

At Har Sinai (25:1) – Rashi’s question is famous: Why are the laws of Shmittah mentioned at Har Sinai? Rashi explains that it is to teach us that just like Shmittah had its general and specific rules taught at Sinai the other rules of the Torah were given the same way. But why wait to teach that lesson until now – with Shmittah? Teach it with the first Mitzvah? The **Ben Ish Chai** explains that Shmittah and Har Sinai share a unique quality: That which was lacking in them is what makes them special. Har Sinai was chosen as unique because it lacks the bells and whistles of the other mountains and Shmittah too, involves the lack of growth. Sometimes our greatest Maalah is knowing who we ARE. Sometimes, it is in knowing and being content with what we are not.

And you shall blow a shofar throughout the land(25:9) – The Mishna in Rosh Hashana notes that the blowing of Shofar on Rosh Hashana and Yovel is exactly the same. The **Rambam** distinguishes between the mitzvah to hear the Shofar on Rosh Hashana and the mitzvah to blow on Yom Kippur of Yovel. The Achronim ask that if this is so, why do we not all have to blow Shofar in Yovel? **Rav Schachter Shlita** quoted the Avnei Nezer who notes that Shomeiya K’Oneh only applies to words – shofar is a Mitzva in making noise and Shomea Koneh wouldn’t apply to noise. (He later changes this opinion). The change may be due to the fact that Shofar on Rosh Hashana is a context of Tefilla – albeit without words. Maybe this is the difference with Rosh Hashana as well – the mitzvah is to hear – since there are words and Shomea K’Oneh applies. On Yovel it is about noise to be a sign to let the Avadim go free.

According to the number of years of crops he should sell it to you (25:15) – Why does the Torah make you wait 2 years after Yovel before selling real estate even if both sides want it (Erachin 29b)? **Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl.** points out that the Torah wants us to understand that we are not the ultimate Baalim on the land of Israel. Hashem is. In fact, that lesson expands to all areas of possession – L’Hashem HaAretz U’Miloah.

And you will sit on the land securely (Labetach) (25:18) – There are three possukim that refer to Betach in context to the land of Israel. Our Possuk which speaks of sitting on the land LaBetach, one in Bechukosai which speaks of Betach b’Artzechem and one in Re’eh which speaks of being left free of enemies and sitting Betach. The Kabbalist **Rav Gamliel Rabinovitz Shlita** explained that the Torah speaks to 3 different groups of people. The first speaks to people who are on top (LaBetach Aleiha) securely even while the blood thirsty terrorists try to tunnel underneath. The second refers to the rest of Am Yisrael who place their trust in Hashem who are promised Betach B’Artzeichem. The third is a promise to the Chayalei Tzahal who sometimes need to leave the borders but are promised Me’Saviv V’Yishavtem Betach.

Do not take interest from him (25:36) – At the end of Sefer Nidche Yisrael, The **Chofetz Chaim** notes the terrible effect of taking interest. He explains that when Yechezkel experienced the episode of the dry bones, one body did not rise with the rest. When he asked why, he was told that the individual was one who took interest from his neighbors. Such people are not to rise in Techiyas HaMeisim. The Chofetz Chaim added that it is Middah K’Negged Middah. He does not want to uphold his downtrodden fellow man. Therefore Hashem does not want him to rise up again either. The Chofetz Chaim added that this is a crucial lesson in life – many do not begin to know or understand the terrible embarrassment in the future from this challenge.

You shall not work with him with Rigor (Perach) (25:43) – Rashi explains that this means causing an Eved to do unnecessary work, merely to torture him. **Rav Nissim Karelitz Shlita** tried to explain how this rule still applies today. He explained that when a wife is preparing for Pesach and then at the point of exhaustion her husband introduces a series of backbreaking Chumros all at once, this could be a violation of Lo Tirdeh Bo B'Perach. If one violates the law (like the building laws) and he organizes rallies and demands his neighbors participate --- all the while being wrong – this might be Lo Tirdeh Bo B'Perach.

You should protect my Shabbos and fear my Mikdash (26:2) – Baal HaTurim explains that this Possuk reminds us that the building of the Mikdash does not replace Shabbos law requirements. **Rav Yehuda Amital ztl.** explained that it is important for a person to have spiritual elements in his relationship with God. However, it is crucial for those spiritual elements to be based firmly in objective Halakhic action, and a Torah-true life. You need to have the "Ke-gavna" element to your Shabbat, but it is meaningless without the hard-core observance symbolized by "Ba-meh Madlikin."

Haftorah: Chanamel my uncle's son came to me in the prison yard and asked me to buy the field in Anasos (Yirmiyahu 32:8)- Why does Yirmiyahu not realize that Chanamel is so dire that he needs to sell his family's Sdeh Achuzah? Why did he need Hashem to tell him? **Rav Soloveitchik ztl.** explained that Yirmiyahu was not merely being told to do an act of charity. He was being asked to perform an act of belief and commitment – that ultimately Chanamel's field would return to its rightful heirs. Yovel too, is a promise – that we will have an achuza in the land. We continuously study the laws of Zeraim with that in mind – V'Shavu Banim l'Gevulam collectively promising that we too, will return to our land.