



The Inherent Values of *Shemita* – Rabbi Moshe Bloom:

- A. "Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; but in the seventh you shall let it rest and lie fallow. Let the needy among your people eat of it, and what they leave let the wild beasts eat. You shall do the same with your vineyards and your olive groves." (*Shemot* 23:10–11)
- B. "When you enter the land that I assign to you, the land shall observe a sabbath of the Lord. Six years you may sow your field and six years you may prune your vineyard and gather in the yield. But in the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath of complete rest, a sabbath of the Lord: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. You shall not reap the aftergrowth of your harvest or gather the grapes of your untrimmed vines; it shall be a year of complete rest for the land. But you may eat whatever the land during its sabbath will produce—you, your male and female slaves, the hired and bound laborers who live with you, And your cattle and the beasts in your land may eat all its yield." (*Vayikra* 25:2–7)
- C. "Every seventh year you shall practice remission of debts. This shall be the nature of the remission: every creditor shall remit the due that he claims from his fellow; he shall not dun his fellow or kinsman, for the remission proclaimed is of the Lord. You may dun the foreigner; but you must remit whatever is due you from your kinsmen. There shall be no needy among you—since the Lord your God will bless you in the land that the Lord your G-d is giving you as a hereditary portion—if only you heed the Lord your G-d and take care to keep all this Instruction that I enjoin upon you this day. For the Lord your G-d will bless you as He has promised you: you will extend loans to many nations, but require none yourself; you will dominate many nations, but they will not dominate you.
- "If, however, there is a needy person among you, one of your kinsmen in any of your settlements in the land that the Lord your G-d is giving you, do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy kinsman. Rather, you must open your hand and lend him sufficient for whatever he needs. Beware lest you harbor the base thought, "The seventh year, the year of remission, is approaching," so that you are mean to your needy kinsman and give him nothing. He will cry out to the Lord against you, and you will incur guilt. Give to him readily and have no regrets when you do so, for in return the Lord your G-d will bless you in all your efforts and in all your undertakings. For there will never cease to be needy ones in your land, which is why I command you: open your hand to the poor and needy kinsman in your land." (*Devarim* 15:1–11).



Foundations of the Shemita - Rabbi Moshe Bloom

Rambam (The Guide for the Perplexed 3:39):

So that the soil multiplies and strengthens.

Rambam (The Guide for the Perplexed 3:39):

Compassion and mercy for all human beings, as it says [in the Torah], "My paupers shall eat with you."

Sefer Hachinuch (84):

There is also great value [during the *shemita* year] in that we become more compassionate to our fellow man.

Sefer Hachinuch (84):

So that the person will remember that the land that produces its fruits for him ... does not do so because of its intrinsic qualities. There is a Master over all.

Sefer Hachinuch (84):

The person will increase his trust in G-d."

Ba'al Ha'akeidah:

Being satisfied with minimum necessities

Rabbi Kalisher:

They will not be busy with working the land forever, to fulfill basic needs ... when they will dismantle the yoke of work, they will busy themselves with Torah.

Yovel:

And you shall hallow the fiftieth year. You shall proclaim release throughout the land for all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: each of you shall return to his holding and each of you shall return to his family...

But the land must not be sold beyond reclaim, for the land is Mine; you are but strangers resident with Me. Throughout the land that you hold, you must provide for the redemption of the land. (*Vayikra* 25:10–24)