

Voice OF THE VAAD

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CALCULATING THE SHEMITAH CYCLES

This upcoming year, 5782, will be commemorated as a *Shemita* year in *Eretz Yisroel*.¹ The myriad of *halachos* that this year will entail are primarily applicable to the farmers who cultivate the land in *Eretz Yisroel*. In this article, we will endeavor to briefly discuss the calculation used to determine the years of the *Shemita* cycles.

In the beginning of *Parshas Behar*, the *Torah* delineates the *mitzvos* of *Shemita* and *Yovel*. In short, every seventh year is a *Shemita* year, and after 7 cycles of *Shemita* (49 years) the fiftieth year is celebrated as *Yovel*. These two *mitzvos* are similar in many aspects, e.g., the prohibition against working the fields. They are unique in some ways as well, e.g., all slaves are set free by *Yovel*. These *mitzvos* are dependent on one another, meaning that to fulfill these *mitzvos* properly, both must be fully observed.

The *Rambam* tells us that the *mitzvah* of *Yovel* has not been in force since the time period immediately preceding the destruction of the first *Beis HaMikdash*. The reason for this is that, specific conditions need to be fulfilled for *Shemita*/*Yovel* to be commemorated. Namely, members of all 12

shevatim must be living in *Eretz Yisroel* and must be dwelling in their designated portions in the Land, for *Shemita*/*Yovel* to be *Torah* obligations.² The *Rambam* explains that we did not commemorate *Shemita*/*Yovel* for our first 14 years in *Eretz Yisroel*. Until that

point the land was not properly settled and divided amongst the *shevatim*. From that point on, we started counting the seven-year cycles. Therefore, the first *Shemita* was celebrated 21 years after we entered the Land. This cycle continued until the *shevatim* started going into *golus*.³

How the counting of the years continued after this, is a matter of

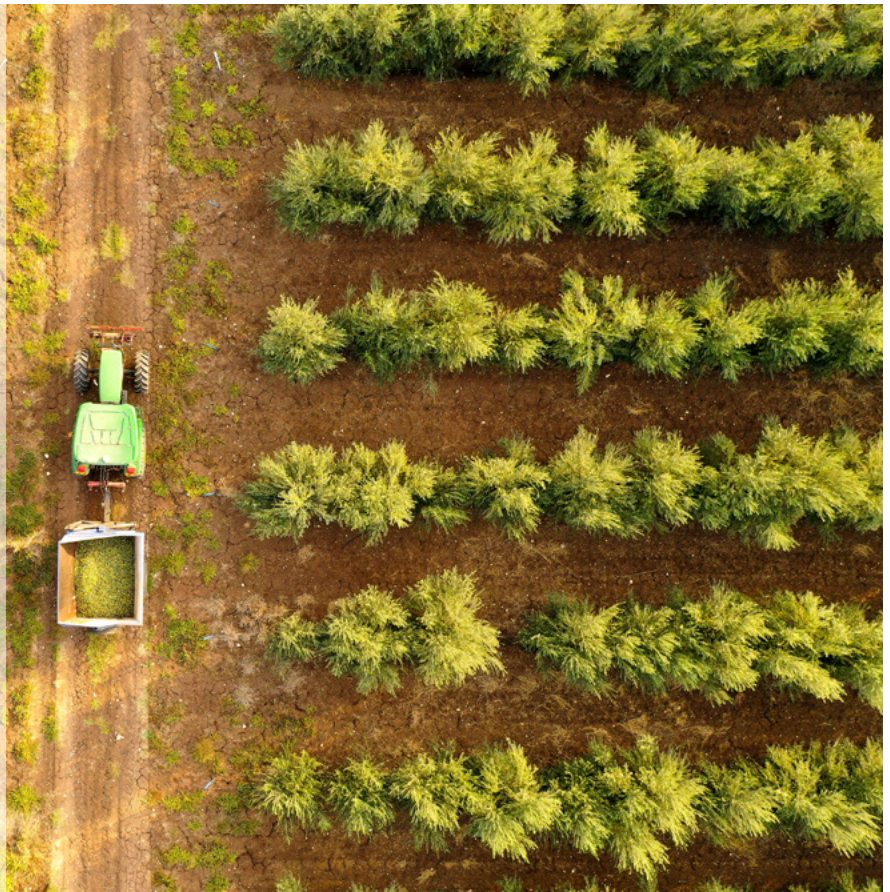
dispute. The *Rambam*⁴ is of the opinion that although the *mitzvah* of *Yovel* was not going to be fulfilled on a *Torah* level, the cycles continued to be counted as before. This is not just an academic discussion, like whether or not we will count the fiftieth year as a commemorative *Yovel* year. Rather, it impacts when we actually observe the *Shemita* year. The *Chachamim* instituted that we still keep the laws of *Shemita*, although *Yovel* was not going to be kept⁵. Yet in order to know when the proper year for *Shemita* is, one still needs to count the fiftieth year as *Yovel*.⁶ However, the *Rambam* says that the *Geonim*



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“The Torah promises that those who fulfill the mitzvos of Shemitah properly will merit to have sustenance, even though they are leaving the fields fallow.



CALCULATING THE SHEMITAH CYCLE *Continued from p. 1*

passed on the *mesorah* differently. The *Geonim* are of the opinion that just as *Yovel* was not counted during the seventy years of *golus* between the destruction of the first *Beis HaMikdash* and the rebuilding of the second *Beis HaMikdash*, so too it should not be counted after the destruction of the second *Beis HaMikdash*. *Derech Emunah*⁷ explains that since nowadays we are not applying the laws of *Yovel*, it is not reasonable to require the counting of that year and thereby lose a year in the sabbatical cycle. However, during the times of the second *Beis HaMikdash* although *Yovel* was not practiced, the year was counted. How are we to reconcile this seemingly contradictory calculation?

The *Kesef Mishneh*⁸ explains that during the time of the second *Beis HaMikdash*, we were continuously hopeful that the rest of *Klal Yisroel* would come back to *Eretz Yisroel* as well. Had that occurred, *Yovel* would have been celebrated with all its details. Therefore, during the entire period of the second *Beis HaMikdash* the *Yovel* year was counted with hope and anticipation. Unfortunately, with the destruction of the second *Beis HaMikdash*, that hope was not fulfilled. Therefore, nowadays

where there are no practical *halachos* of *Yovel* to fulfill (since even if all Jews or a majority would settle in *Eretz Yisroel*, the conditions mentioned above would not be fulfilled⁹), we do not count the *Yovel* year in our sabbatical cycles.

The *Geonim*'s calculation for the *Shemitah* cycle has become standard practice. It is fascinating to note¹⁰ that according to these calculations one can always determine if a given year is a *Shemitah* year. If any given year is divisible by seven it's a *Shemitah* year.¹¹

One last point to mention is that the *Torah*¹² promises that those who fulfill the *mitzvos* of *Shemitah* properly will merit to have sustenance, even though they are leaving the fields fallow. This begs the question, if nowadays the *mitzvah* is only in force on a Rabbinic level, is this guarantee still active? The *Chazon Ish*¹³ writes that when the *Chachamim* instituted the *mitzvah* of *Shemitah*, they also activated this *bracha* of the *Torah* to be effective! May we all merit this year to reinstate the counting of the *Yovel* years with our complete return to *Eretz Yisroel*.

1 See Rambam – *Hilchos Shemitah V'Yovel* 10:6 where he concludes his discussion siding with the opinion of the *Geonim* that this is the correct *mesorah*.

2 Rambam *ibid* 10:8 with explanation of *Derech Emunah*

3 36 years before the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*

4 *Ibid* 10:4

5 As it would be considered a decree that would be to overbearing on the masses; *Derech Emunah* (*ibid* 10:s"21 in the name of *Tosfos*).

6 Rambam *ibid* 10:3 see *Derech Emunah* s"22

7 *Ibid* 10:32

8 Quoted in *Derech Emunah* 10:5:Biur Halacha - Avel

9 *Derech Emunah* (*ibid* s"246) explains; Firstly, we do not have proper knowledge of the lineage of families to know which shevet they belong to. Additionally, we do not have the knowledge of where each familial section in the Land was. Lastly, in the days of *Moshiach* there will be a new dividing of the Land which will replace the original division.

10 See *Derech Emunah* *ibid* s"235

11 This year 5782 divided by 7 is 826

12 *Behar* 25:21

13 Quoted in *Derech Emunah* 1:97

PAS YISROEL LIST 5782/2021

The *Shulchan Aruch*¹ states that the custom of Jews is to be strict with Pas Yisroel bread products during the *Aseres Yemi Teshuva*². We therefore provide you with this useful list of Pas Yisroel certified items. Please note, all Gluten-Free (*shehakol*) breads and rolls are not considered pas and do not pose any Pas Yisroel issues.

OVK Certified

1. **Breadsmith** – All items baked in store
2. **Circle Cafe at Crown Center** - Breads: Honey Oat, French Peasant, New York Rye, Pizza crust, Fruit breads and Focaccia. Bagels: plain, sesame and everything. Coffee cakes.
3. **Dierbergs** - During the *Aseres Yemi Teshuva* select almond & honey cakes at the following locations: Brentwood Pointe, West Oak, Market Place, Four Seasons and Heritage will be marked as Pas Yisroel. Throughout the year Dierbergs (in the above-mentioned locations) carry Challah, Miami Onion Rolls and various Oberlander bakery products which are Pas Yisroel.
4. **Elefant Pizza** - All items
5. **Kohn's** - Fresh bakery items only
6. **Schnucks** - During the *Aseres Yemi Teshuva* select breads and cookies at the following locations: Ladue Crossing and Hilltown Village (Chesterfield) will be marked as Pas Yisroel
7. **Toby's Challah House** - All items

cRc Certified

(select list of items available locally)

1. **Eli's Cheesecake** – All varieties
2. **"Enjoy Life" products** are not made with the "five grains" therefore they are not considered pas.
3. **Kronos Pita** - All varieties
4. **North Shore Bakery** - All products
5. **Pretzilla** - All varieties of pretzel buns

Kof K Certified

(select list of items available locally)

1. **Food For Life** - Ezekiel Sprouted Grain Breads (Not the Pocket Breads)
2. **Gabilla's Knishes** – All varieties
3. **Oberlander Bakery** - All items

4. **Streit's** - All products
5. **Tofutti Cuties** - All varieties

OK Certified

(select list of items available locally)

1. **Green's Bakery** - All products
2. **Konto's** - All pita bread products marked as Pas Yisroel
3. **Matt's Cookie** - Real Peanut Butter Cookies, Chocolate Chip Cookies, Cranberry Walnut Cookies, Chocolate Chip Pecan Cookies, Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip Cookie, Oatmeal Raisin Cookies, Fig Bars, Strawberry Bars, Whole Wheat Fig Bars
4. **Sabra** – Pretzels and Pita Chips that come with the following Hummus: Classic, Roasted Garlic, Roasted Red Pepper, Luscious Lemon, and the Avocado Toast.
5. **Wasa** - Crispbread: Fiber Rye, Flaxseed, Light Rye, Sourdough Rye, Whole Grain.

OU Certified

(select list of items available locally)

1. **Amnon's Pizza** - All varieties
2. **Angel's Bakery** – All products
3. **Bloom's** - All cookies
4. **Dagim** - All products
5. **Damascus** (pita & flatbreads) - Only those items which are marked Pas Yisroel
6. **David's Gluten Free** - All products
7. **Dr. Praeger's** - Fishies, Fish Sticks, Fish Cakes, and Pizza Bagels
8. **Gefen** - Crackers, Cookies, Whole Wheat Breadcrumbs, Matzoh, Ice Cream Cones
9. **Golden Fluff** – Pretzels, Cookies, Animal Crackers
10. **Haddar** - All products
11. **Jason** - Breadcrumbs (plain, panko,

flavored and coating crumbs)

12. **Kedem** - Cookies, Cereal bars, Tea Biscuits and Crackers
13. **Kemach** – Cookies and Crackers (when marked as Pas Yisroel)
14. **Kitov** - All products
15. **Lily's Bakeshop** - All products
16. **Macabee** - Pizza, Pizza Bagel, Breaded Eggplant, Breaded Mushrooms, Mozzarella Sticks
17. **Manischewitz** - Tam Tams, Italian Coating Crumbs, Cake Mixes, all Matzah products
18. **Meal Mart** – All items
19. **Miami Onion Rolls** – All products
20. **Mishpacha** – All products
21. **Natural Ovens** - 100% Whole Grain Bread, Hunger Filler Bread, Multi-Grain Bread, Oat Nut Crunch Bread, Oatmeal Bread, Organic Whole Grain & Flax Bread, Original Carb Conscious Bread, Right Wheat Bread, Sunny Millet Bread. The buns are pas yisroel according to cRc guidelines.
22. **Of Tov** – Chicken Breast Nuggets
23. **Osem** - All products
24. **Ostreicher's** - All products
25. **Reisman Bros. Bakery** – All products
26. **S. Rosen's** - Mary Ann - Breads, Buns & Rolls - according to the cRc guidelines.
27. **Trader Joe's** - Chocolate Babka, Cinnamon Babka, Mango Babka, Pumpkin Spice Babka, Half Moon Cookies, Raspberry Rugelach

Star-K Certified

(select list of items available locally)

1. **Benz's** - Kishka
2. **Chopsie's** - All products

¹ OC 603:1

² For an article explaining this custom see <https://ovk kosher.org/voice-of-the-vaad-1/>

FROM THE VAAD INBOX

Question: *I was making a pareve vegetable soup in a pareve pot. I inadvertently used my fleishege ladle to dish out the soup. The ladle had not been used in the past 24 hours. Is the soup now considered fleishege? Can I still consider the pot to be pareve? Can I add cheese to my bowl of soup?*

Answer: The soup in your bowl and what is remaining in the pot, is still considered *pareve*¹. The pot is also still considered *pareve*.² Additionally, in this case you may still even add cheese to your bowl of soup. Enjoy!

¹ Rema YD 95:2

² See Shach YD 94:15 that in a case where there are 3 steps of imparting the taste (*gimel nosnei taam*) the original meat flavor into the ladle, from the ladle into the soup, from the soup into the pot, all opinions agree that it remains pareve.

³ Meor HaChaim 9:52

Question: *I was preparing dinner and mistakenly took the spoon that had just been used to stir some meaty sauce and used it to scoop out some mayonnaise I needed for a salad. Can I still use the remainder of the mayonnaise for pareve or dairy salads?*

Answer: Any visible residue from the meaty sauce needs to be removed from the mayonnaise. Subsequently, the remainder could be used for *pareve* or dairy use.³



MENS MIKVAH INFO

The Taharath Israel Mikvah - Staenberg Family Building - will be available for men to use on:

Erev Rosh HaShana from 7:00 am - 4:30 pm

Erev Yom Kippur from 6:30 am - 4:00 pm

Mikvah Fees:

- \$7.50 for adult
- \$5.00 for Yeshiva Bochurim or boys under bar-mitzvah
- \$5.00 for those in "Klei Kodesh"

No towels or bathroom use will be available at this time

Usage fees can be paid online at: <https://stlmikvah.org/> or by check payable to "Taharath Israel"



לשנה טובה

FROM THE VAAD HOEIR OF ST. LOUIS

KASHRUS ALERTS ON TWITTER



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