

# Shemitta & the Biblical Meaning of 7

for Torah in Motion - by Menachem Leibtag

## Class #4 The connection between shemitta & Har Sinai

### INTRO-

Last week, we studied the story of the manna, and how it introduced Am Yisrael to the cycle of a 'week' and the laws of Shabbat. Ever since then, we've been keeping shabbat.

In today's shiur we return to our study of the manna, to attempt and understand what is the connection between "shemitta" & Har Sinai, but examining the laws of Hakhel

### A. Review Seven preceding 40

In the Flood story, Breishit chapter 7

**ד** כִּי לַיָּמִים עוֹד שִׁבְעָה, אֲנֹכִי מִמָּטִיר  
עַל-הָאָרֶץ, אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם, וְאַרְבָּעִים  
לַיְלָה; וּמַחִיתִי, אֶת-כָּל-הַיְּקוּם אֲשֶׁר  
עָשִׂיתִי, מֵעַל, פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה.

4 For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I blot out from off the face of the earth.'

### At Har Sinai, Shmot chapter 24

**טז** וַיִּשְׁכֹּן כְּבוֹד-יְהוָה עַל-הַר סִינַי, וַיִּכְסֶהוּ  
הָעָנָן שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים; וַיִּקְרָא אֶל-מֹשֶׁה בַּיּוֹם  
הַשְּׁבִיעִי, מִתּוֹךְ הָעָנָן.

16 And the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and the seventh day He called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

**יז** וּמֵרָאֵה כְּבוֹד יְהוָה, כְּאֵשׁ אֹכֶלֶת בְּרֹאשׁ  
הַהָר, לְעֵינֵי, בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

17 And the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.

**יח** וַיָּבֹא מֹשֶׁה בְּתוֹךְ הָעָנָן, וַיַּעַל אֶל-הָהָר  
וַיְהִי מֹשֶׁה, בְּהָר, אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם,  
וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה.

18 And Moses entered into the midst of the cloud, and went up into the mount; and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.

### B. . Manna - as preparation for Mount Sinai /Shmot chapter 16

**ד** וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה, הֲנִנִי מִמָּטִיר  
לָכֶם לֶחֶם מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם; וַיֵּצֵא הָעָם  
וַלְקָטוּ דָבָר-יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ, לְמַעַן אֲנִסְנוּ  
הַיֵּלֶךְ בְּתוֹרַתִי אִם-לֹא.

4 Then said the LORD unto Moses: 'Behold, I will cause to rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in My law, or not.

**טז** זֶה הַדָּבָר, אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה, לְקָטוּ  
16 This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded: Gather ye of it

מִמֶּנּוּ, אִישׁ לְפִי אָכְלוּ :  
עֹמֶר לַגִּלְגָּלֹת, מִסֵּפֶר נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם -  
אִישׁ לְאִשֶּׁר בְּאֹהֶלוֹ, תִקְחוּ.

יז וַיַּעֲשׂוּ-כֵן, בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל; וַיִּלְקְטוּ, הַמֶּרְבֵּה  
וְהַמִּמְעִיט.

יח וַיִּמְדוּ בְּעֹמֶר--וְלֹא הָעֲדִיף  
הַמֶּרְבֵּה, וְהַמִּמְעִיט לֹא הֶחְסִיר :  
אִישׁ לְפִי-אָכְלוֹ, לָקְטוּ.

כב וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי, לָקְטוּ לֶחֶם מִשָּׁנָה--  
שְׁנֵי הָעֹמֶר, לְאֶחָד; וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל-נְשֵׂאֵי  
הָעֵדָה, וַיִּגִּידוּ לְמֹשֶׁה.

כג וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם, הוּא אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר  
יְהוָה-- שַׁבָּתוֹן שַׁבַּת-קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה,  
מָחָר : אֵת אֲשֶׁר-תֹּאפוּ אִפּוֹ, וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר-  
תִּבְשְׁלוּ בִשְׁלוֹ, וְאֵת כָּל-הָעֵדֶף, הַנִּיחוּ לָכֶם  
לְמִשְׁמַרְת עַד-הַבֹּקֶר.

כד וַיִּנְיְחוּ אֹתוֹ עַד-הַבֹּקֶר, כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה  
מֹשֶׁה; וְלֹא הִבְאִישׁ, וְרִמָּה לֹא-הָיְתָה בּוֹ.

כה וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֲכַלְהוּ הַיּוֹם,  
כִּי-שַׁבַּת הַיּוֹם לַיהוָה : הַיּוֹם, לֹא  
תִמְצָאֶהוּ בַשָּׂדֶה.

כו שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים, תִּלְקְטֶהוּ; וּבַיּוֹם  
הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת, לֹא יִהְיֶה-בּוֹ.

לב וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה, זֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה  
יְהוָה-- מְלֵא הָעֹמֶר מִמֶּנּוּ, לְמִשְׁמַרְת  
לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם : לְמַעַן יֵרְאוּ אֶת-הַלֶּחֶם, אֲשֶׁר  
הָאֲכַלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בַּמִּדְבָּר, בְּהוֹצִיאִי אֶתְכֶם,  
מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם.

לג וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-אַהֲרֹן, קַח צִנְצָנֹת  
אֶחָת, וְתֵן-שָׁמָּה מְלֵא-הָעֹמֶר, מִן; וְהִנֵּחַ  
אֹתוֹ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה, לְמִשְׁמַרְת לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם.

every man according to his eating;  
an omer a head, according to the  
number of your persons, shall ye  
take it, every man for them that are  
in his tent.'

17 And the children of Israel did so,  
and gathered some more, some less.

18 And when they did mete it with an  
omer, he that gathered much had  
nothing over, and he that gathered  
little had no lack; they gathered  
every man according to his eating.

22 And it came to pass that on the  
sixth day they gathered twice as  
much bread, two omers for each one;  
and all the rulers of the congregation  
came and told Moses.

23 And he said unto them: 'This is  
that which the LORD hath spoken:  
To-morrow is a solemn rest, a holy  
sabbath unto the LORD. Bake that  
which ye will bake, and seethe that  
which ye will seethe; and all that  
remaineth over lay up for you to be  
kept until the morning.'

24 And they laid it up till the  
morning, as Moses bade; and it did  
not rot, neither was there any worm  
therein.

25 And Moses said: 'Eat that to-day;  
for to-day is a sabbath unto the  
LORD; to-day ye shall not find it in  
the field.

26 Six days ye shall gather it; but on  
the seventh day is the sabbath, in it  
there shall be none.'

32 And Moses said: 'This is the thing  
which the LORD hath commanded:  
Let an omerful of it be kept  
throughout your generations; that  
they may see the bread wherewith I  
fed you in the wilderness, when I  
brought you forth from the land of  
Egypt.'

33 And Moses said unto Aaron:  
'Take a jar, and put an omerful of  
manna therein, and lay it up before  
the LORD, to be kept throughout  
your generations.'

**לד** כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה; וַיִּנְיַחְהוּ אֹהֶרֶן לְפָנֵי הָעֵדוּת, לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת. **34** As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept.

**לה** וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, אָכְלוּ אֶת-הַמָּן אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה--עַד-בְּאֵם, אֶל-אֶרֶץ נוֹשֶׁבֶת: אֶת-הַמָּן, אָכְלוּ--עַד-בְּאֵם, אֶל-קִצֵּה אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן. **35** And the children of Israel did eat the manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat the manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.

**לו** וְהָעֹמֶר, עֶשְׂרִית הָאִיפָה הוּא. {פ} **36** an omer is one tenth an ephah.

### C. The word "omer" in Vayikra chapter 23

**ט** וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר. **9** And the LORD spoke unto Moses saying:

**י** דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם, כִּי-תָבֹאוּ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם, וְקִצְרֹתֶם אֶת-קִצְיָהּ--וְהִבֵּאתֶם אֶת-עֹמֶר רֵאשִׁית קִצִּירְכֶם, אֶל-הַכֹּהֵן. **10** Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them: When ye are come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring the sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest.

**יא** וְהִנִּיף אֶת-הָעֹמֶר לְפָנֵי יְהוָה, לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם; מִמָּחֳרַת, הַשַּׁבָּת, יִנִּיפוּנוּ, הַכֹּהֵן. **11** And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you; on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

**יב** וַעֲשִׂיתֶם, בַּיּוֹם הַנִּיפְכֶם אֶת-הָעֹמֶר, כֶּבֶשׂ תְּמִים בֶּן-שָׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה, לַיהוָה. **12** And in the day when ye wave the sheaf, ye shall offer a he-lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt-offering unto the LORD.

**יג** וּמִנְחָתוֹ שְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרִינָיִם סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַשָּׁמֶן, אֲשֶׁה לַיהוָה--רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ; וְנִסְכָּה יַיִן, רְבִיעֵת הַהֵין. **13** And the meal-offering thereof shall be two tenth parts of an ephah of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour; and the drink-offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of a hin.

**יד** וְלֶחֶם וְקִלִּי וְכֶרֶמֶל לֹא תֹאכְלוּ, עַד-עֶפְסֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה--עַד הִבִּיאְכֶם, אֶת-קָרְבַּן אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם, בְּכֹל מִשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם. {ס} **14** And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor fresh ears, until this selfsame day, until ye have brought the offering of your God; it is a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. {S}

**טו** וּסְפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם, מִמָּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת, מִיּוֹם הִבִּיאְכֶם, אֶת-עֹמֶר הַתְּנוּפָה: שִׁבְעַת שָׁבָתוֹת, תְּהִימַת תְּהִינָה. **15** And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the day of rest, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the waving; seven weeks shall there be complete;

**טז** עַד מִמָּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׁבִיעִית, תִּסְפְּרוּ חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם; וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם מִנְחָה חֲדָשָׁה, לַיהוָה. **16** even unto the morrow after the seventh week shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall present a new meal-offering unto the LORD.

**יז** מִמִּשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם תְּבִיאוּ לֶחֶם תְּנוּפָה, שְׁתֵּי שְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרִינָיִם--סֹלֶת תְּהִינָה, חֲמִץ תֹּאפִינָה: **17** Ye shall bring out of your dwellings two wave-loaves of two tenth parts of an ephah; they shall be of fine flour,

בְּכֹרִים, לִיהוָה.

they shall be baked with leaven, for first-fruits unto the LORD.

יח וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם עַל-הַלֶּחֶם, שִׁבְעַת כְּבָשִׂים  
תְּמִימִם בְּנֵי שָׁנָה, וּפֶרֶךְ בֶּן-בֶּקָר אֶחָד, וְאִילָם  
שְׁנָיִם: יִהְיוּ עֲלֶיהָ, לִיהוָה, וּמִנְחֹתָם  
וְנִסְכֵיהֶם, אִשָּׁה רֵיחַ-נִיחֹחַ לִיהוָה.

18 And ye shall present with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams; they shall be a burnt-offering unto the LORD, with their meal-offering, and their drink-offerings, even an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

**A. Rhythm in nature / 'seven' & nature - Breishit chapter 1**

**B. The logical connection between Shabbat & Shemitta**

**C. The Biblical concept of "kedusha" / 'holy' vs. 'separated'**

**C. The mitzvah of Hakhel -to re-live Mt.Sinai / Devarim chapter 31**

ט וַיִּכְתֹּב מֹשֶׁה, אֶת-הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת, וַיִּתְּנָהּ  
אֶל-הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי לֵוִי, הַנִּשְׂאִים אֶת-אֲרוֹן  
בְּרִית ה'; וְאֶל-כָּל-זִקְנֵי, יִשְׂרָאֵל.

9 And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, that bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel.

י וַיִּצַו מֹשֶׁה, אוֹתָם לֵאמֹר: **מִקֵּץ שִׁבְעַת  
שָׁנִים, בְּמֵעַד שָׁנַת הַשְּׁמִטָּה--בְּחַג  
הַסֻּכּוֹת.**

10 And Moses commanded them, saying: 'At the end of every seven years, in the set time of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles,

יא בָּבוֹא כָל-יִשְׂרָאֵל, לִרְאוֹת אֶת-פָּנָי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ, בְּמָקוֹם, אֲשֶׁר  
יִבְחָר: **תִּקְרָא אֶת-הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת, נֹגֵד כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל--  
בְּאָזְנֵיהֶם.**

11 when all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which He shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

יב **הִקְהַל אֶת-הָעָם, הָאֲנָשִׁים וְהַנְּשִׂים  
וְהַטָּף, וְגֵרְךָ, אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ--לְמַעַן יִשְׁמְעוּ  
וּלְמַעַן יִלְמְדוּ, וַיִּירָאוּ אֶת-ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם,  
וּשְׁמְרוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת, אֶת-כָּל-דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה  
הַזֹּאת.**

12 Assemble the people, the men and the women and the little ones, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law;

**B. The concept of 'annual' celebrations**

**The 'enduring understandings' of each holiday**

**Thematic relationship between Hakhel, shemitta, &**

**Succot**

**The educational goal of Succot - Vayikra chapter 23**

מב בסכת תשבו, שבעת ימים; כל-  
האזרח, בישראל, ישבו, בסכת.

42 Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are home-born in Israel shall dwell in booths;

מג למען, ידעו דורותיכם, כי בסכות  
הושבתי את-בני ישראל, בהוציא  
אותם מארץ מצרים: אני, ה' אלהיכם.

43 that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

'Knowing' what happened or why it happened - see Devarim chapter 8

ב וזכרת את-כל-הדרך, אשר הוליכך ה'  
אלהיך זה ארבעים שנה--במדבר: למען  
ענתך לנסתך, לדעת את-אשר בלבבך  
התשמר מצותו--אם-לא

2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness, that He might afflict thee, to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no.

[Training for the dangers of prosperity]

ז כי ה' אלהיך, מביאך אל-ארץ טובה:  
ארץ, נחלי מים--עינת ותהמות, יצאים  
בבקעה ובהר.

7 For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, springing forth in valleys and hills;

ח ארץ חטה ושערה, וגפן ותאנה ורמון;  
ארץ-זית שמן, ודבש....

8 a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive-trees and honey;

י ואכלת, ושבעת--וברכת את-ה' אלהיך,  
על-הארץ הטבה אשר נתן-לך.

10 And thou shalt eat and be satisfied, and bless the LORD thy God for the good land which He hath given thee.

יא השמר לך, פן-תשכח את-ה' אלהיך,  
לבבתי שמר מצותיו ומשפטיו וחקתיו, אשר  
אנכי מצוה היום....

11 Beware lest thou forget the LORD thy God, in not keeping His commandments, and His ordinances, and His statutes, which I command thee this day;

יז ואמרת, בלבבך: כחי ועצם ידי,  
עשה לי את-החיל הזה.

17 and thou say in thy heart: 'My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.'

יח וזכרת, את-ה' אלהיך--כי הוא הנתן  
לך כח, לעשות חיל: למען הקים את-  
בריתו אשר-נשבע לאבותיך, כיום הזה.

18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God, for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

## D. Succot="chag ha'asif" fruit gathering - end of agricultural season

This is exactly Succot- as it is first defined in Shmot chapter 23

טז וְחַג הַקְצִיר בַּכּוֹרֵי מַעֲשֵׂיֶךָ, אֲשֶׁר  
תִּזְרַע בַּשָּׂדֶה; וְחַג הָאֲסֹף בְּצֵאת  
הַשָּׁנָה, בְּאֲסֹפְךָ אֶת-מַעֲשֵׂיֶיךָ מִן-  
הַשָּׂדֶה.

16 and the feast of harvest, the first-fruits of thy labours, which thou sowest in the field; and the feast of ingathering, at the end of the year, when thou gatherest in thy labours out of the field.

## E. Hakhel - how & when to re-create Sinai experience

[i.e. during Succot at end of the shemitta year]

To relive Matan Torah - maybe return to the desert?

Return to Mt. Sinai - replaced by Mishkan / Temple

Return to desert experience?

Shemitta can re-create manna experience

## F. Remembering to forget the 'omer' / Devarim 24:19

An example of how Sefer Devarim applies this educational message:

ט כִּי תִקְצֹר קְצִירְךָ בַשָּׂדֶךְ וְשָׁכַחְתָּ  
עֹמֶר בַּשָּׂדֶה, לֹא תָשׁוּב לְקַחְתּוֹ--לְגֵר  
לִיתּוֹם וְלֵאלֵמָנָה, יְהִיָּה...

19 When thou reapest thy harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go back to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the LORD may bless thee in all the work of thy hands.

## G. The unique introduction to shemitta in Vayikra 35:1-7-

The only commandment introduced with phrase: 'beHAR SINAI!'

וַיִּקְרָא פֶּרֶק כֹּה א וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל-מֹשֶׁה, בְּהַר סִינַי לֵאמֹר....

ג יָשַׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְרַע שָׂדֶךְ... ד וּבַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִת, שְׁבַת שְׁבַתוֹן...

## . How to re-create the Sinai experience in the future

1. The Mishkan/ Mikdash replaces Mt. Sinai

(famous Ramban on Shmot 25:1 - explaining Mishkan)

2. How to create 'manna' experience -

Need food everywhere, like the manna -

But only taking as much as you need for each day

→ This is exactly what the laws of shemitta create