



# OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI  
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

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## ***Thoughts on Parashat BEHAR / BECHUKOTAI Year 23 by Dayan Abraham David***

The Torah introduces the Mitzvah of 'Shemitta', with the words and Hashem spoke to Moshe, 'Behar Sinai' even though all the Mitzvot were given to Moshe on Har Sinai and it becomes evidently so from this Mitzvah as Rashi and the Meforshun explain. But why was this Mitzvah chosen specially to connect all the other 'Mitzvot' to our receiving them on Har Sinai? The Mitzvah of 'Shemitta' was a Mitzvah which demanded great faith in Hashem. A landowner was commanded to leave his field fallow for a whole year and give up any produce from it to others. He could benefit from it but only as much as others, he would share with everyone equally the produce of what was in fact his field. The first lesson is unity as it was in 'Kabbalat HaTorah', we received the Torah in complete unity, 'Veyechan sham, ke ish Echad belev Echad', we encamped there as one, caring for each other, not just grabbing the best spot for ourselves. The Ora Chayim explains there, that the Torah needs unity, people coming

together to study Torah. Here too in 'Shemitta' the landlord would come together to be equal and one with others who would share his produce in this special year of freedom from work. This was intended to become a year of dedication to Hashem with time off to study the Torah as the Seforno explains: 'Shabbat la Hashem, she gam ovede Haadamah Kasher yishbotu bashana Ha he yitorreru lidrosh Hashem', so that those who work the land will have time to seek the word of Hashem in that year. The best way to study Torah is studying together with others.

The Seforno gives a further insight in the lessons of this Mitzvah, a lesson needed for the study of Torah. The Pasuk (25:19) begins with: 'Ve natna Haaretz pinya ve achaltem la sovah' and the land will give its produce and you will eat to satisfaction and dwell on it with security. Then it goes on "when or if you will ask 'Ma nochal bashanah hasheveit hen lo nizrah ve lo neesaf' what should I eat on the 7<sup>th</sup> year if I do not sow or harvest?" The Pasuk answers: "and I will command my 'Beracha' on the 6<sup>th</sup> year so you will have abundance of produce for 3 years!" It would seem that this 'Beracha' of abundance comes as an answer to the question: "if you

ask”, why not just say: “I will send a *‘Beracha’* for produce for 3 years. The Seforno explains, if you have any doubts and your faith is not complete, and you feel you need to see the *‘Beracha’* then I will give you produce for 3 years. But if you have complete faith and do not question: “What will I eat?” then the same amount of produce of the 6<sup>th</sup> year will be blessed to go a long way and you will eat to satisfaction without having to overwork, to take in produce for 3 years with having problems to store it etc. The *‘Beracha’* would be in *‘Echut’* in quality and not quantity. This would be on the higher level of a blessing or, as the Ben Ish Hai says: “The *‘Beracha’* would fill your store houses, you put in a normal amount and it never ends, that same amount increases to give you all you need. Quantity is a blessing on a lower level but those who have complete faith, the *‘Beracha’* is in the quality of what they eat. This is a lesson for the study of Torah. Some people feel they must see *‘Beracha’* in quantity before they can sit down to learn, they spend years accumulating so that they would be able to sit and learn with peace of mind while the clever ones sit down to learn and receive *‘Beracha’* in quality not quantity, *‘Ve achalte la sovah’*. The *‘Shemitta’* was given on Har Sinai for its message to us for the study of Torah which is our greatest inheritance we need to have faith in Hashem to provide sustenance for our spiritual growth.

### **BECHUKOTAI**

‘Im Behuchotai Telachu Ve et Mitzvotai tishmeru Va asetem Otam’: If

you walk in my statutes and guard my mitzvot and fulfil them then you will receive all the berachot that follow. Rashi explains that: ‘Im Behuchotai Telachu’ refers to the study of the Torah, but it is strange that the study of the Torah is referred to as a statute ‘chok’ which usually refers to mitzvot we do not have explanations for!

We are being told that the way to progress and to go forward for a Jew is the study of the Torah; ‘the study of the Torah works upon us as a ‘chok’’, it affects us and brings us to keep mitzvot even though we may not immediately see the connection; ‘Talmud mebe Leyade Maase’ the study brings us to keep and improve ourselves. We can explain this with a comparison to a baby who is fed by his mother’s milk, the baby drinks this milk, maybe likes the taste, but is not aware of anything more. But we know he is being nourished by this milk which not only gives him sustenance but helps him grow and develop for the future, a complete nourishment for all his parts, keeping him alive for the present and guaranteeing his development for future. The Torah we learn penetrates our whole being giving us sustenance for the present and blessing for our future needs. Like the milk which comes from the mother’s blood so our Torah comes from our father, Hashem’s inner treasures. But there is one condition, the baby must suckle for if it does not suckle, then it cannot work. The baby must make the effort, it cannot be poured down its throat, it must do the suckling. The equivalent for us is to be *‘Amelim Batorah’* and like milk the more the baby suckles the more milk is supplied. So it is with the Torah, the more we are ‘Amel’, work hard to understand the Torah, more comes forth from the treasure house of Hashem. When we study and keep the Torah we are promised as a people, the rains in its correct time and beracha in the Land, we will eat to

satisfaction and dwell in our Land in security: 'Veachaltem Lachmechem Lasova Veshavtem Labetach beartzechem Ve natati shalom ba aretz'; 'And I will give peace to the Land. Rashi explains that this is the greatest blessing for we can have all the food we need and eat to satisfaction, but if we do not have peace and security then there is no blessing at all. As we see today there is economic success in the land, but we live in fear and cannot appreciate our blessings. But why the repetition if we already have security in the Land and, dwell in it with security? 'Ve shavtem Labetach Beartzechem' so why does it continue: 'Ve natati shalom ba aretz' and I will give peace to the Land? What is being added?\_The Ora Chayim gives a beautiful insight: "even if we have security in our Land" as it says: 'Be artzechem', and there is no peace in the world it can affect us and can cause us distress". Not only peace and security in our Land but also peace in the world is necessary and depends on our actions. Our study of the Torah and keeping of mitzvot affect the world. In the offerings of Succoth festival, we are made to offer 70 oxen during the seven days, one for each of the 70 nations of the world. We are made to be responsible for the well being of the nations of the world, for when there is blessing and peace in the world, people will have peace of mind and time to recognise where it is coming from. This is the added beracha 'Ve Natati shalom ba aretz' in the world. But there is also another explanation for the repetition. Yes we can have security in the Land and live in confidence in it: 'Veshavtem Labetach' with no fear of our enemies but if there is no peace among us then the blessing is not complete. This is what the Torah adds 'Ve natati shalom ba aretz' and there will be peace among you. All this is mentioned in Berchat Cohanim: 'Ye Barekecha Hashem Vayishmerecha'; G-d will

bless you with plenty and He will guard your possessions, 'Ya er Hashem Panav elecha Vechuneka', He will shine his countenance upon you and you will find favour in the eyes of others, even the nations. But most of all, 'Vayasem lecha shalom', and He will make peace among you.

## **STORIES OF TZADDIKIM**

While Rabbi Eliya Lopian was still a young man his wife became critically ill and all the doctors despaired of her life. She lay helpless upon her bed with her family gathered around weeping bitterly. Rabbi Lopian was pacing up and down in a room next door, full of anxiety. Suddenly the door opened and a man entered asking what all the weeping was about. He replied that in the next door his wife was lying hopelessly ill. He then asked "What is wrong with her and what do the doctors say?". Rabbi Lopian replied saying what the doctors called the illness and that they could not save her." The Jew then said, "It is nothing. Go to a certain place and pick the herbs growing there. Boil them and give it to her in a drink and with Hashem's help she will recover". Rabbi Lopian did as the man advised, picked the herbs, boiled them and gave it to her to drink and with Hashem's help she began miraculously to get better. Rabbi Lopian felt certain that the man who came to him was Eliyahu HaNavi. Some time later Rabbi Lopian visited the great Rabbi the 'Sefat Emet' and discussed matters with him. Before leaving he asked the 'Sefat Emet' for a blessing. The 'Sefat Emet' answered him "A young man who has merited that Eliyahu HaNavi should appear to him does not need my blessing!" Rabbi Lopian replied, "If that is so [i.e. 'Sefat Emet' knows this] then I insist on being blessed by you."

***Shabbat Shalom***

## **HALACHOT**

1) It is forbidden to overcharge another Jew one sixth more than its market value or to buy an article from another Jew for one sixth less than its price without him being aware of its true market value. The transgression for this is mentioned in this week's Parasha, '*Al tono ish et achev*'.

2) If the overpricing or under pricing was one sixth neither the buyer or seller can retract but the extra sixth must be returned. If the overprice was more than one sixth the sale can be annulled and all the money returned. Under one sixth of the price there is nothing to return since there is '*Mechilah*'.

3) This does not mean that the profit level can be only up to one sixth. What we are saying is about charging above the market price, but if a shopkeeper, for example, buys at a cheap price, he can sell it at the market price even though he is making a big profit.

4) If he declares to the buyer this is what I paid for it and this the profit I want to make, even though the profit is more than one sixth of the market value, it would be permitted since he has let him know.

5) Even if a person was himself cheated by the price he bought it for he is not allowed to raise the price and cheat another who buys it from him.

6) The laws of '*Honaah*' here apply only to movable articles but not the sale of land or houses but it can apply to hiring or contracts or money changing.

**Shimon and Briana Simon on  
the birth of  
their baby girl.  
Mazal tov to the grandparents  
and families**

**Mazal tov to  
Eli & Rochelle Sassoon  
on the birth of their grandson,  
and parents  
Dovi and Katie Vogel  
and all their families**

*If you wish to sponsor a Kiddush  
Please contact  
Monty Sassoon 07787 571313  
For Seuda Shlishit  
or to rent the  
Nancy Reuben Hall  
for a Simcha  
Please contact  
Yanky David 07725 408724*

**We have a regular Youth  
Minyan organised by Jason  
Ibrahim and Jordan Moses  
followed by a kiddush**

## **SHABBAT TIMES**

Shabbat commences	8:24 pm
Shabbat terminates	9:45 pm
Mincha Erev Shabbat for the summer	7:15 pm
Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat	
Shacharit	8:30 am
Shiur Pirkei Avot	7:00 pm
Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit	8:00 pm
Shacharit Sundays	7:00 am
Shacharit Weekdays	6:50 am
Mincha followed by Arbit	
Arbit for the summer	7:30 pm

**Mazal tov to**