

HALACHIC AND HASHKAFIC ISSUES IN

CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

225 - SHEMITA 5782: PART 1 - FOUNDATIONS

OU ISRAEL CENTER - SUMMER 2021

- As Shemita approaches, we will be'H start a series of shiurim highlighting some key halachic¹ and hashkafic issues.
- This will NOT be a comprehensive analysis of hilchot Shemita and we will not be able to cover many of the details. But we should be able to get an overview.
- There is considerable reading material, in English and in Hebrew, dealing with Shemita issues. Some of this is included in the Appendix to this shiur.

A] SHEMITA: THE ISSUES

A1] HALACHIC ISSUES

The following are some of the halachic issues that arise in connection with the Shemita Year:-

- Prohibitions concerning working the Land of Israel:
 - work prohibitions which are deoraita and derabbanan.
 - the rabbinic prohibition of *sefichin*.
 - how to deal in practice with commercial farming.
 - how to deal in practice with regular domestic gardening needs.
 - which parts of Israel are subject to which prohibitions.
- The status of the produce of the Shemita year
 - *kedushat shevi'it* ("K7") and its implications.
 - how to manage a kitchen with Shemita produce.
 - buying produce during Shemita - understanding options.
 - eating out - restaurants and hechsherim, family and friends.
 - understanding the 'solutions' to Shemita issues - *yevul shishit*, Heter Mechira, Otzar Beit Din, *matza menutak*, *yevul nochri*, imported produce.
 - terumot and ma'aserot on Shemita produce.
- *Biyur*
 - disposal of Shemita produce at the end of the season.
- *Shemitat Kesafim*
 - release of loans at the end of the Shemita year.
 - Prozbul².

A2] HASHKAFIC ISSUES

The following are some of the hashkafic issues that arise in connection with the Shemita Year. These often overlap with the halachic and meta-halachic issues.

- Attitudes to *Kedushat Shevi'it*
 - something to embrace and desire, or a halachic pitfall to avoid?
 - focus on positive *Ahava* or preventative *Yira* aspects?
 - focus on Shemita as a 'next step' in the coming of geula or another halachic issue in life to deal with correctly?
- Religious implications of Medinat Yisrael
 - weighing the needs of the State and Israeli society/industry in the halachic debate: *prati/klali* perspectives?
 - support of local Jewish vs Arab economies?
 - support or opposition to the State 'solutions' eg Heter Mechira?
- Interpretation of halachic sources to fit with hashkafic priorities.

1. All references to the Rambam in this sheet are to Hilchot Shemita unless otherwise stated. All references to the Chazon Ish are to Shevi'it.

2. We will be'H have shiurim later in the Shemita year dealing with the issues of *Biyur* and *Prozbul*, as they become relevant.

B] SHEMITA IN THE TORAH

1. (י) וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְרַע אֶת-הָאָרֶץ וְאֶסְפְּתָהּ אֶת-תְּבוּאֹתֶיהָ: (יא) וְהִשְׁבִּילְתָּ תְשֻׁמְטָנָהּ וְכִטְשָׁתָהּ וְאָכְלוּ אֲבִינֵי עַמּוּךְ וְיִתְּרָם תֹּאכַל חֵיטְּ הַשָּׂדֶה כִּרְתַעֲשֶׂה לְכַרְמֶךָ לְיוֹתֶךָ: (יב) שְׁשֵׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מַעֲשֵׂיךָ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי תִשְׁבֹּת לְמַעַן יָנוּחַ שׁוֹרְךָ וְחַמְרְךָ וַיִּנְפֹּשׂ בְּרֵאֲמֹתֶךָ וְהִגֵּר:

שמות פרק כג

The pesukim in Shemot 23 give an outline of Shemita and highlight the following ideas: (i) the land lying fallow; (ii) not harvesting produce as we would normally do; (iii) the produce being available for the poor and the natural world, not guarded and kept as private property; (iv) the link with Shabbat³, thus attesting to God's role as Creator of the world.

2. שְׁשֵׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי תִשְׁבֹּת בְּחֵרִישׁ וּבִקְצִיר תִּשְׁבֹּת:

שמות לד-כא

Shemot 34 includes a prohibition on plowing and reaping. We will see below if this refers to Shabbat or to Shemita.

3. (א) וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל-מֹשֶׁה בְּהַר סִינַי לֵאמֹר: (ב) דָּבָר אֲלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם כִּי תְבֹאוּ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם וְשָׁבַתָה הָאָרֶץ שְׁבֹת לָהּ: (ג) שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְרַע שְׂדֶךָ וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְמֹר כְּרַמְךָ וְאֶסְפְּתָהּ אֶת-תְּבוּאֹתֶיהָ: (ד) וּבַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית שְׁבֹת שְׁבֹתוֹן יִהְיֶה לְאָרֶץ שְׁבֹת לָהּ שְׂדֶךָ לֹא תִזְרַע וְכַרְמֶךָ לֹא תִזְמֹר: (ה) אֶת סַפְיֵי קִצְיֶיךָ לֹא תִקְצֹר וְאֶת-עֲנָבֵי נִזְיֶיךָ לֹא תִבְצֹר שְׁנֵת שְׁבֹתוֹן יִהְיֶה לְאָרֶץ: (ו) וְהִיְתָה שְׁבֹת הָאָרֶץ לָכֶם לֶאֱכֹלָהּ לָךְ וּלְעַבְדְּךָ וּלְשִׁכְיֶיךָ וּלְתוֹשְׁבֵי הַגְּרָם עִמָּךְ: (ז) וּלְבַהֲמֹתֶיךָ וּלְחַיָּה אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץךָ תִהְיֶה כָל-תְּבוּאֹתֶיהָ לְאָכְלָהּ: (ח) וְעַשִּׂיתֶם אֶת-חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת-מִשְׁפָּטַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וְעַשִּׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְיִשְׁבַּתֶם עַל-הָאָרֶץ לְבִטָּח: (יט) וְנִתְּנָה הָאָרֶץ פְּרִיָּהּ וְאֶכְלֹתֶם לְשִׁבְעָה וְיִשְׁבַּתֶם לְבִטָּח עֲלֶיהָ: (כ) וְכִי תֹאמְרוּ מִה-נֹאכַל בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית הֵן לֹא נִזְרַע וְלֹא נֶאֱסַף אֶת-תְּבוּאֹתֵינוּ: (כא) וְצִוִּיתִי אֶת-בְּרַכְתִּי לָכֶם בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית וְעַשִּׂיתָ אֶת-הַתְּבוּאָה לְשֵׁלֶשׁ הַשָּׁנִים: (כב) וְזָרְעִיתֶם אֶת הַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁמִינִית וְאֶכְלֹתֶם מִן-הַתְּבוּאָה יֶשֶׁן עַד הַשָּׁנָה הַתְּשִׁיעִית עַד-בּוֹא תְּבוּאֹתֶיהָ תֹאכְלוּ יֶשֶׁן: (כג) וְהָאָרֶץ לֹא תִמְכַּר לְצַמְתֹּת כִּי-לִי הָאָרֶץ כִּי-גֵרִים וְתוֹשְׁבֵי אֲדָמָה עִמָּךְ: (כד) וּבְכָל אֶרֶץ אֲחֻזְתְּכֶם גְּאֻלָּהּ תִּתְּנוּ לְאָרֶץ: ס

ויקרא פרק כה

The pesukim in Vayikra give more detail. The focus is on: (i) a sabbatical for God - ie devoted to spiritual activities; (ii) specific prohibited activities - planting, pruning and harvesting (grain or fruit); (iii) the produce being available not only to the regular owner, but also to the underprivileged sectors of society - servants, workers, unlanded minorities, animals; (iv) national security and blessing flowing from observance of Shemita; (v) Shemita as a demonstration of our bitachon; (vi) the Land not belonging ultimately to the people, but to God; (vii) Shemita as a 'redemption' for the Land itself.

4. (לג) וְאֲתַכֶּם אֲזָרָה בְּגוֹלִים וְהִרִיקוּתִי אַחֲרֵיכֶם חָרָב וְהִיְתָה אֲרַצְכֶם שְׁמָמָה וְעַרְיֹכֶם יִהְיוּ חָרְבָה: (לד) אִזּוֹ תִרְצֶה הָאָרֶץ אֶת-שְׁבֹתוֹתֶיהָ כָּל יְמֵי הַשְּׁמָה וְאַתֶּם בְּאֶרֶץ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם אִזּוֹ תִשְׁבֹּת הָאָרֶץ וְהִרַצְתָּ אֶת-שְׁבֹתוֹתֶיהָ: (לה) כָּל-יְמֵי הַשְּׁמָה תִשְׁבֹּת אֶת אֲשֶׁר לֹא-שְׁבַתָהּ בְּשִׁבְתוֹתֵיכֶם בְּשִׁבְתֵיכֶם עֲלֶיהָ:

ויקרא פרק כו

Exile from the Land is predicted as a consequence of non-observance of Shemita

5. (יט) וַיִּשְׁרְפוּ אֶת-בְּיַת הָאֱלֹקִים וַיִּנְתְּצוּ אֶת חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם וְכָל-אֲרָמְנוֹתֶיהָ שָׂרְפוּ בְּאֵשׁ וְכָל-כְּלֵי מַחְמַדֶּיהָ לְהַשְׁחִית: (כ) וַיִּגְדַּל הַשְּׂאֲרִית מִן-הַחֵרֶב אֶל-בְּבַל וַיְהִי-לוֹ וּלְבָנָיו לְעַבְדִים עַד-מָלְךְ מַלְכוּת פָּרְס: (כא) לְמַלְאוֹת דְּבָרָהּ בְּפִי יִרְמְלוּהוּ עַד-רִצְתָהּ הָאָרֶץ אֶת-שְׁבֹתוֹתֶיהָ כָּל-יְמֵי הַשְּׁמָה שְׁבֹתָהּ לְמַלְאוֹת שְׁבָעִים שָׁנָה: (כ"א) - שֶׁל שְׁמִיטָה וַיּוֹזַל שְׁטוּלוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחָרָץ וּכְנַגְדוֹן גָּלוּ שְׁבָעִים שָׁנָה (....)

דברי הימים ב' לו:יט-כא ורש"י שם

.... and this is in the end how it happened - 70 years of exile for 70 missed Shemita and Yovel years.

C] THE STRUCTURE OF THE TORAH MITZVOT

C1] THE NEGATIVE MITZVOT

6. (ד) וּבַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית שְׁבֹת שְׁבֹתוֹן יִהְיֶה לְאָרֶץ שְׁבֹת לָהּ שְׂדֶךָ לֹא תִזְרַע וְכַרְמֶךָ לֹא תִזְמֹר: (ה) אֶת סַפְיֵי קִצְיֶיךָ לֹא תִקְצֹר וְאֶת-עֲנָבֵי נִזְיֶיךָ לֹא תִבְצֹר שְׁנֵת שְׁבֹתוֹן יִהְיֶה לְאָרֶץ:

ויקרא פרק כה

The verses specify two prohibited actions on the land: **Zeria** (planting) and **Zemira** (pruning) and two prohibited actions in connection to the produce: **Ketzira** (reaping) and **Betzira** (gathering). We saw above the Torah (Shemot 34) also prohibits **Charisha** (plowing).

3. See Rav Rimon's book on Shemita for a detailed and pictorial comparison between Shemita and Shabbat. Rav Kook writes (in the introduction to Shabbat HaAretz) that Shemita achieves for the Jewish nation as a whole the same spiritual elevation that Shabbat achieves for the individual.

C2] THE POSITIVE MITZVA

7. (ב) דָּבַר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם כִּי תְבֹאוּ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם וְשַׁבְתָּהּ הָאָרֶץ שַׁבַּת לָהּ: (ג) וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְרַע שְׂדֵךְ וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְמַר כְּרִמְךָ וְאָסַפְתָּ אֹתָהּ- תְּבוּאָתָהּ: (ד) וּבַשְּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית שַׁבַּת שַׁבְתוֹן יִהְיֶה לְאָרֶץ שַׁבַּת לָהּ שְׂדֵךְ לֹא תִזְרַע וְכְרִמְךָ לֹא תִזְמַר: (ה) אֶת סְפִיחַ קִצְיֹרְךָ לֹא תִקְצֹר וְאֶת-עֵנְבֵי נֹזְרְךָ לֹא תִבְצֹר שְׁנַת שַׁבְתוֹן יִהְיֶה לְאָרֶץ.

ויקרא פרק כה

However, the mitzva of Shemita also appears to be a positive mitzva focused on the LAND - to enable it to 'rest'. This may be independent of the specific negative prohibitions on working the land

- The first major halachic question is whether the concept of Shabbaton is indeed an independent Positive Mitzva, or just an outcome of not performing the negative actions.
- If there is a separate mitzva to enable the Land to rest, this may also preclude actions by non-Jews which cause the Land to produce. If the focus is on Jews not performing activities, the equivalent activity by non-Jews may be permitted, or Rabbinically prohibited.
- There is a strong parallel on the weekly Shabbat. Does the mitzva of Shabbat focus on specific prohibited actions by Jews, or is there also a positive concept of 'Shabbaton' - to create a special and spiritual Shabbat atmosphere?⁴

8. מצות עשה לשבות מעבודת הארץ ועבודת האילן בשנה שביעית שנאמר וְשַׁבְתָּהּ הָאָרֶץ שַׁבַּת לָהּ. ונאמר בְּחֻרֵשׁ וּבְקִצִיר תִּשְׁבֹּת. וכל העושה מלאכה מעבודת הארץ או האילנות בשנה זו ביטל מצות עשה ועבר על לא תעשה שנאמר שְׂדֵךְ לֹא תִזְרַע וְכְרִמְךָ לֹא תִזְמַר.

רמב"ם הלכות שמיטה ויובל פרק א הלכה א

In Mishne Torah, the Rambam focuses on the positive and negative obligations of the individual.

9. והמצוה הקל"ה היא שצונו לשבות מעבודת הארץ בשנה שביעית. והוא אמרו ית' בְּחֻרֵשׁ וּבְקִצִיר תִּשְׁבֹּת. וכבר נכפל הצווי הזה פעמים ואמר שַׁבַּת שַׁבְתוֹן יִהְיֶה לְאָרֶץ שַׁבַּת. וכבר קדם לנו אמרם 'האי שבתון עשה הוא'. ואמר יתעלה גם כן וְשַׁבְתָּהּ הָאָרֶץ שַׁבַּת לָהּ

ספר המצוות לרמב"ם מצות עשה קלה

In Sefer Hamitzvot, the Rambam relates to the individual, but stresses the positive 'Shabbaton' nature of Shemita.

10. הלכות שמיטה ויובל: יש בכללן שתיים ועשרים מצות - תשע מצות עשה, ושלוש עשרה מצות לא תעשה. והו פרטן: (א) שתשבות הארץ בשביעית ממלאכתה

רמב"ם הלכות שמיטה ויובל הקדמה

However, in his introduction to Hilchot Shemita he describes the mitzva as incumbent on the Land!

- Rav Kook explains⁵ that the practical focus of the mitzva is on the PERSON - not to work the Land in certain ways. If a Jew breaks these mitzvot, there is an additional second level to the act - the purpose of the mitzva - in that it prevents the Land from its imperative to rest. ⁶ This positive aspect of the mitzva is not an obligation on each individual Jew, but on the Jewish People as a whole. So if any Jew works the Land he is also placing every other Jew in breach of this obligation.⁷

11. (ב) ושבתה הארץ שבת לה' - מלוא על ישראל שאל יעוז גר לזרוע שנת השבת, כאשר לא נעזבו לעשות מלאכה בשבת, כי הוא ברכותינו.

אבן עזרא ויקרא כה:ב

The Ibn Ezra highlights the idea that the Land should be allowed to rest. As such, even asking a non-Jew to work the Land is a breach of the mitzva, as with Shabbat!

- But asking a non-Jew to work on Shabbat is RABBINIC prohibition! In what way would be consider this a breach of the Torah mitzva?

12. שאע"פ שאין לנו מן התורה בשביעית כי אם אותם האבות השניים ותולדותיהן... לבד שאר עבודות שמפורש שהן מדרבנן, מכל מקום כללות השביתה היא מן התורה בכולן, והעובר עליה בכלל שנת השביעית בקביעות עבר אדאורייתא.

שבת הארץ, קונטרס אחרון, ז

Rav Kook explains that, although many individual actions during Shemita are rabbinic breaches, if someone disregards these concerns in a consistent and permanent way, they thereby break the Torah mitzva of enabling the Land to rest.

4. See Ramban Vayikra 23:24 where he develops the concept of 'Shabbaton' to actively create a special atmosphere on Shabbat. This is independent of the Torah prohibitions of melacha and, uniquely, create a concept of *shevut* - actions which are individually Rabbinically prohibited (eg doing melacha with a shinui or asking a non-Jew to perform melacha) but which together contribute to fulfilling a Torah mitzva. This is one of the reasons why *shevut* prohibitions on Shabbat are sometimes treated more stringently than other Rabbinic prohibitions (eg chicken and milk). For instance, sometimes on Shabbat the halacha WILL permit a gezeira on another gezeira, where they are prohibitions of *shevut*.

5. Kuntres Acharon 1.

6. As such, in the details of the mitzva, the Rambam focuses on the specific actions of the individual, but in the description of the mitzva he focuses on the obligation of the Land.

7. Thus asking another Jew to work the land is not simply lifnei iver, but a breach of the core mitzva of Shemita! The Minchat Chinuch (112) rules that a Jew who instructs a non-Jew to work the Land is also personally in breach of this positive mitzva.

D] TOSEFET SHEVI'IT

13. שנאמר (שמות לד-כא) בְּחֹרֵישׁ וּבְקִצֹר תִּשְׁבֹּת - אין צריך לומר חריש וקציר של שביעית. **אלא חריש של ערב שביעית** שהוא נכנס בשביעית וקציר של שביעית שהוא יוצא למוצאי שביעית ר' ישמעאל אומר: מה חריש רשות אף קציר רשות יצא קציר העומר.

משנה מסכת שביעית פרק א משנה ז

The Mishna quotes the opinion of R. Akiva that the extra verse in Shemot which prohibits ploughing and harvesting is to teach a Torah prohibition of Tosefet Shevi'it - extending the laws of Shemita back into the 6th year and forward into the 8th. R. Yishmael disagrees, and learns that this verse teaches a totally unrelated halacha permitting the barley for the korban Omer to be cut on Shabbat.

14. הלכתא לרבי ישמעאל, קראי לרבי עקיבא.

מועד קטן ז.

Chazal understand that ALL opinions accept Tosefet Shevi'it in principle. R. Akiva learns it from the verse and R. Yishmael learns it as a Halacha LeMoshe MiSinai - an oral tradition from Sinai.

15. ורבי יוחנן אמר: רבן גמליאל ובית דינו מדאורייתא בטיל להו. מאי טעמא? גמר 'שבת' 'שבת' משבת בראשית. מה להלן היא אסורה, לפנייה ולאחריה - מותרין, אף כאן היא אסורה, לפנייה ולאחריה - מותרין. מתקיף לה רב אשי: מאן דאמר הלכתא - אתיא גזרה שוה עקרה הלכתא? ומאן דאמר קרא - אתיא גזרה שוה עקרה קרא? אלא אמר רב אשי: רבן גמליאל ובית דינו סברי לה כרבי ישמעאל דאמר הלכתא גמירי לה. וכי גמירי הלכתא - בזמן שבית המקדש קיים, דומיא דניסוך המים. אבל בזמן שאין בית המקדש קיים - לא.

מועד קטן ז.

Chazal conclude that the laws of Tosefet Shevi'it only operation on a Torah level when the Beit Mikdash is standing.

16. וכל הדברים האלו בזמן המקדש כמו שאמרנו, אבל בזמן הזה מותרין בעבודת הארץ עד ר"ה.

רמב"ם הלכות שמיטה ויובל פרק ג

This is the psak of the Rambam. So it would seem the entire concept should be irrelevant today and planting should be permitted until Rosh Hashana. However, it is clear from the Mishna that this is NOT the case

17. אין נוטעין ואין מבריכין ואין מרכיבין ערב שביעית פחות משלשים יום לפני ר"ה. ואם נטע או הבריך או הרכיב יעקור. רבי יהודה אומר כל הרכבה שאינה קולטת לשלשה ימים שוב אינה קולטת. רבי יוסי ורבי שמעון אומרים לשתי שבתות.

משנה מסכת שביעית פרק ב משנה ו

The Mishna rules that planting (and derivative actions - eg grafting) may not be done for 30 days before Rosh Hashana.

18. לדברי האומר שלשה - צריך שלשה ושלשים, לדברי האומר שתי שבתות - צריך שתי שבתות ושלשים יום

ראש השנה י

The Gemara concludes that there must be time for the plant/tree to take root (3 or 14 days - see below) PLUS 30 days.

• Many mefarshim understand⁸ that the concern is that the plant should not take root during the Shemita year. As such, it must be planted sufficiently before the Shemita year that it has fully taken root by Rosh Hashana. On that basis, 14 days should be sufficient.

19. אף בזמן הזה אין נוטעין אילנות ואין מרכיבין ואין מבריכין ערב שביעית אלא כדי שתקלט הנטיעה ותשנה אחר הקליטה שלשים יום קודם ראש השנה של שביעית. וסתם קליטה שתי שבתות. ודבר זה אסור לעולם מפני מראית העין שפלא יאמר הרואה בשביעית נטעו. נמצאת אומר שהנוטע או המבריך או המרכיב ערב שביעית קודם ראש השנה במ"ד יום יקיים. פחות מכן יעקר

רמב"ם הלכות שמיטה ויובל פרק ג הלכה יא

However, the Rambam understands that the issue is not directly related to Shemita, but to Orla! If a tree were planted just before Shemita, the Orla count of 3 years would begin during the Shemita year. If so, and year 1 for Orla was Shemita, people may think that the person actually planted the tree DURING Shemita. As such, the tree must be planted long enough before Shemita so that it can take root and then there be one full month which counts as Year 1 for Orla. The Shemita year will then be Year 2 for Orla.

8. See Rashi and Tosafot on Rosh Hashana 10b s.v. shloshim veshloshim.

• Rav Kook rules⁹ that we must be machmir for Rashi/Rabbeinu Tam and ensure that all trees, even non-fruit bearing (for which Orla is irrelevant), must be planted by 15 Elul. The Chazon Ish¹⁰ is lenient with non-fruit trees and permits planting up to Rosh Hashana.

• In practice:

<u>Type of Plant</u>	<u>Must be Planted By</u>
Fruit trees with exposed roots	15 Av (44 days before Rosh Hashana)
Fruit trees with a root ball of soil (<i>gush adama</i>)	29 Av ¹¹
Non-fruit trees with exposed roots	15 Elul (Rav Kook); Rosh Hashana (Chazon Ish)
Non-fruit trees with a root ball of soil	Rosh Hashana
Vegetables	Must <u>sprout</u> before Rosh Hashana ¹²
Flower without scent	26 Elul (Rav Kook); Rosh Hashana (Chazon Ish)
Flowers with a root ball of soil	Rosh Hashana
Turf	Should be done early since it will need to be mown several times

• All garden activities other than planting eg pruning, fertilizing, spraying etc. are permitted until Rosh Hashana - As much as possible should be done BEFORE Shemita to avoid issues during Shemita.

• According to some poskim¹³, one should refrain from ALL gardening etc activity on Erev Rosh Hashana before Yom Tov to add a small amount of Tosefet Shevi'it, as we do for Shabbat¹⁴. Other poskim rule that the Tosefet Yom Tov will fulfil that need¹⁵.

E] TORAH PROHIBITIONS OF WORK DURING SHEMITA

• We saw that the Torah prohibits *zeria* and *zemira* on the Land and *ketzira* and *betzira* on the produce.

20. מכדי זמירה בכלל זריעה, ובצירה בכלל קצירה, למאי הלכתא כתבינהו רחמנא? למימרא: דאהני תולדות מיחייב, אאחרנייתא לא מיחייב.

מועד קטן ג.

Chazal understand that the Torah specifies ONE sub-category in each melacha: Zeria~Zemira and Ketzira~Betzira to teach that ONLY these actions are prohibited on a Torah level. All others are rabbinic.

• In Hilchot Shabbat there are Avot Melacha and Toldot¹⁶ eg planting is the Av and watering is the Tolada. Threshing produce is the Av and squeezing grapes is the Tolada. In hilchot Shabbat, BOTH the Av and the Tolada are prohibited by the Torah¹⁷.

• In Hilchot Shemita the Avot are prohibited by the Torah but the Toldot are prohibited rabbinically¹⁸.

E1] THE LAND

The following activities are, in principle¹⁹, Torah prohibitions relating to the LAND during Shemita year:

- **ZERIA** - Planting
 - the action of *zeria* relates to seeds (eg grain) but the prohibition includes ANY physical planting²⁰.
 - even non fruit-bearing plants.
 - a fruit tree planted in a prohibited manner during Shemita must be uprooted, even after Shemita.²¹

• Today, it is common for sowing to be done automatically by machines. Is this a type of *grama* which may be less prohibited²²? Most poskim rule that hand held or operated machinery is halachically considered to be the same as direct action. Where a machine/robot is programmed in advance to carry out prohibited melachot during Shemita, this is more likely to be *grama*.²³

9. Shabbat HaAretz 3:5.

10. 22:5. Also quoted by R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach Minchat Shlomo 1:55.

11. If the tree with the root ball is removed from the pot and left lying directly on the soil, it can be planted up to Rosh Hashana.

12. If vegetables begin to sprout during Shemita year they will be prohibited as *sefichin* - see below.

13. Derech Emuna Shemita 3:11.

14. Even though the Gemara in Moed Katan 4a (above) indicated that there is NO Tosefet Shabbat, Tosafot (ibid) explains this to mean that there is no fixed and lengthy period of Tosefet Shabbat. However, all agree that one must add a few minutes.

15. Minchat Shlomo 3:121:3

16. The Av melacha is the physical act which was performed in the construction of the Mishkan. The Tolada is any other act which achieves the same purpose.

17. The practical distinction between them is mainly relevant only to the korban which one brings upon breach.

18. Rambam (1:2-3).

19. We we look below at the debate concerning whether any of the mitzvot of Shemita currently apply on a Torah level, or are Rabbinic today.

20. There is a halachic debate concerning *netiya* - planting a plant, rather than a seed. The Gemara (Gittin 53b) state that *netiya* is a Torah prohibition. This is the position of the Rash (Mishna Shevi'it 2:6). The Rambam (1:4) appears to rule that *netiya* is rabbinic and the Acharonim have different ways of understanding this psak. The Chazon Ish (17:2) understands that the Rambam actually considers it to be min haTorah, but most Acharonim disagree (see Minchat Chinuch 327).

21. Rambam 1:12, 3:11.

22. In hilchot Shabbat, *grama* - causing a melacha to happen in a delayed and indirect manner is usually prohibited rabbinically.

23. See R. Yaakov Ariel, Baohela Shel Torah 3:5

- However, grama may be MORE serious for Shemita than for Shabbat since there is a stronger mitzva to allow the Land to rest, not merely a focus on individual actions.²⁴
- Performing an action with a shinui will not always down-grade it to a rabbinic prohibition. The Chazon Ish²⁵ requires that shinui is reflected in some different impact on the land - result oriented. Simply doing the act differently may not be sufficient²⁶. Pre-programmed machines which result in a *zeria* which is otherwise normal may still involve a Torah prohibition.
- **ZEMIRA** - Pruning
 - cutting fronds of a vine to stimulate growth.
 - there is a debate as to whether pruning other trees (*kirsum*) is prohibited on a Torah or Rabbinic level.²⁷
 - Rav Kook²⁸ rules that the pruning is only deoraita when done in such a manner as will improve the fruit not just the health of the tree. Since pruning non-vines is for the tree, not the fruit, it will be a rabbinic prohibition and permitted in certain cases (especially if done by a non-Jew).
 - cutting back regular trees for shape, tidiness etc is permitted.
- **CHARISHA** - Plowing
 - the Torah verse apparently prohibits ploughing during Shemita²⁹, but the poskim are divided as to whether the prohibition is min haTorah or rabbinic³⁰.
- Activities for non-agricultural purposes eg digging for building are permitted provided it is clear from the context that this is not agricultural.³¹

E2] THE PRODUCE

- **KOTZER** - Reaping - as an owner (grain, vegetable and other annual crops)
- **BOTZER** - Gathering - as an owner (picking fruit and other perennial crops).
- these do NOT apply to non-fruit bearing plants (unlike the halachot of zeria/zemira). As such, it is permitted to cut off branches from non-fruit trees for *schach*, building etc. They do not have K7.³²

21. וְהִיְתָה שְׁבֵת הָאָרֶץ לָכֶם לְאֹכְלָהּ לֶךָ וּלְעִבְדֶיךָ וּלְאִמְתֶיךָ וּלְתַשְׁבְּדֶיךָ וְלַתְּשֻׁבָה הַגְּרָיִם עִמָּךְ.

ויקרא כהו'

Shemita produce MAY be eaten. According to some mefarshim (Ramban - see below) it is even a mitzva to eat it! As such, some picking MUST be permitted!

22. וְאֶת-עֲנָבֶיךָ וְזֵיתֶיךָ לֹא תִבְצֹר - מִן הַשְּׂמֹרֶת בְּאֶרֶץ אֵין אֹתָהּ בּוֹצֵר, אֲבָל אֹתָהּ בּוֹצֵר מִן הַמּוֹפְקִים. לֹא תִבְצֹר - לֹא תִבְצֹר בְּדֶרֶךְ הַבּוֹצְרִים.

ספרא בהר פרשה א תחילת פרק א

Chazal explain that gathering and picking us PERMITTED during Shemita as long as it is not done professionally or commercially, but from produce which is HEFKER³³.

- The Rishonim differ as to what is halachically required so that the picking/gathering will be permitted:
 - Rabbeinu Tam: Requires TWO conditions: an unusual method of picking (shinui) PLUS produce which is hefker, not guarded.
 - R. Shimon of Sens³⁴: Requires ONE condition: only that the produce be hefker OR a shinui is used.
 - Rambam³⁵: Requires ONE condition: only that the method of gathering be different.

24. For instance, planting a seed shortly before Shabbat is permitted, even if it takes root on Shabbat. Planted a seed or plant immediately before Shemita is prohibited since the plant takes root during Shemita (Minchat Chinuch end of 326 and R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, Ma'adanei Aretz 13:17). We dealt above with the concept of Tosefet Shevi'it.

25. Chazon Ish 25:38. See also Shu't Har Tzvi OC 1:208.

26. Where there are multiple reasons for leniency some poskim permit planting - eg a non-fruit tree with a root ball, especially if planted by a non-Jew.

27. The Sifra (Behar 1:5) indicates that this is deoraita but Moed Katan 3a rules that it is derabbanan. Rambam (1:2) appears to rule deoraita but the Chazon Ish 21:16 and 26:1 reads the Rambam as ruling derabbanan. Rav Kook and the Chazon Ish rule that zemira is a Torah prohibition only for vines and rabbinic for other trees. This is also due to the unique nature of pruning vines, which must be cut in very specific places to promote fruit growth.

28. Shabbat HaAretz Kuntres Acharon 11.

29. This is the understanding of R. Akiva in the Gemara (Rosh Hashana 9a). R. Yishmael learns that the verse is NOT dealing with Shemita at all, but teaches that harvesting for a mitzva (eg the korban Omer) is permitted on Shabbat - see above.

30. Rambam rules (1:10) that ploughing is derabbanan. Mahari Kurkus (on Rambam) and Shu't Radvaz 1560 rule that the Rambam is referring here to ploughing to prepare the ground. However, ploughing around a plant or seed to improve growth will be a form of *zeria* which is prohibited min haTorah. Chazon Ish (18:3) rules that *charisha* is a Torah prohibition.

31. For instance, laying astroturf is permitted as long as it is clear to observers that it is not real grass.

32. Minchat Shlomo 1:51. Lulavim, hadasim and aravot also do not have K7. Even though some palms are fed to animals, since our practice today is to throw them away and we do not feed them to animals, they will not have K7.

33. The mefarshim debate whether the produce is automatically hefker since the Torah declared it so, or whether there is an additional requirement for the owners to declare it hefker. Rambam (Sefer Hamitzvot 134) indicates that there is a mitzva for the owner to declare it hefker. R. Moshe Feinstein rules (Igrot Moshe YD 3:90) that, even though the Torah declares it hefker (Shemot 23:11: וְהִשְׁבִּיעַת תִּשְׁמְטֶנָּה וְיִטְשֶׁתָּהּ), there is an additional requirement for the owner also to declare it hefker. Most poskim do not require a verbal declaration and a sign in the garden that the produce is hefker will suffice.

34. Mishna Shevi'it 8:6.

35. 4:22

- The mefarshim also differ as to whether the shinui should be:
 - Bartenura³⁶: in the method of cutting (eg use scissors rather than shears).
 - Rambam³⁷: in the quantity of picking (ie a small amount for personal use³⁸ rather than commercially reaping the whole field for sale).
- Chazal understand that the prohibition of Shemita is picking/gathering as an owner - ie in large quantities in a professional/commercial manner. Picking/gathering small quantities in a non-professional manner will be PERMITTED.
- In fact, picking/gathering small amounts of produce (a few day's food) in a non-professional/commercial manner is permitted for anyone - even the owner of the field - since the produce is considered ownerless - hefker.
- In practice:
 - the prohibition of picking/gathering relates ONLY to produce which has K7.
 - one may pick a small amount at a time.
 - one should preferably use a shinui when cutting.

F] RABBINIC PROHIBITIONS OF WORK DURING SHEMITA

- We saw above that there is a positive Torah mitzva for the Land to rest. R. Kook understands³⁹ that if a person performs work on a regular basis which is only prohibited on a Rabbinic level, they will nevertheless be in breach of the positive Torah mitzva!
- Any other activity (the halacha gives 22 categories) which enhances the growth of plant is prohibited rabbinically. This will include watering, weeding, fertilizing, removing stones⁴⁰ etc.
- The Chazon Ish⁴¹ lists the 22 Toldot⁴² as:
 - applying dust - מאבקין [5] removing leaves - מפרקין [4] removing blemishes - מיבלין [3] hoeing - מעדרין [2] fertilizing - מזבלין [1]
 - removing green branches - מורדין [9] pruning - מקרסמין [8] removing stones - מסקלין [7] fumigating - מעשנין [6]
 - covering roots with ash - קוטמין [13] wrapping - כורכין [12] applying manure - מזהמין [11] removing side branches - עושין [14]
 - weeding with roots - ניכוש [18] piercing figs - ומנקבין [17] smearing figs with oils - סכין [16] watering - משקין [15] building shelters - בתים
 - removing branches - מגזמין [22] hoeing (under olive) - קשקוש [21] supporting - מפסגין [20] weeding w/o roots - כיסוח [19]
- Additionally, there are specific rabbinic Toldot Melacha related directly to the Avot Melacha:
 - ZERIA - includes *havracha* (sinking a branch into the soil to create a new plant), and *harkava* - grafting.

23. משקין בית השלחין במועד ובשביעית

משנה מועד קטן פרק א משנה א

*The Mishna rules that it is permitted during Shemita year to water a field that requires regular watering.*⁴³

- Therefore, any activity which is normally prohibited rabbinically but is carried out in order to save the plant from dying (or according to some poskim to save the fruit from dying) is permitted.
- Most poskim understand that this heter is only applicable with the Toldot, which are rabbinic.⁴⁴
- The mefarshim understand this heter in two very different ways:
 - some⁴⁵ explain it using the general principle of significant monetary loss - *hefsed* - in the case of a rabbinic mitzva.
 - others⁴⁶ understand that it is based on principles specific to hilchot Shemita - that activities to sustain the plant are not considered 'melacha' on the Land⁴⁷.

36. Mishna Shevi'it

37. 4:24. See also Chazon Ish 12:8.

38. Chazon Ish 26:6 defines a small amount as what is needed for the family for a few days. An Otzar Beit Din which is gathering for a whole town can gather in the produce in the normal manner.

39. Shabbat HaAretz 1:4, Kuntres Acharon 7.

40. The equivalent activities on Shabbat would be prohibited on a Torah level.

41. 17:19.

42. 1-17 appear in Chapter 2 of Mesechet Shevi'it. 18-21 appear in Moed Katan 3a. 22 appears in Avoda Zara 50b. The mefarshim have different explanations and translations for a number of these melachot,

43. A *beit hashelachim* requires regular watering whereas a *beit haba'al* receives sufficient water from rainfall. Most Rishonim (see Rash and others on the Mishna) understand that this heter applies not only to watering but to all other rabbinic prohibitions which are performed to preserve the life of the plant. A minority (see Nimukeu Yosef) understand that the heter related to watering only.

44. Rav Kook is strict on this (as on many issues pertaining to Shemita, whereas the Chazon Ish is often more lenient. Rav Kook (Kuntres Acharon 2) sees this heter as fully connected to the issue of *hefsed*, in principle these actions are prohibited, but the prohibition is pushed aside (*dechuya*) through the heter of *hefsed*. The Chazon Ish (17:27 and 21:17) understands that work to preserve a plant is, by definition, permitted (*hutra*) during Shemita. Where however the only concern is *hefsed*, one must indeed try to minimize the melacha as much as possible.

45. Rashi Moed Katan 3a s.v. setumei.

46. Ritva Moed Katan 3a s.v. setumei; Rashi Avoda Zara 50b s.v. aval. The Chazon Ish (17:27) understands that, for Shemita, the prohibition applies to any work which is intended to INCREASE growth. Whereas on Shabbat, any melacha which assists in keeping the plant alive would be a Torah prohibition.

47. There are a number of *nafka minot* - practical halachic implications - to this theoretical debate, including: (i) whether such work is permitted only in cases of rabbinic prohibition (since the heter is due to *hefsed*) - this is the position of Rav Kook (Shabbat HaAretz 1:5:12, Kuntres Acharon 12). Or whether even Torah prohibitions are permitted to keep the plant alive (since these are not considered to be work on the Land (see R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach Shu't Minchat Shlomo 51:8); (ii) whether one should try to only perform work in a way which is rabbinically prohibited (eg with a shinui) or may perform Torah prohibitions where these are more effective; (iii) whether rabbinically prohibited actions to preserve the plant's health may be performed even where there is no direct loss eg spraying to prevent weeds. Rav Kook prohibits this whereas other poskim (eg the Chazon Ish) permit it; (iv) whether actions needed to preserve the plant should be brought forward before Shemita or delayed until after Shemita where possible.

- There is also a major disagreement as to whether this heter applies only when there is a risk of loss of the plant/tree itself⁴⁸, or even to action required to prevent loss of this year's crop⁴⁹. In practice, since (according to many poskim) the mitzva of Shemita applies today on a rabbinic level⁵⁰ and not min haTorah, many poskim are lenient and permit rabbinic melacha to prevent loss of the crop where a farmer who would otherwise suffer significant loss. However, for private gardens, most poskim are stricter, and only permit watering etc where necessary to preserve the plant/tree but not to preserve the crop⁵¹.
- All poskim rule that, where (rabbinic) melachot are needed to prevent loss, one should weigh whether the action is actually required to preserve the plant/tree (permitted) or is in truth needed only to promote growth (prohibited)⁵².

In practice:

- gardens and plants are watered minimally to stop them from dying.
- we will look in more detail be'H in the coming shiurim at the practical implications for watering modern gardens with automated sprinkler systems etc.
- hedges etc can be cut back and lawns mown for aesthetic purposes.
- there are special rules for potted plants (inside and out), plants standing on tiles/flooring etc, window boxes and plants inside the house.

G] KEDUSHAT SHEVI'IT - THE CORE PRINCIPLES

24. בַּיּוֹבֵל הוּא קִדְּשׁ תְּהִיָּה לָכֶם מִן־הַשְּׂדֵה וְתִבְּוֹאֶתָּהּ.

ויקרא כה"ב

25. כְּתִיב בִּיּוֹבֵל הוּא קִדְּשׁ תְּהִיָּה לָכֶם וְגו' - מֵהָיָא קוּדֵשׁ אֶף תְּבֹאֵתָה קוּדֵשׁ.

תלמוד ירושלמי (וילנא) מסכת שביעית פרק ז'

Chazal learn that the produce of the Yovel (and by extension Shemita) year has intrinsic kedusha.

26. וְהִתְּהַלַּחְתְּ שֵׁבֶת הָאָרֶץ לָכֶם לְאֹכְלָהּ - וּדְרָשׁוּ לֹאֲכֹלָהּ וְלֹא לְסַחֲרָהּ. וְזֶה דְּבַר תּוֹרָה הוּא ... וְנִכְפַּלָה זֶה הַמִּצְוָה בְּחֹמְרָה יְתִיב וְאֶכְלֹנוּ אֲדִינֵי עִמְךָ. שֶׁלֹּא חֹמֶר 'לְאֲדִינֵי עִמְךָ' תַּעֲזוּב אֹתָם' כִּמוֹ שֶׁחֹמֶר 'ר"פ קְדוּשִׁים' (לְעֵי וּלְגַר תַּעֲזוּב אֹתָם) בְּלִקְטָה וּשְׂכַחָהּ. אֲזַל לְשׁוֹן אֲכִילָה מִזְכִּיר זֶה הַבְּחִיב בְּכָל מְקוֹם.

השגות הרמב"ן לספר המצוות לרמב"ם שכחת העשין

The Ramban observes that the Torah stresses the importance of eating Shemita produce. According to some opinions, the Ramban's position is that it is a mitzva to eat Shemita produce which has K7⁵³.

- In order to establish which produce has K7, one must answer 4 core questions:
1. What type of produce is it?
 2. When did it grow?
 3. Where did it grow?
 4. Who owns the land on which it grew?

G1] WHAT TYPE OF PRODUCE IS IT?

- K7 applies to produce that is grown from the Land specifically for human or animal food, or even for other human uses such as anointing, lighting a fire, makeup, etc. According to many poskim, it also applies to scent-bearing flowers.
- K7 does not apply to decorative flowers that have no scent.

G2] WHEN DID IT GROW?

- The Shemita Year runs from Rosh Hashana of the 7th year (Sept 7 2021) until Rosh Hashana of the 8th year (Sept 26 2022). This Shemita is actually longer than normal because 5782 is also a leap year. However, the K7 of produce is not decided by the calendar, but applies to the produce according to when it grew or when it was picked, as set out below.

48. Rav Kook (Shabbat HaAretz 1:5) rules that NO action is permitted to save the crop (which is hefker), only to prevent the death of the plant and avoid the need to plant new trees after Shemita. The heter of *hefsed* only extends to the long-term loss of the tree, not the short-term loss of the crop.

49. The Chazon Ish (21:14) permits actions needed to save the crop since such actions are not considered 'melacha'. Also, even though the fruits are hefker, the Torah designates them as food for the poor etc so it is legitimate to protect them (see Maharil Diskin brought it Ma'adanei Aretz 7). Rambam (Perush HaMishna 4:10) also rules that the reason one may not cut down fruit-bearing branches during Shemita is to preserve them for the poor.

50. We will be'H deal in depth with this important question during the coming shiurim.

51. Note that, even according to the stricter position of Rav Kook, actions to preserve the crop are only problematic if the fruit has K7 (see below). However, for fruit which does NOT have kedusha (eg fruit on trees at the start of the Shemita year) there are no restrictions. Similarly, many poskim are lenient on (rabbinic prohibited) actions to preserve flowers and decorative plants (even annuals) since many they may not have K7. Perennials may certainly be watered etc to prevent them from dying.

52. See Chazon Ish 21:17.

53. This is explained in this way by the Megillat Esther. Rav Kook takes this opinion (Da' at Kohen 240; Mishpat Kohen 85; Shabbat HaAretz 5:1:1, 6:1:2; Kuntres Acharon 21.) Rav Kook also suggests that one should do *netilat yadim* before eating K7 produce (Shabbat HaAretz 5:7:2; Kuntres Acharon 25).

1. Vegetables

Vegetables have K7 according to when they were picked - *lekita*. So vegetables picked during Shemita year (ie from Sept 7 2021) will have K7. Vegetables which were picked before or after Shemita year do NOT have K7. This will mean that most canned vegetables through 2021 and into 2022 will not be affected by Shemita. But they WILL be affected as they come onto the market during and after Shemita year. However, fresh vegetables are affected by Shemita almost immediately after Rosh Hashana since they are picked and come to the shops quickly.

2. Olives, Grapes, Grain and Legumes

The status of olives, grapes, grains and legumes (such as beans, peas etc.) is not determined by picking but by when they achieved the first third of their growth - *gidul shelish*. That is, they have K7 if the first third of their growth occurs during the Shemita year.

3. Fruit

The determining stage for fruit is the formation of the young fruit on the tree - *chanata*. As such, it does not matter when the fruit is picked, but when it first began to develop. As such, all fruit on the trees at the start of the Shemita year - figs, pomegranates etc - will NOT have K7 because they formed in the sixth year. But the fruit on the trees at the start of the eighth year - ie September 2022 - WILL have K7, even though it is picked after Shemita.

4. Flowers

Not all flowers have K7. Those which have scent (as most flowers do) are (according to many poskim) subject to the laws of Shemita. The kedusha (for annual flowers) is based on when the flowers were picked. As such, when one buys any scented flowers during Shemita year one should preferably buy them from a store with a hechsher.

- As consumers, it is very difficult to know exactly when the produce coming onto the market reaches any of the above stages and potentially has K7. Therefore, many kashrut authorities produce and update calendars through and after the Shemita year showing from which date each different vegetable and fruit (fresh and canned) is affected by K7. We will see some of these dates in the subsequent shiurim.
- In practice, many shops and kashrut organizations adopt halachic approaches which avoid K7 entirely, and we will discuss these be'H in the coming shiurim.

G3] WHERE IN ISRAEL DID IT GROW?

- Shemita only applies to produce grown in Eretz Yisrael. Fruit and vegetables grown outside Eretz Yisrael⁵⁴ have no K7.
- However, the relevant geographic boundaries for Shemita are not determined by the modern boundaries of the State of Israel. There are certain areas of Israel that definitely have kedusha for Shemita because they were settled by the Jews who returned from exile to build the Second Beit HaMikdash (Olei Bavel). Other areas of Israel have a lesser kedusha for Shemita since they were only conquered by the Yehoshua in the initial settlement (Olei Mitzrayim). There are yet other parts of modern-day Israel which were not historically part Eretz Yisrael at all, and the produce from these areas may not have any K7.
- Shemita only applies fully to produce grown normally in the ground. Produce grown hydroponically - in water, or in pots which are not connected to the ground (matza menutak) does not have K7. Technological advances have turned this into a major industry.
- We will be'H learn more about all of these issues in the coming shiurim.

G4] WHO OWNS THE LAND ON WHICH THE PRODUCE GREW?

This is a major issue in the laws of Shemita on which there is a disagreement in halacha:-

- According to the Beit Yosef⁵⁵, produce that grows in a field belonging to a non-Jew in Eretz Yisrael DOES NOT have K7. This is the accepted practice in Jerusalem and, in general, most of Israel.
- According to the Mabit⁵⁶, produce grown in a field belonging to a non-Jew in Eretz Yisrael DOES still have K7. This is the opinion of the Chazon Ish and is the accepted practice in Bnei Brak and some other places.

54. In practice, this means that many foods in Israel today will not have K7 eg rice, sugar, soy oil, many spices.

55. R. Yosef Karo, 16C Spain, Turkey then Eretz Yisrael.

56. R. Moshe miTrani, 16C Greece then Eretz Yisrael

APPENDIX

MATERIAL IN ENGLISH ON SHEMITA

SEFARIM DEALING IN DETAIL WITH SHEMITA

- Shemita - R. Yosef Zvi Rimon (2014)
- Gateway to Shemittah - R. Dovid Marchant (2007)
- Rav Kook's Introduction to Shabbat Ha'Aretz, translated by Rabbi Julian Sinclair

MATERIAL ON THE WEB

- IN DEPTH:**
- <https://en.toraland.org.il/beit-midrash/articles/shemitah/> (2021)
The Institute for Torah and the Land of Israel - a very detailed series of around 40 fully annotated articles in English
- IN BRIEF:**
- <https://rabbihaber.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/shemita-guide.pdf> (2014)
A great free downloadable 20-page short guide by Rabbi Alan Haber
 - OU: a short primer at <https://oukosher.org/blog/feature/shemittah-primer/> (2014)
<https://oukosher.org/blog/consumer-kosher/shemittah-for-the-clueless/> (2007) and articles at <https://oukosher.org/blog/shemittah/> (2014)
 - <http://shaalvim.org/Uploads/files/Kitzur%20Hilchot%20Shmitta.pdf> (2014)
A short 'how-to' guide produced by Sha'alvim for Women