

## Parashah #32

(Updated for 5.14.11)

B'har ~ בהר ~ On Mount

Torah: Vayikra/Leviticus 25:1~26:2

Haftarah: Yirme'yahu/Jeremiah 32:6-27

B'rit Hadashah: Luke 4:16-21; 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:21-24; Galatians 6:7-10

*B'har* literally means *on Mount* but a more specific interpretation would be *on the Mount of Sinai*. This is a relatively short Parashah which covers the subjects of (Sh-meet-tah) *Sh'mittah/Sabbatical Year* and (Yo-vehl) *Yovel/Jubilee*. In the *Sh'mittah*, the land lays fallow every 7<sup>th</sup> year and after the 49<sup>th</sup> year (7 X 7) it lays fallow an additional year for the *Yovel*, the 50<sup>th</sup> year of Jubilee.

### CHAPTER 25

Last week in **Vayikra/Leviticus 23:3** we read “Work is to be done on six days; but the seventh day is a *Shabbat* of complete rest, a holy convocation; you are not to do any kind of work, it is a *Shabbat for Adonai*, even in your homes.”

Notice the phrase *Shabbat for Adonai*. This phrase is repeated twice in our Parashah this week in **Vayikra/Leviticus 25:2 & 4**. No where else in the entire 5 books of the Torah do we find a festival named specifically as a “*Shabbat for Adonai*”. Only the seventh day *Shabbat* and the (Sh-meet-tah) *Sh'mittah/Sabbatical Year* enjoy this title.

Let's turn back to the Creation Account in **B'eresheet/Genesis 1:3 & 4, 10-12, 18, 21, 25, and 31**. Here we find the phrase “[it] was good”, appearing exactly **seven** times in relation to how G~d described the stages of each day's work. However, upon looking closely at **Day Three**, we notice this term is used twice. And on **Day Six** the term “very good” was used. What was created on day three? Dry land, and seas, grass, plants and trees. And what was created on Day Six? Man.

Okay, now what two subjects are the center of attention of both the Sabbatical year and the Yovel? Man (inhabitants) and the Land (and what grows on it). Let's read these (p'sue-keem) *p'sukim/verses* of our current Parashah.

- First the Land: **Vayikra/Leviticus 25:4 & 5** “But in the seventh year is to be a Shabbat of complete rest for the land, a *Shabbat for Adonai*, you will neither sow your field nor prune your grapevines. You are not to harvest what grows by itself from the seeds left by your previous harvest, and you are not to gather the grapes of your untended vine; it is to be a year of complete rest for the land.”

- And now its inhabitants (Man): **Vayikra/Leviticus 25:10** “and you are to consecrate the fiftieth year, proclaiming freedom throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It will be a Yovel for you.” (**Trivia note:** Did you realize the inscription on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia is from **Vayikra / Leviticus 25:10**? “Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.” Sure is, for a fact!)

The sabbatical year and the **Yovel/Jubilee** remind us everything belongs to HaShem. We really don't own anything. “The earth is the L~rd's and all it contains.” (**Teh-heh-leem) Tehillim / Psalms 24:1**). With our westernized mindset, it's easy to get caught in the trap of materialism. We most often, unfortunately, measure our quality of life based on the value of our possessions. A person cannot really own things. We are just short-term borrowers.

In **Vayikra/Leviticus 25:8**, we are told to count off seven sabbaths of years. That is, seven times seven years so you have forty-nine years. The sabbatical year occurred once every seven years. HaShem commanded us to count off seven full sabbatical cycles. The fiftieth year was called the (Yoh-**vehl**) **Yovel** (יובל) which is transliterated into English as **Jubilee**. During the jubilee year . . .

- Agriculture is to be left fallow just like a sabbatical year
- Debts are forgiven
- Loans are cancelled
- Slaves are released
- Property holdings return to their original tribal/family owners

Jubilee years have not been practiced in Israel since the tribes went into exile. But can you imagine what it was like when Jubilee years were kept? Can you imagine yourself in any one of the above categories and being totally released? Imagine the merriment! Sure would set one's feet to dancing!

In **verses 9 and 10** we are told “Then, on the tenth day of the seventh month, on (Yome~rhymes with home) **Yom Kippur/Day of Atonement** you are to sound a blast on the shofar; you are to sound the shofar all through your land; and you are to consecrate the fiftieth year, proclaiming freedom throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It will be a **yovel** for you; you will return everyone to the land he owns and everyone is to return to his family.” This trumpet sound is an eternal call to freedom and an enduring hope for the future. We long to hear the Jubilee trumpet of Messiah.

Remember? In **Luke 4:18-19**, Yeshua told the people in Nazareth He had come to “proclaim release to the captives . . . to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the L~rd”. The favorable year of the L~rd is the Jubilee year! Yeshua is our spiritual jubilee. His death paid the debt of sin we cannot repay.

“Thus you are not to take advantage of each other, but you are to fear your G~d; for I am Adonai your G~d” (verse 17). Abba’s Word is very clear . . . Torah forbids any kind of dishonest transaction. For instance: a person who would never think of stealing a ballpoint pen doesn’t bother to point out to a vendor they forgot to bill him for his last shipment. A couple selling a house does not feel it necessary to point out to the prospective buyers the furnace is failing. A broker feels no need to let his client know his fees are twice the industry standard. It’s just business, right? Business affairs should AND must be held to the same standard of Torah as the rest of life. While discussing business transactions, Torah warns us not to take advantage of each other! Scrupulous honesty might not seem like a good way to get ahead in the business world, but it will get you ahead in the kingdom of heaven!

**Vayikra/Leviticus 25:20** addresses the issue of “What are we gonna do?!” Just as (B’nay Israh-ehl) *B’nei Isra’el/Children of Israel* did when they were in the wilderness. They were told to gather two day’s manna on the 6<sup>th</sup> day for their provision on Shabbat. HaShem requires our faith/trust. *Sh’mittah/Sabbatical Year* was a stretch for His children; can you imagine how much more of a stretch *Yovel/Jubilee* would be for them? Would it be a stretch for us? I dare say we would be greatly challenged!

For that matter, many of us are still greatly challenged. Even though we know Shabbat is a day of rest and it is set apart as holy. No common things are to transpire, yet, some still fail to prepare/plan ahead and decide to buy and sell (common to the work week days) although we have been instructed to keep the Sabbath holy.

When we truly read **verses 20-22**, what do we find? Our Abba Father is speaking. He says, “If you ask, “If we aren’t allowed to sow seed or harvest what our land produces, what are we going to eat the seventh year?” then I will order my blessing on you during the sixth year, so the land brings forth enough produce for all three years.” He goes on to say, “The eighth year you will sow seed but eat the old, stored produce until the ninth year; that is, until the produce of the eighth year comes in, you will eat the old, stored food.” W ☺ W!!!! This sounds like a TRIPLE blessing to me!!!!

**Verse 23** tells us The Land, Israel is not to be sold into perpetuity without a right of redemption because The Land belongs to Adonai. Can you imagine what HaShem is thinking right now concerning the things going on in His land? And, for that matter, His thoughts concerning the role the United States is playing right now? I can almost see Him shaking His head and sadly saying, “Children! Children!! Children!!! When will you learn?”

Today, we have very many Federal and State governmental programs which take care of those in need. I venture to say if we, people as a whole, had followed Torah, those programs would not have become necessary. **Vayikra/Leviticus 25:35** tells us how it was to be done: “. . . if a member of your people has become poor, so he can’t support himself among you, you are to assist him as you would a foreigner or a temporary resident, in order for him to continue living with you.”

Then, with regard to **verse 49**, “. . . or if he becomes rich, he may redeem himself.”, I have a question. If this individual has been a slave, how in the world would he “become rich”? I guess this is another one of those questions I can ask my Father when I see Him face to face!

The Torah paints a picture of work and rest, slavery and freedom, which spiritually amounts to life and death.

In **Galatians 6:7-10**, Rabbi *Sha’ul/Paul* tells us: “Don’t delude yourselves; no one makes a fool of G~d! A person reaps what he sows. Those who keep sowing in the field of their old nature, in order to meet its demands, will eventually reap ruin. Those who keep sowing in the field of the Spirit will reap, from the Spirit, everlasting life. So let us not grow weary of doing what is good; for if we don’t give up, we will in due time reap the harvest. Therefore, as the opportunity arises, let us do what is good to, and for, everyone and especially to the family of those who are trustingly faithful.”

Placing our trust and faith in the atoning work of Yeshua Ha Mashiach is to rest from our own labors! Without the faith of Messiah at work in our lives, we don’t have a proper concept of Shabbat. To rest (on the Sabbath) is to cease working in our own fields and to begin “resting” in the fields of the Master. When we were in the world, we were “slaves” to sin. But now, in Yeshua, we have experienced our spiritual Yovel. We are no longer slaves to sin! We have been set free by the power of his Sabbath rest!

“What the Messiah has freed us for is freedom! Therefore, stand firm and don’t let yourselves be tied up again to a yoke of slavery.” (**Galatians 5:1**)

And again in **Ivrim/Hebrews 4:9-11**, “So there remains a Shabbat-keeping for G~d’s people. For the one who has entered G~d’s rest has also rested from his own works, as G~d did from His. Therefore, let us do our best to enter that rest; so no one will fall short because of the same kind of disobedience.”

## **CHAPTER 26**

And finally, there is the admonition again concerning idols AND keeping the Sabbath.

- **Vayikra/Leviticus 26:1** “You are not to make yourselves any idols, erect a carved statue or a standing stone, or place any carved stone anywhere in your land in order to bow down to it. I am Adonai your God.
- **Vayikra/Leviticus 26:2** Keep my Shabbats, and revere my sanctuary; I am ADONAI.”

B’har ~ **בהר** ~ On Mount

**Haftarah: Yirme’yahu/Jeremiah 32:6-27**

This passage of scripture parallels our Torah portion with regard to redeeming property. These verses seem to be a message of hope to *Yirme'yahu/Jeremiah* when things seemed to be hopeless. Babylon was terrorizing Jerusalem. Jeremiah was in prison because he had prophesied the sins of the people and their stubborn refusal to repent would bring them destruction and exile, a word they did not want to hear!

Even though Jeremiah was in prison, HaShem spoke very clearly for him to redeem a family property, which was beyond Jeremiah's comprehension. He found it hard to understand why he should redeem land which would soon be conquered by the enemy. HaShem assured Jeremiah there is no tragedy beyond His power to change. The ultimate hope here is . . . Israel's history is not ended by conquest, destruction or exile; its destiny is merely delayed, for they have the Divine assurance of ultimate survival and success.

"I am the LORD, the G~d of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?" (verse 27)

To deny HaShem's ability is to deny Adonai himself. Nothing is too hard for G~d. However else we may struggle in our faith, we must come to the place where we accept His power is limitless. Once we get to this point, the door of our hearts is open to whatever He may want to do in our lives. I wonder how many of us cannot hear the great things HaShem wants to do in us and through us, because we don't believe in His ability. Think of how we would pray and live differently if in our heart of hearts we knew, that we knew, that we knew G~d's power is limitless!!!!

### B'har ~ בְּהָרַר ~ On Mount

**B'rit Hadashah: Luke 4:16-21; 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:21-24; Galatians 6:7-10**

**Luke 4:16-21** It is important for us to understand Hebrew tradition when reading these verses. In a synagogue, one does not approach the (bee-mah) *Bimah/Pulpit* without being invited to come forward. It was/is an honor and a privilege. Nor did one open the Torah scroll to any old place they would choose. As we should know by now, Torah pursuant people all over the world are on the same page at the same time. We all read the same Torah portion if we are choosing to be Torah pursuant. So, the Rabbi (not the minister) called Yeshua forward to read the Haftarah for that Shabbat, which was *Yesha'yahu/Isaiah 61:1 & 2*. What do you think the odds were of this happening; Yeshua being called to the (Bee-mah) *Bimah/pulpit* to read this specific scripture? Tradition, at the time, also allowed the person reading the Torah portion or the Haftarah to (drah-sh) *drash* or *make comments*. When I learned this little tidbit, it shed more light on Abba's Word.

Also note, Yeshua didn't finish *Yesha'yahu/Isaiah 61:2*. This is because the last portion of *verse 2* defines His duties when He comes the second time! These are "the Day of Vengeance

of our G~d” (KJV) or “the Day of the L~rd”. The phrase “comfort all who mourn” refers to the return of the captives, another end-times event (Northern Kingdom/House of Israel).

**1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:21-24** As I read these verses and related them to our Torah portion, it dawned on me how truly free we are in the Messiah. When we accept Him as our Master, we are no longer “slaves” to our former ways and we don’t have to wait for seven years to be “set free” or “released from bondage”. We are set free immediately, if we so choose and act accordingly.

**Galatians 6:7-10** I can remember when these verses REALLY hit home! I loved the L~rd! I thought I was doing the right things by going to church Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Wednesday evening and was involved in a singles ministry too! Nonetheless, from time to time, I kept “sowing in the field of my old nature” in order to meet the demands of the corporate world in which I was involved. “Don’t delude yourselves; no one makes a fool of G~d!” means exactly what it says!!! I finally acknowledged the fact if I continued to do what I used to do I would eventually “reap ruin” and I truly wanted to “reap from the Spirit everlasting life”. I finally decided to no longer be a “slave” to my old nature. The sowing and reaping we have studied isn’t just about agriculture. It’s about everything in life!!! Truly, we will reap what we sow!!!

**The corresponding Psalm for this Torah portion is: Psalm 112**

**Next week’s lesson: Parashah #33**

**B’chukkotai ~ בְּחֻקֹּתַי ~ By My Regulations**

**Torah: Vayikra/Leviticus 26:3~27:34**

**Haftarah: Yirme’yahu/Jeremiah 16:19~17:14**

**B’rit Hadashah: Yochanan/John 14:15-21;  
Yochanan/John 15:10-12; Yochanan Alef/1<sup>st</sup> John**

**Who fills his mind with Torah clears it of fear and folly.**

*Rabbi Chanina Sgan HaKohanim*

**Organize yourselves into classes for the study of Torah,  
since it can best be acquired in association with others.**

*Talmud: Berkot 63b*

*Shavuah tov (have a good week)!!!*