**Yom Kippur & Shmita**

On the spiritual personal level YOM KIPPUR is a day of soul atonement and forgiveness. That is the time of the year to ask for repentance, from ourselves and from the people how surround us.

This year we also starting “Shnat Shmita”, that happens ones in every seven Hebrew years.

**What is Shmita?**

Commonly translated as the ‘Sabbatical Year,’ *Shmita* literally means ‘release.’ Of biblical origin, this is the final year of a shared calendar cycle, when land is left fallow, debts are forgiven, and a host of other agricultural and economic adjustments are made to ensure the maintenance of an equitable, just, and healthy society. We’re starting now a new *Shmita* year at Rosh Hashana 2014.

### Exodus

**“23:10** And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof:
**23:11**  But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy oliveyard.

**23:13** And in all things that I have said unto you be circumspect: and make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth”

This is a time to reflect about our past and start doing personal soul searching and reflection, and decided how you want your new year to be like. “Between a man to himself and between a man and his friend”.

We’re going to explore what is the connection between Yom Kippur and Shnat Shmita, what can we learn from it and it can help us develop as individual and there for as a community.

Sources:

**Shmita - An Egalitarian Bubble in a Globalized World**

"בישראל המופרטת, הגלובלית ורבת הפערים, השמיטה היא סימן קריאה הכרחי. יש לנו, באמתחתנו הלאומית, תרופה מוכנה לשיקום הסולידריות הבין-אישית שהתרופפה. במובן זה, השמיטה היא מרכיב בחוסן הלאומי. קשה שלא להתרשם מעמקות האידיאה, הנעה בזהירות בין הרצון לשמר את רכושו של האדם לרצון שלא לראות ברכוש חזות הכל.

השמיטה היא קריאה לביצור בועה בזמן, שבה העשייה הכלכלית אמורה להגיע לרגיעה, שמטפחת חמלה, רחמים ואף שותפות בין כל החולקים את פני האדמה, כולל חיית השדה. בשנה השמינית המרוץ יימשך, מכיוון שהאנושות זקוקה לו, אך האידיאה וזיכרונה יחלחלו אל מחוץ לשנת השבתון, אל שש שנות הקדחתנות היצרנית."

אבי שגיא וידידי-ה שטרן

In our current privatized, globalized, stratified Israel shemittah is a vital exhortation. We have, in our national repertoire, a remedy for the rehabilitation of our disintegrating social solidarity. In this sense, shemittah is a component of our national vitality. It is hard not to be deeply impressed by the profundity of the idea, which moves cautiously between the desire to preserve private property, and the desire not to see in property the totality of everything.

Shemittah is a call to set apart a bubble in time, which slows economic activity down, and which fosters care, compassion and even partnership between all those who share the earth, including animals. The race will resume in the eighth year, because humanity needs it, but the idea and its memory will linger on beyond the confines of the sabbatical year, to the other six years of feverish productivity.

Avi Sagi and Yedidya Stern

## **הרמב"ם: משנה תשובה, ספר המדע, הלכות תשובה פרק ב'**

"ט) אין התשובה ולא יום הכיפורים מכפרין אלא על-עברות שבין אדם למקום כגון: מי שאכל דבר אסור, או בעל בעילה אסורה וכיוצא בהן, אבל עברות שבין אדם לחברו, כגון: החובל בחברו, או המקלל חברו, או גוזלו וכיוצא בהן - אינו נמחל לו לעולם עד שיתן לחברו מה שהוא חייב לו וירצהו. אף על-פי שהחזיר לו ממון שהוא חייב לו, צריך לרצותו ולשאול ממנו שימחל לו. אפילו לא הקניט את חברו אלא בדברים צריך לפייסו ולפגוע בו עד שימחל לו. לא רצה חברו למחול לו מביא לו שורה של שלושה בני אדם מרעיו ופוגעין בו ומבקשים ממנו. לא נתרצה להם - מביא לו שניה ושלישית: לא רצה מניחו והולך לו, וזה שלא מחל - הוא החוטא. ואם היה רבו הולך ובא אפילו אלף פעמים עד שימחל לו.

י) אסור לאדם להיות אכזרי ולא יתפייס, אלא יהא נוח לרצות וקשה לכעוס: ובשעה שמבקש ממנו החוטא למחול - מוחל בלב שלם ובנפש חפצה. ואפילו הצר לו וחטא לו הרבה, לא יקום ולא יטור וזה דרכם של זרע ישראל וליבם הנכון"

**HaRambam:** [**Mishneh Torah**](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/682956/jewish/Mishneh-Torah.htm)**, [Sefer Madda](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/904958/jewish/Sefer-Madda.htm), Teshuvah - Chapter Two**

**Halacha 9**

Teshuvah and Yom Kippur only atone for sins between man and God; for example, a person who ate a forbidden food or engaged in forbidden sexual relations, and the like. However, sins between man and man; for example, someone who injures a colleague, curses a colleague, steals from him, or the like will never be forgiven until he gives his colleague what he owes him and appeases him. [It must be emphasized that] even if a person restores the money that he owes [the person he wronged], he must appease him and ask him to forgive him. Even if a person only upset a colleague by saying [certain] things, he must appease him and approach him [repeatedly] until he forgives him.

If his colleague does not desire to forgive him, he should bring a group of three of his friends and approach him with them and request [forgiveness]. If [the wronged party] is not appeased, he should repeat the process a second and third time. If he [still] does not want [to forgive him], he may let him alone and need not pursue [the matter further]. On the contrary, the person who refuses to grant forgiveness is the one considered as the sinner. [The above does not apply] if [the wronged party] was one's teacher. [In that instance,] a person should continue seeking his forgiveness, even a thousand times, until he forgives him.

**Halacha 10**

It is forbidden for a person to be cruel and refuse to be appeased. Rather, he should be easily pacified, but hard to anger. When the person who wronged him asks for forgiveness, he should forgive him with a complete heart and a willing spirit. Even if he aggravated and wronged him severely, he should not seek revenge or bear a grudge.

This is the path of the seed of Israel and their upright spirit. In contrast, the insensitive gentiles do not act in this manner. Rather, their wrath is preserved forever. Similarly, because the Gibeonites did not forgive and refused to be appeased, [[II Samuel 21:2](http://www.chabad.org/15881#v2)] describes them, as follows: "The Gibeonites are not among the children of Israel."

Questions:

* What can we learn from Shmita about our personal relationships in life?
* When is the time to forgive and forget?
* What do we need to “drop” (לשמוט) in order to really forgive?
* Is there things that is impossible to “drop”? To forgive and let go?
* Is there people that we can’t forgive?
* What can make forgiveness hard? And why are we mad to begin with?
* What is the gain and what is lost from Shmita?
* What can we do I order to create a better society for the next generations?