

# Teachings of the Maharal

## The Logic of Exile

**Vayikra 25:18** - **And you shall do My decrees and keep My judgments, and you will reside in security on the Land.**

**Rashi** - For the sin of failure to observe the sabbatical year, Israel goes into exile, as it later says "then the Land will appease its shmita years" [26:34]. The seventy years of Babylonian Exile corresponded to the seventy unobserved sabbatical years.

**Gur Arye** - The rabbis said [Avot 5:9], "Exile comes to the world on account of transgressing idolatry, sexual immorality, murder, and shmita [sabbatical year.]" Shmita applies only to the Land of Israel and no other land, because the land itself is fitting for it. The Land of Israel is shlema [complete, perfect] as it says [D'varim 8:9] "a land that lacks nothing," unlike other lands. A land that has shlemut deserves a periodic rest. The same could be said of the people of Israel, who from the aspect of their shelemut have Shabbat and rest. This world lacks shelemut, but has the potential for it. When the potential is actuated and sh'eimut reigns, then it will earn the day that is all Shabbat rest. The fact that this world requires work is a sign it lacks sh'leimut. When the people of Israel dwell in the Land of Israel, work is required, but the Land has earned its periodic rest. If it does not get its shmita, it will find rest another way, by vomiting out its inhabitants.

*Column prepared by Dr. Moshe Kuhr*