah which is from the three Sefiros to be revealed in the days of Mashiach. As mentioned the Three Weeks also have a connection to the first three Sefiros. "בן מנשה", the son of Menashe, is gematria "בין המצרים", the Three Weeks (they both equal 447) to symbolize their connection.

Reading about the Daughters of Tzelafchad - A Consolation for the Three Weeks

We do not marry in the Three Weeks because they represent the exile of a Jew from his roots in Eretz Yisroel as well as the separation from his marriage partner. "המביא גט ממדינת הים"¹⁹, one who bring a divorce from a faraway country, is gematria, "נדחך בקצה השמים"²⁰, cast of to the ends of the heavens (a reference to exile,) they both are gematria 672 (עם התיבות).

The topic of the daughters of Tzelafchad is about the returning of every Jew to his roots in the land of Eretz Yisroel as well as his spouse. "מביא גט ממדינת הים", one who bring a divorce from a faraway country, is gematria "ושבו מארץ אויב"²¹, they will return from the land of their enemy (a reference to the redemption,) they both equal 664 (עם הכולל). May we be zocheh to this very soon with the coming of Eliyahu HaGileadi.

יבוא אליהו לבשרנו יבאו משיח צדקנו

- 1 מטות במדבר לב:לט
- 2 מסעי במדבר לו:יא
- 3 בראשית ב:כג
- 4 גמ' מס' סוכה
- 5 תניא
- 6 במדבר היז
- 7 ס' ערבי נחל
- 8 בראשית ויחי נ:כה
- 9 רש"י במדבר כז:ה
- 10 תהילים ח:י
- 11 רש"י במדבר כז:ה
- 12 במדבר כז:א
- 13 ס' ערבי נחל
- 14 בני יששכר חודש חשון
- 15 ראשית רבה יח:א
- 16 זמירות חנוכה
- 17 דברי הימים א יב:לג
- 18 בראשית טו:יט
- 19 גיטין ב.
- 20 דברים לד:ד
- 21 ירמיהו לא