

How Shmitta Saves Us From Ourselves



By Tammy Jacobowitz

בראשית א': כ"ד-ל"א

(כד) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים תּוֹצֵא הָאָרֶץ גִּפְשׁ חִיָּה לְמִינָהּ בְּהֵמָה וְרֶמֶשׂ
וְחַיֵּיתוֹ-אָרֶץ לְמִינָהּ וַיְהִי-כֵן: (כה) וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹקִים אֶת-חַיֵּית הָאָרֶץ
לְמִינָהּ וְאֶת-הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינָהּ וְאֵת כָּל-רֶמֶשׂ הָאֲדָמָה לְמִינָהּ וַיֵּרָא
אֱלֹקִים כִּי-טוֹב:

(כו) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ וַיְרִדוּ בְדִגְתַּת הַיָּם
וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל-הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל-הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ
עַל-הָאָרֶץ: (כז) וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹקִים אֶת-הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹקִים
בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם: (כח) וַיִּבְרָךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹקִים וַיֹּאמֶר
לָהֶם אֱלֹקִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ וְכִבְשׁוּהָ וּרְדוּ בְּדִגְתַּת הַיָּם
וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכָל-חַיָּה הָרֹמֶשֶׂת עַל-הָאָרֶץ: (כט) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים
הִנֵּה נֹתְתִי לָכֶם אֶת-כָּל-עֵשֶׂב | זֶרַע זֶרַע אֲשֶׁר עַל-פְּנֵי כָל-הָאָרֶץ
וְאֶת-כָּל-הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ פְרִיעֵץ זֶרַע זֶרַע לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאֹכְלָהּ: (ל)
וְלִכְלַח-חַיֵּית הָאָרֶץ וְלִכְלַח-עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלִכְלֹ | רֹמֵשׂ עַל-הָאָרֶץ
אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ גִּפְשׁ חִיָּה אֶת-כָּל-יֵרֶק עֵשֶׂב לְאֹכְלָהּ וַיְהִי-כֵן: (לא) וַיֵּרָא
אֱלֹקִים אֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וְהִנֵּה-טוֹב מְאֹד וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר יוֹם
הַשְּׁשִׁי: {פ}

Genesis 1:24-31

(24) God said, “Let the earth bring forth every kind of living creature: cattle, creeping things, and wild beasts of every kind.” And it was so.

(25) God made wild beasts of every kind and cattle of every kind, and all kinds of creeping things of the earth. And God saw that this was good.

(26) And God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. They shall rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the cattle, the whole earth, and all the creeping things that creep on earth.” (27) And God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (28) God blessed them and God said to them, “Be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it; and rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living things that creep on earth.” (29) God said, “See, I give you every seed-bearing plant that is upon all the earth, and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit; they shall be yours for food. (30) And to all the animals on land, to all the birds of the sky, and to everything that creeps on earth, in which there is the breath of life, [I give] all the green plants for food.” And it was so. (31) And God saw all that He had made, and found it very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

בראשית ב' א'-ג'

(א) וַיִּכְלֹוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל־צְבָאָם: (ב) וַיִּכְלֹוּ אֱלֹקִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְכָל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה: (ג) וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹקִים אֶת־יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְכָל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־בְּרָא אֱלֹקִים לַעֲשׂוֹת: {פ}

Genesis 2:1-3

(1) The heaven and the earth were finished, and all their array. (2) On the seventh day God finished the work that He had been doing, and He ceased on the seventh day from all the work that He had done. (3) And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because on it God ceased from all the work of creation that He had done.

משנה סנהדרין ד':ה'

(ה) פִּיצַד מְאִימִין אֶת הָעֵדִים עַל עֵדֵי נְפֹשׁוֹת, הָיוּ מְכַנְיָסִין אוֹתָן וּמְאִימִין עֲלֵיהֶן. שָׁמָּא תֹאמְרוּ מֵאֵמֶד, וּמִשְׁמוּעָה, עַד מִפִּי עַד וּמִפִּי אָדָם נֶאֱמָן שְׁמַעֲנוּ, אוֹ שָׁמָּא אֵי אַתֶּם יוֹדְעִין שְׁסוּפְנוּ לְבַדֵּק אֶתְכֶם בְּדַרְיָשָׁה וּבַחֲקִירָה. הָיוּ יוֹדְעִין שְׁלֹא כְּדִינֵי מְמוֹנוֹת דִּינֵי נְפֹשׁוֹת. דִּינֵי מְמוֹנוֹת, אָדָם נוֹתֵן מְמוֹן וּמִתְכַּפֵּר לוֹ. דִּינֵי נְפֹשׁוֹת, דָּמוֹ וְדָם זֶרְעִיּוֹתָיו תְּלוּיִין בּוֹ עַד סוּף הָעוֹלָם, שְׁכַן מְצִינּוֹ בְּקִנּוֹ שְׁהָרַג אֶת אַחִיו, שְׁנֵאמַר (בראשית ד) דְּמֵי אַחִיךָ צֹעֲקִים, אֵינּוּ אוֹמֵר דָּם אַחִיךָ אֲלֵא דְּמֵי אַחִיךָ, דָּמוֹ וְדָם זֶרְעִיּוֹתָיו. דְּבַר אַחֵר, דְּמֵי אַחִיךָ, שְׁהֵיךָ דָּמוֹ מִשְׁלָךְ עַל הָעֵצִים וְעַל הָאֲבָנִים. לְפִיכָךְ נִבְרָא אָדָם יְחִידִי,

לְלַמְדָּהּ, שְׁכַל הַמַּאֲבֵד נֶפֶשׁ אַחַת מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל, מֵעֵלָה עָלָיו הַכֶּתוּב
 כָּאֵלּוּ אֲבִד עוֹלָם מְלֵא. וְכָל הַמְקִיִּים נֶפֶשׁ אַחַת מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל, מֵעֵלָה
 עָלָיו הַכֶּתוּב כָּאֵלּוּ קַיִם עוֹלָם מְלֵא. וּמִפְּנֵי שְׁלוֹם הַבְּרִיּוֹת, שֶׁלֹּא
 יֵאמַר אָדָם לַחֲבֵרוֹ אֲבֵא גָדוֹל מֵאַבְיָהּ. וְשֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה מִיָּנִין אוֹמְרִים,
 הַרְבֵּה רְשָׁיוֹת בַּשָּׁמַיִם. וְלִהְיִיד גְּדֻלָּתוֹ שֶׁל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא,
 שֶׁאָדָם טוֹבֵעַ כַּמָּה מִטְּבָעוֹת בְּחוֹתָם אֶחָד וְכֵן דוֹמִין זֶה לְזֶה, וּמִלֶּךְ
 מַלְכֵי הַמְּלָכִים הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא טָבֵעַ כָּל אָדָם בְּחוֹתָמוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם
 הָרֵאשׁוֹן וְאִין אֶחָד מֵהֶן דוֹמֵה לַחֲבֵרוֹ. לְפִיכֶף כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד חַיֵּב
 לוֹמַר, בְּשִׁבְלֵי נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם. וְשָׂמָּה תֹאמְרוּ מָה לָּנוּ וְלַצָּרָה הַזֹּאת,
 וְהֵלֵא כְּכֹר נֶאֱמַר (וַיִּקְרָא ה') וְהוּא עֵד אוֹ רֹאֵה אוֹ יָדַע אִם לֹא יִגִּיד
 וְגו'. וְשָׂמָּה תֹאמְרוּ מָה לָּנוּ לְחֹב בְּדָמוֹ שֶׁל זֶה, וְהֵלֵא כְּכֹר נֶאֱמַר
 (משלי יא) וּבְאֵבֶד רְשָׁעִים רָנָה:

Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5

(5) **How does the court intimidate the witnesses in giving testimony for cases of capital law? They would bring the witnesses in and intimidate them** by saying to them: **Perhaps** what **you say** in your testimony is **based on conjecture, or** perhaps it is **based on a rumor**, perhaps it is **testimony** based on **hearsay**, e.g., you heard a witness testify to this in a different court, **or** perhaps it is **based on the statement of a trusted person**. **Perhaps you do not know that ultimately we examine you with inquiry and interrogation**, and if you are lying, your lie will be discovered. The court tells them: **You**

should know that cases of **capital law** are **not like** cases of **monetary law**. In cases of **monetary law**, a **person** who testifies falsely, causing money to be given to the wrong party, can **give** the **money** to the proper owner **and his sin is atoned** for. In cases of **capital law**, if one testifies falsely, **the blood of the accused and the blood of his offspring** that he did not merit to produce **are ascribed to** the witness's testimony **until eternity**. The proof for this is **as we found with Cain, who killed his brother, as it is stated** concerning him: "The voice of **your brother's blood** [*demei*] **cries** out to Me from the ground" (Genesis 4:10). The verse **does not state: Your brother's blood** [*dam*], in the singular, **but** rather: "**Your brother's blood** [*demei*]," in the plural. This serves to teach that the loss of both **his brother's blood and the blood of his brother's offspring** are ascribed to Cain. The mishna notes: **Alternatively**, the phrase "**your brother's blood** [*demei*]," written in the plural, teaches that **that his blood** was not gathered in one place but was **splattered on the trees and on the stones**. The court tells the witnesses: **Therefore, Adam** the first man **was created alone, to teach you that** with regard to **anyone who destroys one soul from the Jewish people**, i.e., kills one Jew, **the verse ascribes him** blame **as if he destroyed an entire world**, as Adam was one person, from whom the population of an entire world came forth. **And** conversely, **anyone who sustains one soul from the Jewish people, the verse ascribes him** credit **as if he sustained an entire world**. The mishna cites another reason Adam the first man was created alone: **And** this was done **due to** the importance of maintaining **peace among people, so** that one **person**

will not say to another: My father, i.e., progenitor, is greater than your father. And it was also so that the heretics who believe in multiple gods will not say: There are many authorities in Heaven, and each created a different person. And this serves to tell of the greatness of the Holy One, Blessed be He, as when a person stamps several coins with one seal, they are all similar to each other. But the supreme King of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, stamped all people with the seal of Adam the first man, as all of them are his offspring, and not one of them is similar to another. Therefore, since all humanity descends from one person, each and every person is obligated to say: The world was created for me, as one person can be the source of all humanity, and recognize the significance of his actions. The court says to the witnesses: And perhaps you will say: Why would we want this trouble? Perhaps it would be better not to testify at all. But be aware, as is it not already stated: “And he being a witness, whether he has seen or known, if he does not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity” (Leviticus 5:1)? It is a transgression not to testify when one can do so. And perhaps you will say: Why would we want to be responsible for the blood of this person? But be aware, as is it not already stated: “When the wicked perish, there is song” (Proverbs 11:10)?

שמות כ"ג:א'-י"ב

(א) לֹא תִשָּׂא שְׁמֵעַ שׂוֹא אֶל־תִּשָּׂא יָדָךְ עִם־רִשָּׁע לְהִיטֵעַ חַמָּס:

(ב) לֹא־תִהְיֶה אַחֲרֵי־רֵבִים לְרַעַת וְלֹא־תַעֲנֶנָּה עַל־רֵב לְנֹטֹת אַחֲרֵי רֵבִים לְהַטֹּת: (ג) וְדָל לֹא תִהְדָּר בְּרִיבוֹ: {ס} (ד) כִּי תִפְגַּע שׁוֹר אֲבִיבֶךָ אוֹ חֲמֹרוֹ תַעֲהֶה הַשֵּׁב תִּשְׁיבְנוּ לּוֹ: {ס} (ה) כִּי־תִרְאֶה חֲמֹר שֹׁנֵאֶךָ רֹבֵץ תַּחַת מַשְׂאוֹ וְחִדַּלְתָּ מֵעֲזֹב לוֹ עֲזֹב תַעֲזֹב עִמּוֹ: {ס} (ו) לֹא תִטֶּה מִשִּׁפְטֵי אֲבִינֶךָ בְּרִיבוֹ: (ז) מִדְּבַר־שֶׁקֶר תִּרְחֹק וְנָקִי וְצַדִּיק אֶל־תִּהְרָג כִּי לֹא־אֲצַדִּיק רָשָׁע: (ח) וְשֹׁחַד לֹא תִקַּח כִּי הַשֹּׁחַד יַעֲוֶר פְּקוּחִים וְיִסְלַף דְּבָרֵי צַדִּיקִים: (ט) וְגַר לֹא תִלַּחֵץ וְאַתֶּם יִדְעֶתֶם אֶת־נַפְשׁ הַגֵּר כִּי־גָרִים הֵייתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: (י) וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְרַע אֶת־אֲרֻצֶּךָ וְאַסְפָּתָ אֶת־תְּבוּאָתָהּ: (יא) וְהַשְּׁבִיעַת תִּשְׁמַטְנָה וְנִטְשִׁתָּהּ וְאַכְלוּ אֲבִינֵי עַמֶּךָ וְיִתְרֹם תֹּאכַל חֵיט הַשָּׂדֶה כְּוַתַּעֲשֶׂה לְכַרְמֶךָ לְזִיתֶךָ: (יב) שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי תִשְׁבַּת לְמַעַן יָנוּחַ שׁוֹרְךָ וְחֲמֹרְךָ וַיִּנְפֹשׁ בְּוַאֲמַתְּךָ וְהָגֵר:

Exodus 23:1-12

(1) You must not carry false rumors; you shall not join hands with the guilty to act as a malicious witness: (2) You shall neither side with the mighty to do wrong—you shall not give perverse testimony in a dispute so as to pervert it in favor of the mighty— (3) nor shall you show deference to a poor man in his dispute. (4) When you encounter your enemy's ox or ass wandering, you must take it back to him. (5) When you see the ass of your enemy lying under its burden and would refrain from raising it, you must nevertheless raise it with him. (6) You shall not subvert the rights of your needy in their

disputes. (7) Keep far from a false charge; do not bring death on those who are innocent and in the right, for I will not acquit the wrongdoer. (8) Do not take bribes, for bribes blind the clear-sighted and upset the pleas of those who are in the right. (9) You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt. (10) Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; (11) but in the seventh you shall let it rest and lie fallow. **Let the needy among your people eat of it, and what they leave let the wild beasts eat.** You shall do the same with your vineyards and your olive groves. (12) Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall cease from labor, in order that your ox and your ass may rest, and that your bondman and the stranger may be refreshed.

ויקרא כ"ה

(א) וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּהַר סִינַי לֵאמֹר: (ב) דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם כִּי תְבֹאוּ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם וְשַׁבְּתָהּ הָאָרֶץ שִׁבְתָּ לָהּ: (ג) שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְרַע שָׂדֶךְ וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְמַר כְּרֶמֶךְ וְאִסַּפְתָּ אֶת־תְּבוּאָתָהּ: (ד) וּבַשְּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית שִׁבְתָּ שַׁבְּתוֹן יִהְיֶה לָאָרֶץ שִׁבְתָּ לָהּ שָׂדֶךְ לֹא תִזְרַע וְכְרֶמְךָ לֹא תִזְמַר: (ה) אֵת סִפְיֹת קִצְיֹרְךָ לֹא תִקְצֹר וְאֶת־עַנְבֵי נִזְיֹרְךָ לֹא תִבְצֹר שְׁנַת שַׁבְּתוֹן יִהְיֶה לָאָרֶץ: (ו) וְהָיְתָה שִׁבְתָּ הָאָרֶץ לָכֶם לֶאֱכֹלָהּ לָךְ וּלְעַבְדְּךָ וּלְאִמְתְּךָ וּלְשִׁכְיֹרְךָ וּלְתוֹשְׁבֵי הַגָּרִים עִמָּךְ: (ז) וּלְבֵהֶמְתְּךָ וּלְחִיָּה אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרְצְךָ

תְּהִיֶּה כָּל־תְּבוּאָתָהּ לְאָכֹל: (ס) (ח) וְסִפְרָתָּ לָךְ שִׁבְעַת שָׁבֹת שָׁנִים
 שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים שִׁבְעַת פְּעָמִים וְהָיוּ לָךְ יָמֵי שִׁבְעַת שָׁבֹת הַשָּׁנִים תִּשְׁעַת
 וָאַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה: (ט) וְהָעֵבֶרֶתְּ שׁוֹפָר תְּרוּעָה בַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבַעִי בַעֲשׂוֹר
 לַחֹדֶשׁ בְּיוֹם הַכַּפָּרִים תַּעֲבִירוּ שׁוֹפָר בְּכָל־אַרְצְכֶם: (י) וְקִדְשְׁתֶּם אֶת
 שְׁנַת הַחֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה וְקִרְאתֶם דְּרוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ לְכָל־יֹשְׁבֵיהָ יוֹבֵל הוּא
 תְּהִיֶּה לָכֶם וּשְׁבֹתֶם אִישׁ אֶל־אֲחֵזְתּוֹ וְאִישׁ אֶל־מִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ תָּשָׁבוּ: (יא)
 יוֹבֵל הוּא שְׁנַת הַחֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה תְּהִיֶּה לָכֶם לֹא תִזְרְעוּ וְלֹא תִקְצְרוּ
 אֶת־סִפְיָחֶיהָ וְלֹא תִבְצְרוּ אֶת־גְּזֵרֶיהָ: (יב) כִּי יוֹבֵל הוּא קֹדֶשׁ תְּהִיֶּה
 לָכֶם מִן־הַשָּׁדָה תֹּאכְלוּ אֶת־תְּבוּאָתָהּ: (יג) בַּשְּׁנַת הַיּוֹבֵל הַזֹּאת
 תָּשָׁבוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אֲחֵזְתּוֹ: (יד) וְכִי־תִמְכְּרוּ מִמֶּכֶר לַעֲמִיתְךָ אוֹ קָנָה מִיַּד
 עֲמִיתְךָ אֶל־תּוֹנוּ אִישׁ אֶת־אֲחֵיו: (טו) בְּמִסְפַּר שָׁנִים אַחֵר הַיּוֹבֵל
 תִּקְנֶה מֵאֵת עֲמִיתְךָ בְּמִסְפַּר שְׁנַי־תְּבוּאֹת יִמְכַר־לָךְ: (טז) לְפִי א רַב
 הַשָּׁנִים תִּרְבֶּה מְקַנְתּוֹ וּלְפִי מְעַט הַשָּׁנִים תִּמְעֵיט מְקַנְתּוֹ כִּי מִסְפַּר
 תְּבוּאֹת הוּא מִכָּר לָךְ: (יז) וְלֹא תוֹנוּ אִישׁ אֶת־עֲמִיתוֹ וִירְאֵת מֵאֲלֹקֶיךָ
 כִּי אָנֹכִי ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם: (יח) וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת־חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת־מִשְׁפָּטַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ
 וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אִתְּם וַיִּשְׁבַּתֶּם עַל־הָאָרֶץ לְבִטָּח: (יט) וְנִתְּנָה הָאָרֶץ פְּרִיָּהּ
 וְאָכַלְתֶּם לְשִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים וַיִּשְׁבַּתֶּם לְבִטָּח עָלֶיהָ: (כ) וְכִי תֹאמְרוּ מִה־נֹּאכַל
 בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִת הֵן לֹא נִזְרַע וְלֹא נִאֶסַף אֶת־תְּבוּאֹתֵינוּ: (כא) וְצִוִּיתִי
 אֶת־בְּרַכְתִּי לָכֶם בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁשִׁית וַעֲשֵׂת אֶת־הַתְּבוּאָה לְשֵׁלֶשׁ הַשָּׁנִים:
 (כב) וְזָרְעֹתֶם אֶת הַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁמִינִת וְאָכַלְתֶּם מִן־הַתְּבוּאָה יִשּׁוּן עַד א
 הַשָּׁנָה הַתְּשִׁיעִת עַד־בּוֹא תְּבוּאָתָהּ תֹּאכְלוּ יִשּׁוּן: (כג) וְהָאָרֶץ לֹא

תִּמְכַּר לְצַמֵּת כִּי־לִי הָאָרֶץ כִּי־גֵרִים וְתוֹשְׁבֵי אֶתֶם עֹמְדִי: (כד)
 וּבְכָל אֶרֶץ אַחֲזַתְכֶם גְּאֻלָּה תִתְּנוּ לְאֶרֶץ: (ס) (כה) כִּי־יִמּוֹךְ אַחֲיָךְ
 וּמָכַר מֵאַחֲזַתּוֹ וּבֹא גְאֻלוֹ הִקְרַב אֵלָיו וּגְאָל אֶת מִמְכָּר אַחֲיוֹ: (כו)
 וְאִישׁ כִּי לֹא יִהְיֶה־לּוֹ גְאֹל וְהִשְׁיִגָה יָדוֹ וּמָצָא כַּדִּי גְאֻלָּתוֹ: (כז)
 וְחָשַׁב אֶת־שְׁנֵי מִמְכָּרוֹ וְהִשִּׁיב אֶת־הָעֵדֻף לְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר מָכַר־לוֹ וְשָׁב
 לְאַחֲזַתּוֹ: (כח) וְאִם לֹא־מָצָאָה יָדוֹ דֵּי הַשִּׁיב לוֹ וְהָיָה מִמְכָּרוֹ בְּיַד
 הַקֹּנֶה אֹתוֹ עַד שְׁנַת הַיּוֹבֵל וַיֵּצֵא בַּיּוֹבֵל וְשָׁב לְאַחֲזַתּוֹ: (כט) וְאִישׁ
 כִּי־יִמְכַר בֵּית־מוֹשָׁב עִיר חוֹמָה וְהִיתָה גְאֻלָּתוֹ עַד־תָּם שְׁנַת מִמְכָּרוֹ
 יָמִים תִּהְיֶה גְאֻלָּתוֹ: (ל) וְאִם לֹא־יִגְאָל עַד־מְלֹאת לוֹ שָׁנָה תְּמִימָה
 וְקָם הַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר־בְּעִיר אֲשֶׁר־לֹא [לו] חָמָה לְצַמִּית לְקֹנֶה אֹתוֹ
 לְדוֹרֹתָיו לֹא יֵצֵא בַּיּוֹבֵל: (לא) וּבְתֵי הַחֲצִרִים אֲשֶׁר אֵין־לָהֶם חָמָה
 סָבִיב עַל־שְׂדֵה הָאָרֶץ יִחָשֵׁב גְּאֻלָּה תִּהְיֶה־לּוֹ וּבַיּוֹבֵל יֵצֵא: (לב) וְעָרֵי
 הַלְּוִיִּם בְּתֵי עָרֵי אַחֲזַתְתֶם גְּאֻלָּת עוֹלָם תִּהְיֶה לְלוִוִּים: (לג) וְאֲשֶׁר יִגְאָל
 מִן־הַלְּוִיִּם וַיֵּצֵא מִמְכַר־בֵּית וְעִיר אַחֲזַתּוֹ בַּיּוֹבֵל כִּי בְתֵי עָרֵי הַלְּוִיִּם
 הֵוא אַחֲזַתְתֶם בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: (לד) וְשְׂדֵה מִגְרֵשׁ עָרִיָּהֶם לֹא יִמְכַר
 כִּי־אַחֲזַת עוֹלָם הֵוא לָהֶם: (ס) (לה) וְכִי־יִמּוֹךְ אַחֲיָךְ וּמָטָה יָדוֹ עִמָּךְ
 וְהִחֲזַקְתָּ בּוֹ גֵר וְתוֹשֵׁב וְחֵי עִמָּךְ: (לו) אֶל־תִּקַּח מֵאֹתוֹ גִּנְשָׁךְ וְתִרְבִּית
 וּרְאֵת מֵאֲלֻקִּיךָ וְחֵי אַחֲיָךְ עִמָּךְ: (לז) אֶת־כֶּסֶף לֹא־תִתֵּן לוֹ בְּגִנְשָׁךְ
 וּבְמִרְבִּית לֹא־תִתֵּן אֶכְלָךְ: (לח) אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם
 מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לָתֵת לָכֶם אֶת־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן לְהִיּוֹת לָכֶם לְאֱלֹקִים: (ס)
 (לט) וְכִי־יִמּוֹךְ אַחֲיָךְ עִמָּךְ וְנִמְכַר־לְךָ לֹא־תַעֲבֹד בּוֹ עֲבַדַת עֲבָד: (מ)

כְּשֹׁכֵיר כְּתוֹשֵׁב יִהְיֶה עִמָּךְ עַד־שְׁנַת הַיָּבֵל יַעֲבֹד עִמָּךְ: (מא) וַיֵּצֵא
מִמֶּמְךָ הוּא וּבְנָיו עִמּוֹ וְשָׁב אֶל־מִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ וְאֶל־אֲחֻזַּת אֲבֹתָיו יָשׁוּב:
(מב) כִּי־עֲבָדְיָ הֵם אֲשֶׁר־הוֹצֵאתִי אֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא יִמְכְּרוּ
מִמִּכְרַת עֶבֶד: (מג) לֹא־תִרְדֶּה בּוֹ בַּפֶּרֶךְ וַיִּרְאֵת מֵאֲלֻקִּיךָ: (מד) וְעֲבָדְךָ
וְאִמְתְּךָ אֲשֶׁר יִהְיוּ־לְךָ מֵאֵת הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבֹתֶיכֶם מֵהֶם תִּקְנוּ עֶבֶד
וְאִמָּה: (מה) וְגַם מִבְּנֵי הַתּוֹשָׁבִים הַגֵּרִים עִמָּכֶם מֵהֶם תִּקְנוּ
וּמִמִּשְׁפַּחְתָּם אֲשֶׁר עִמָּכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹלִידוּ בְּאֶרְצְכֶם וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְאֲחֻזָּה:
(מו) וְהִתְנַחֲלֹתֶם אֹתָם לְבְנֵיכֶם אַחֲרֵיכֶם לְרִשְׁתָּ אֲחֻזָּה לְעָלֶם בָּהֶם
תַּעֲבֹדוּ וּבְאֲחֵיכֶם בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אִישׁ בְּאֲחֵיו לֹא־תִרְדֶּה בּוֹ בַּפֶּרֶךְ: (ס)
(מז) וְכִי תִשָּׂיג יָד גֵּר וְתוֹשֵׁב עִמָּךְ וּמָךְ אֲחִיךָ עִמּוֹ וְנִמְכַר לְגֵר תוֹשֵׁב
עִמָּךְ אִו לְעֹקֵר מִשְׁפַּחַת גֵּר: (מח) אַחֲרַי נִמְכַר גְּאֻלָּה תִהְיֶה־לּוֹ אֶחָד
מֵאֲחֵיו יִגְאֻלְנוּ: (מט) אִו־דָּלוֹ אִו בְּוִדְדוֹ יִגְאֻלְנוּ אִו־מִשְׁאֵר בְּשָׂרוֹ
מִמִּשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ יִגְאֻלְנוּ אִו־הַשִּׁיגָה יָדוֹ וְנִגְאֻל: (נ) וְחָשַׁב עִם־קִנְיָהוּ מִשְׁנַת
הַמְּכָרוֹ לֹו עַד שְׁנַת הַיָּבֵל וְהָיָה כֶּסֶף מִמְכָרוֹ בְּמִסְפַּר שָׁנִים כִּימֵי
שְׁכִיר יִהְיֶה עִמּוֹ: (נא) אִם־עוֹד רַבּוֹת בְּשָׁנִים לְפִיָּהוּ יִשִּׁיב גְּאֻלָּתוֹ
מִכֶּסֶף מִקְנָתוֹ: (נב) וְאִם־מְעֻט נִשְׂאָר בְּשָׁנִים עַד־שְׁנַת הַיָּבֵל
וְחָשַׁב־לוֹ כִּפִּי שָׁנָיו יִשִּׁיב אֶת־גְּאֻלָּתוֹ: (נג) כְּשֹׁכֵיר שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה יִהְיֶה
עִמּוֹ לֹא־יִרְדְּנוּ בַּפֶּרֶךְ לְעֵינֶיךָ: (נד) וְאִם־לֹא יִגְאֻל בְּאֻלָּה וַיֵּצֵא בְּשְׁנַת
הַיָּבֵל הוּא וּבְנָיו עִמּוֹ: (נה) כִּי־לִי בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבָדִים עֲבָדְיָ הֵם
אֲשֶׁר־הוֹצֵאתִי אוֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם:

Leviticus 25

(1) The LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai: (2) Speak to the Israelite people and say to them: When you enter the land that I assign to you, the land shall observe a sabbath of the LORD. (3) Six years you may sow your field and six years you may prune your vineyard and gather in the yield. (4) But in the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath of complete rest, a sabbath of the LORD: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. (5) You shall not reap the aftergrowth of your harvest or gather the grapes of your untrimmed vines; it shall be a year of complete rest for the land. (6) But you may eat whatever the land during its sabbath will produce—you, your male and female slaves, the hired and bound laborers who live with you, (7) and your cattle and the beasts in your land may eat all its yield. (8) You shall count off seven weeks of years—seven times seven years—so that the period of seven weeks of years gives you a total of forty-nine years. (9) Then you shall sound the horn loud; in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month—the Day of Atonement—you shall have the horn sounded throughout your land (10) and you shall hallow the fiftieth year. You shall proclaim release throughout the land for all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: each of you shall return to his holding and each of you shall return to his family. (11) That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you: you shall not sow, neither shall you reap the aftergrowth or harvest the untrimmed vines, (12) for it is a jubilee. It shall be holy to you: you may only eat the growth direct from the field. (13) In this year of

jubilee, each of you shall return to his holding. (14) When you sell property to your neighbor, or buy any from your neighbor, you shall not wrong one another. (15) In buying from your neighbor, you shall deduct only for the number of years since the jubilee; and in selling to you, he shall charge you only for the remaining crop years: (16) the more such years, the higher the price you pay; the fewer such years, the lower the price; for what he is selling you is a number of harvests. (17) Do not wrong one another, but fear your God; for I the LORD am your God. (18) You shall observe My laws and faithfully keep My rules, that you may live upon the land in security; (19) the land shall yield its fruit and you shall eat your fill, and you shall live upon it in security. (20) And should you ask, "What are we to eat in the seventh year, if we may neither sow nor gather in our crops?" (21) I will ordain My blessing for you in the sixth year, so that it shall yield a crop sufficient for three years. (22) When you sow in the eighth year, you will still be eating old grain of that crop; you will be eating the old until the ninth year, until its crops come in. (23) But the land must not be sold beyond reclaim, for the land is Mine; you are but strangers resident with Me. (24) Throughout the land that you hold, you must provide for the redemption of the land. (25) If your kinsman is in straits and has to sell part of his holding, his nearest redeemer shall come and redeem what his kinsman has sold. (26) If a man has no one to redeem for him, but prospers and acquires enough to redeem with, (27) he shall compute the years since its sale, refund the difference to the man to whom he sold it, and return to his holding. (28) If he lacks sufficient means to recover it, what he sold

shall remain with the purchaser until the jubilee; in the jubilee year it shall be released, and he shall return to his holding. (29) If a man sells a dwelling house in a walled city, it may be redeemed until a year has elapsed since its sale; the redemption period shall be a year. (30) If it is not redeemed before a full year has elapsed, the house in the walled city shall pass to the purchaser beyond reclaim throughout the ages; it shall not be released in the jubilee. (31) But houses in villages that have no encircling walls shall be classed as open country: they may be redeemed, and they shall be released through the jubilee. (32) As for the cities of the Levites, the houses in the cities they hold—the Levites shall forever have the right of redemption. (33) Such property as may be redeemed from the Levites—houses sold in a city they hold—shall be released through the jubilee; for the houses in the cities of the Levites are their holding among the Israelites. (34) But the unenclosed land about their cities cannot be sold, for that is their holding for all time. (35) If your kinsman, being in straits, comes under your authority, and you hold him as though a resident alien, let him live by your side: (36) do not exact from him advance or accrued interest, but fear your God. Let him live by your side as your kinsman. (37) Do not lend him your money at advance interest, or give him your food at accrued interest. (38) I the LORD am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, to be your God. (39) If your kinsman under you continues in straits and must give himself over to you, do not subject him to the treatment of a slave. (40) He shall remain with you as a hired or bound laborer; he shall serve with you only until the jubilee

year. (41) Then he and his children with him shall be free of your authority; he shall go back to his family and return to his ancestral holding.— (42) For they are My servants, whom I freed from the land of Egypt; they may not give themselves over into servitude.— (43) You shall not rule over him ruthlessly; you shall fear your God. (44) Such male and female slaves as you may have—it is from the nations round about you that you may acquire male and female slaves. (45) You may also buy them from among the children of aliens resident among you, or from their families that are among you, whom they begot in your land. These shall become your property: (46) you may keep them as a possession for your children after you, for them to inherit as property for all time. Such you may treat as slaves. But as for your Israelite kinsmen, no one shall rule ruthlessly over the other. (47) If a resident alien among you has prospered, and your kinsman being in straits, comes under his authority and gives himself over to the resident alien among you, or to an offshoot of an alien's family, (48) he shall have the right of redemption even after he has given himself over. One of his kinsmen shall redeem him, (49) or his uncle or his uncle's son shall redeem him, or anyone of his family who is of his own flesh shall redeem him; or, if he prospers, he may redeem himself. (50) He shall compute with his purchaser the total from the year he gave himself over to him until the jubilee year; the price of his sale shall be applied to the number of years, as though it were for a term as a hired laborer under the other's authority. (51) If many years remain, he shall pay back for his redemption in proportion to his purchase price; (52) and if few years remain until the jubilee year, he

shall so compute: he shall make payment for his redemption according to the years involved. (53) He shall be under his authority as a laborer hired by the year; he shall not rule ruthlessly over him in your sight. (54) If he has not been redeemed in any of those ways, he and his children with him shall go free in the jubilee year. (55) For it is to Me that the Israelites are servants: they are My servants, whom I freed from the land of Egypt, I the LORD your God.

ספר החינוך פ"ד

(א) מצות שמטת קרקעות - להפקיר כל מה שתוציא הארץ בשנה השביעית שהיא נקראת מפני המעשה הזה שנתחייבנו בה שנת השמטה, ויזכה בפרותיה כל הרוצה לזכות, ...

(ב) משרשי המצוה, לקבע בלבנו ולציר ציור חזק במחשבתנו ענין חדוש העולם כי (שמות כ יא) ששת ימים עשה ה' את השמים ואת הארץ וביום השביעי שלא ברא דבר, הכתיב מנוחה על עצמו. ולמען הסיר ולעקר ולשרש מרעיונו דבר הקדמות אשר יאמינו הכופרים בתורה ובו יהרסו כל פנותיה ויפרצו חומותיה, באה חובה עלינו להוציא כל זמננו יום יום ושנה שנה על דבר זה למנות שש שנים ולשבת בשביעית, ובכן לא תפרד לעולם הענין מבין עינינו תמיד, והוא כענין שאנו מונין ימי השבוע בששת ימי עבודה והשביעי יום מנוחה. ולכן צוה ברוך הוא

להפקיר כל מה שתוציא הארץ בשנה זו מלבד השביתה בה כדי שיזכר האדם כי הארץ שמוציאה אליו הפרות בכל שנה ושנה לא בכחה וסגלתה תוציא אותם, כי יש אדון עליה ועל אדוניה, וכשהוא חפץ מצוה עליו להפקירם. ועוד יש תועלת, נמצא בדבר לקנות בזה מדת הותרנות, כי אין נדיב כנותן מבלי תקוה אל הגמול. ועוד יש תועלת אחר [ת], נמצא בזה שיוסיף האדם בטחון בשם יתברך, כי כל המוצא עם לבבו לתת ולהפקיר לעולם כל גדולי קרקעותיו ונחלת אבותיו הגדלים בכל שנה אחת ומלמד בכך הוא וכל המשפחה כל ימיו, לא תחזק בו לעולם מדת הכילות הרבה ולא מעוט הבטחון.

Sefer HaChinukh 84

(1) **The commandment of the releasing (*shmitat*) of lands:** To make ownerless everything that the earth put out in the seventh year, which is called the *shmitta* (release) year, because of this process in which we are obligated; and that all who want to [take] its fruits may do so ..

(2) **It is from the roots of this commandment to affix in our hearts and make a strong impression in our minds [about] the matter of the world having been created.** As (Exodus 20, 11) "in six days did God make the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day" - in which He did not create anything - He imposed rest on Himself. **And in order to remove and uproot and eradicate from our**

thoughts the idea of the eternity [of the world] - which the deniers of the Torah believe in, through which they destroy all its principles and break through its walls - did the requirement come upon us to expend all our time, day by day and year by year, for this matter, by counting six years and resting on the seventh so that this matter will never depart from between our eyes for all time. And this is similar to the manner in which we count the days of the week [by dividing them] into six days of work and the seventh is a day of rest.

Therefore, He, blessed be He, did command to render ownerless all that the land produces in this year - in addition to resting during it (i.e. during the year) - so that a person will remember that the land which produces fruits for him every year does not produce them by its [own] might and virtue. For there is a Master over it and over its master - and when He wishes, He commands him (i.e. the master of the land) to render them (i.e. the fruit) ownerless. **And there is another benefit in this matter - to acquire the trait of letting go** (i.e. of one's possessions), for there is no one more generous than he who gives without hope for recompense. **And there is another benefit - the outcome of this is that a person will add to his trust in God**, may He be blessed, since anyone who finds it in his heart to give and abandon to the world all of the produce of his lands and his ancestral inheritance for an entire year - and educates himself and his family through this for all of his days - will never have the trait of stinginess overcome him too much, nor will he have a deficient amount of trust.

Rav Kook, Introduction to Shabbat Haaretz

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The quality of life can only be improved through the affording of a breathing space from the bustle of everyday affairs. The individual recovers from the influence of the mundane at frequent intervals, every Sabbath day...What the Sabbath achieves regarding the individual the shemitta achieves with regard to the nation as a whole. The nation has a special need of expressing from time to time the revelation of its own divine light at its fullest brightness, not suppressed by the cares and toil of everyday life...Sanctity is not profaned by the exercise of private acquisitiveness over all this year's produce and the covetousness of wealth stirred up by commerce is forgotten.